

# Islam – The Religion of Mercy

BASED ON THE BOOK BY  
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# ISLAM – THE RELIGION OF MERCY

**W**hen mercy is the characteristic of Allah's (ﷻ) creation, it means softness of heart and when it is the characteristic of the Creator, it means providing blessings to his creation in general.

Allah (ﷻ) has introduced Himself in the Quran as All-Powerful, All-Knowing, The Beneficent, and The Merciful. His Mercy has been mentioned many times in the Quran.

In Islam's first lesson Allah's Mercy is emphatically mentioned twice:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful [1:1]*

The second lesson is:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ - الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds. [1:2-3]*

Here again the declaration of His Mercy is repeatedly stressed. He is the Lord of the worlds. The whole universe constantly benefits from Allah's (ﷻ) Mercy.

Allah (ﷻ) says in the Quran:

وَرَحْمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ

*My Mercy extends to all things. [7:156]*

Allah's (ﷻ) kindness covers everything in this universe: angels, human beings, animals, plants, the earth, sky, the moon, the sun, the alternation of day and night, grain, vegetables, flowers and minerals. This material system of the universe though limited is yet blessed with Allah's (ﷻ) Mercy.

Besides, the physical systems, Allah (ﷻ) also created the metaphysical systems which are unique and limitless. Since the beginning of human race, He (ﷻ) sent His guidance through 124,000 of His prophets and messengers to the peoples of this Earth. Adam (AAS) was the first messenger and Muhammad (ﷺ) the last messenger and the last prophet. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was sent for the guidance of all human beings and jinns until the Day of Judgment. Allah (ﷻ) says:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

*We sent you (Muhammad (ﷺ)) not, but as a mercy for all. [21:107]*

Whatever commandments Allah (ﷻ) sent in the form of the Quran or the Hadith (the sayings or actions of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)) are all signs of His total Mercy on the universe. Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

أَخْلَقُ عِيَالُ اللَّهِ فَأَحَبُّ الْخَلْقِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَنْ أَحْسَنَ إِلَى عِيَالِهِ

(مشكوة – باب الشفقة و الرحمة على الخلق – ص 425 – شعب الأيمان البيهقي)

*The creation is Allah's family (i.e., under His care). Allah loves the most that person who treats well His family.*

This means that the one who treats Allah's (ﷻ) creation compassionately and benefits it, becomes a symbol of Allah's (ﷻ) charity and mercy. The word creation includes all animals and human beings, be they Muslim or non-Muslim, good or evil.

In another saying of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), it is said:

الدين نصيحة

(مسلم، ابو داؤد، نسائي)

*Religion is the well-wishing.*

Islam teaches to do good to everyone. The Prophet (ﷺ) in his teachings insisted serving the members of every segment of the society and spoke about the rewards of doing service to all.

## THE RIGHTS OF THE PARENTS

The closest to a person are his parents. Allah (ﷻ) in many verses of the Quran commands to serve the parents. Twelve verses of the Quran emphasize this service. With respect to the upbringing of their children, the parents are a clear sign of Allah's Mercy. He (ﷻ) says:

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ لَا تَعْبُدُونَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا

*And remember We took a covenant from the Children of Israel (to this effect): Worship none but Allah; treat with kindness your parents [2: 83]*

He (ﷻ) also says:

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا

تَهْرَهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا – وَأَخْفِضْ لَهُمَا جَنَاحَ الذُّلِّ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ وَقُلْ رَبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيَانِي صَغِيرًا

*Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honor. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: "My Lord! Bestow on them your Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood." [17:23-24]*

Allah's (ﷻ) order is that:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا

*We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents. [46:15]*

Even the non-believing (poly-theist) parents must be dealt with kindly:

وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا

*Bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration.) [31:15]*

Another place in the Quran, it says:

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا وَحَمَلُهُ وَفِصَالُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا

*We have enjoined on man kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the (child) to his weaning is (a period of) thirty months. [46:15]*

Muhammad (ﷺ) once said that:

ما من ولد بار ينظر إلى والديه نظر رحمة إلا كتب الله بكل نظرة حجة مبرورة قالوا وإن نظر كل يوم مائة مرة قال

نعم الله و أكبر و أطيب

(مشكوة - باب البر و الصلة - شعب الأيمان البيهقي)

*If a son or daughter looks at his parents with love and mercy, Allah grants him/her the reward of an accepted Hajj. He was asked even if that happened a hundred times a day. The reply was in affirmative; Allah is the Greatest and free of any imperfection.*

This just states the incentive of looking at one's parents lovingly; serving them earns one even more of His blessings.

A companion of the Prophet (ﷺ) once sought his advice about taking part in a battle.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

هل لك من أم قال نعم قال فألزمها فإن الجنة عند رجليها

(مشكوة - ص 421 - نسائي، مسند أحمد)

*"Is your mother alive?" The companion said, "Yes." He was told to stay with his mother because the Paradise was under her feet.*

One of his companions asked the Prophet (ﷺ):

ما حق الوالدين على ولدهما هما جنتك و نارك

(مشكوة - ص 1221 - ابن ماجه)

*What are the rights of parents on their children?" He (ﷺ) replied that they were his Paradise or his Hell.*

This means that being obedient (while staying within the boundaries of Islam) to one's parents can result in Paradise as one's destination.

## THE RIGHTS OF THE DAUGHTERS

Women were oppressed during the pre-Islamic period (era of 'ignorance'). They did not enjoy basic rights such as the right of inheritance from the parents or the husbands. At times, they could neither live peacefully with their husbands, nor could they get a divorce. The parents did not like to have female children and even used to bury their daughters alive; or sometimes killed them with the fear of starvation. Such was the treatment meted out to the females before Islam came.

With Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) advent, peace and tranquility came to the society. Allah (ﷻ) ordered in the Quran:

وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ

*Kill not your children on a plea of want; we provide sustenance for you and for them.  
[6:151]*

And He (ﷺ) also says:

وَإِذَا بُشِّرَ أَحَدُهُمْ بِالْأُنثَىٰ ظَلَّ وَجْهُهُ مُسْوَدًّا وَهُوَ كَظِيمٌ - يَتَوَارَىٰ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ مِنْ سُوءِ مَا بُشِّرَ بِهِ أَيُمْسِكُهُ عَلَىٰ هُونٍ أَمْ يَدُسُّهُ فِي التُّرَابِ

*When the news is brought to one of them, of (the birth of) a female (child), his face darkens, and he is filled with inward grief! With shame does he hide himself from his people, because of the bad news he has had! Shall he retain it on (sufferance and) contempt, or bury it in the dust? [16:58-59]*

In another place in the Quran, Allah (ﷻ) says:

وَإِذَا الْمَوْءُودَةُ سُئِلَتْ بِأَيِّ ذَنْبٍ قُتِلَتْ

*When the female (infant), buried alive, is questioned (on the Judgment Day). For what crime she was killed? [81:8-9]*

Quran using unmatched eloquence of its verses eliminated the cruel practice of murdering the female babies.

Muhammad's (ﷺ) advice about the upbringing of female offspring was:

من عال جاريتين حتى تبلغا جاء يوم القيامة أنا وهكذا وضم أصابعه

(مشكوة - ص 421 - صحيحين)

*Whoever brought up two girls until they came of age, he and I will be close like this; he said it while showing his two fingers joined.*

These humane teachings made people long for raising even other people's daughters. In the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Hijrah, when the Prophet (ﷺ) was returning from Makkah after the performance of Umrah, Martyr Hamzah's (رضي الله عنه) orphan daughter greeted the Prophet. (Hamzah (رضي الله عنه) was Prophet's (ﷺ) uncle and foster brother.) Ali (رضي الله عنه) picked up the little girl and handed her over to his wife Fatima (رضي الله عنها); he wanted to adopt her. Jaffer (رضي الله عنه) and another companion of the Prophet also wanted to adopt her. However, the Prophet (ﷺ) decided to entrust the girl with Jaffer's (رضي الله عنه) wife because she was the girl's maternal aunt. The Prophet (ﷺ) was very pleased to see how positively the conditions had changed from being murderous to the girls to wishing to adopt them.

We are told in a Hadith that when Prophet's (ﷺ) daughter Fatima (رضي الله عنها) used to visit him, he would stand up to greet her and used to kiss her forehead.

To sum up, Muhammad (ﷺ) elevated the status of women and taught people the lessons of honoring the womenfolk.

## **THE RIGHTS OF A WIFE**

A woman has three distinct positions in a society: A mother, a daughter and a wife.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

خياركم خياركم لنسائهم

(ترمذي - باب ما جاء في حق المرأة على زوجها - ص 138)

*The better among you is one who is better for his family.*

Another Hadith states:

خيركم خيركم لأهله وأنا خيركم لأهلي

(بخاري 2 - باب حسن المعاشرة)

*The best among you is the one who treats his wife the best; and among us, I am the best for my family.*

A person's conduct cannot be completely judged only by his behavior in his office, store, school, etc. His life with his family may be the true reflection of his character.

The Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized upon Muslims the rights of all creations of Allah (ﷻ), especially the rights of the underdogs of a society.

## THE RIGHTS OF AN ORPHAN

Allah (ﷻ) stresses the rights of the orphans in many places in the Quran, for example:

فَأَمَّا الْيَتِيمَ فَلَا تَقْهَرْ

*Therefore, treat not the orphan with harshness. [93:9]*

وَأَنْ تَقُومُوا لِلْيَتَامَىٰ بِالْقِسْطِ

*... that you stand firm for justice to orphans. [4:127]*

And one of the Prophet's Hadith states:

أنا وكافل اليتيم في الجنة هكذا وأشار بالسبابة والوسطى وفرج بينهما

(مشكوة - ص 422 - البخاري)

*"The guardian of an orphan and I will be in the Paradise like this"; and he (ﷺ) brought his index and middle fingers closer.*

Another Hadith says:

خير بيت في المسلمين بيت فيه يتيم يُحسن إليه

(مشكوة ص 1423 ابن ماجه)

*The best among Muslims' houses is the one where an orphan is treated well.*

Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ مَسَحَ رَأْسَ يَتِيمٍ لَمْ يَمْسَحْهُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ كَانَ لَهُ بِكُلِّ شَعْرَةٍ تَمَرُّ عَلَيْهِا يَدُهُ حَسَنَاتٍ

(مشكوة - ص 423 - ترمذي)

*Whoever caresses an orphan's head solely to please Allah (ﷻ), he will earn rewards for every strand of hair that was touched.*

Muhammad (ﷺ) also said:

من أحسن إلى يتيم أو يتيم عنده كنت أنا وهو في الجنة كهاتين وقرن بين إصبعيه

(مشكوة - ص 423 - ترمذي)

*"Whosoever did a favor with an orphan boy or a girl will be close to me". He (ﷺ) explained this by bringing the two fingers of his hand closer.*

It is a well-known Hadith that Fatima (رضي الله عنها) used to perform all her domestic chores herself which included, grinding the flour, fetching the water from the well, sweeping the floor, etc. When she requested a household helper from among the captives, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) told her that the orphans of Battle of Badr deserve care on priority basis instead.

Before Islam, no orphanage existed. Thanks to the Islamic teachings, today, we see the orphanages all over the world.

### THE RIGHTS OF A WIDOW

In a society, the widows can be the most helpless. All of Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) wives except Aisha (رضي الله عنها) were widows. This was one of the Prophet's (صلى الله عليه وسلم) ways to help out the widows; he said:

الساعي على الأرملة والمسكين كالمجاهد في سبيل الله و كالذي يصوم النهار و يقوم الليل  
(بخاري)

*He who struggles to fulfill the needs of the widow or the needy is like the one who does jihad in the Path of Allah and like the one who fasts all day and prays the whole night.*

### THE RIGHTS OF THE SICK

Allah (جل جلاله) gives to the sick relief in performing certain obligations. Allah (جل جلاله) says:

وَلَا عَلَى الْمَرِيضِ حَرَجٌ

*It is no fault ... on one afflicted with illness. [24:61]*

A sick person is allowed to replace washing in ablution with mere wiping; he is allowed to pray while sitting instead of standing; and he is allowed to postpone his fasting until he recovers. Visiting and serving the sick are such acts which are highly rewarded by Allah (جل جلاله).

Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

أَنَّ الْمُسْلِمَ إِذَا عَادَ أَخَاهُ الْمُسْلِمَ لَمْ يَزَلْ فِي خُرْفَةِ الْجَنَّةِ حَتَّى يَرْجِعَ  
(مشكوة - ص 133 - باب عيادة المريض - المسلم)

*A Muslim visiting another sick Muslim keeps on picking the fruits of Paradise until he leaves.*

Another Hadith says that when a Muslim visits his fellow sick Muslim in the morning, 70,000 angels keep praying for the visiting Muslim's forgiveness, and when he makes a visit in the evening, the angels pray for his redemption till the morning. A garden in the Paradise is allocated for the person visiting the sick.

(مشكوة - ص 135 - أبو داود)

### THE RIGHTS OF A RELATIVE

To fulfill the rights of close relatives is called *sila rahmee* (صله رحمي). The Quran emphasizes greatly the fulfillment of these rights; and they are mentioned in the Quran in 12 places, for example:



فَاتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ وَالْمِسْكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ

*So give what is due to kindred, the needy, and the wayfarer. [30:38]*

"I, Allah (ﷻ) am The Gracious (الرَّحْمَن). I have created relationship. I have inferred the word "رحم" (relation) from my attribute of being the Gracious. He who maintains the amity among relatives, I bestow him with my special mercy (رحمة خاصة). And he whosoever breaks away from relatives is deprived of my special mercy."

(حديث قدسي - مشكوة - ص 420 - صحيحين)

In a Muslim society, the boys and girls may find their spouses among the relatives. Having a pleasant association with the relatives helps the new couples live in peace and happiness. Breaking up with relatives, on the other hand, can ruin the familial atmosphere.

## THE RIGHTS OF THE NEIGHBORS

Allah (ﷻ) orders:

وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنبِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ

*And do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are near, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and what your right hands possess. [4:36]*

In this verse of the Quran, two types of neighbors are mentioned: the next-door neighbors and the ones who live farther. A short-term neighborhood exists while one is traveling in a plane, bus, train, etc. Students in a class or colleagues in an office or a factory also fall under the category of neighbors.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

والله لا يؤمن والله لا يؤمن والله لا يؤمن قيل من يا رسول الله قال الذي لا يأمن جاره بوائقه

(مشكوة - ص 422 - صحيحين)

*By Allah, a person is not a mo'min (مؤمن/a Muslim with all his heart and soul), By Allah, a person is not a مؤمن, By Allah, a person is not a مؤمن. He was asked, "O Prophet of Allah, who is such a person?" The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, "The one whose neighbor is not safe from his acts of mischief."*

In another Hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

لا يدخل الجنة من لا يأمن جاره بوائقه

(مشكوة، مسلم)

*The person whose neighbor is not safe from the former's mischievous behavior will not enter Paradise.*

Yet another Hadith states:

ما زال جبريل يوصيني بالجار حتى ظننت أنه سيورثه

(مشكوة، صحيحين)

*Angel Jibrael (AAS) kept advising me about the neighbors until I started thinking that the neighbors would eventually become inheritors.*

We can derive from this Hadith that the rights of neighbors resemble those of close relatives. In a Hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ), said:

من كان يؤمن بالله واليوم الآخر فليكرم جاره

(بخاري)

*Whosoever believes in Allah (ﷻ) and in the Judgment Day should always be respectful to his neighbor.*

Another Hadith translates like this:

*Whosoever believes in Allah (ﷻ) and in the Judgment Day should not inflict any harm on his neighbor.*

(بخاري)

The fact is that in times of trouble, the neighbors are the first ones to come to help. So one should be on good terms with the neighbors and must fulfill their rights.

## THE RIGHTS OF A SLAVE

Historically, the victorious used to enslave the members of the defeated. The slaves used to be the weakest section of a society. Islam on its arrival first educated the people on the rights of the slaves; then improved their condition; and eventually abolished the practice of slavery. A means of forgiveness of sins is freeing of slaves so the Muslims were exhorted to set the slaves free; the people freeing the slaves were given the glad tidings of discharge from the Hell and of high rewards in the hereafter.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ أَعْتَقَ رَقَبَةً مُسْلِمَةً أَعْتَقَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ عَضْوٍ مِنْهُ عَضْوًا مِنَ النَّارِ

(مشكوة - كتاب العتق - ص 293 - بخاري، مسلم)

*Whosoever emancipates a slave, Allah (ﷻ) will from hell-fire free each part of the body of the person who sets a slave free.*

The companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) competed in freeing the slaves. Aisha (رضي الله عنه) once freed 40 slaves; Abdullah bin Umar (رضي الله عنه) emancipated 1000 slaves on different occasions. Adbur-Rahman bin Ouf (رضي الله عنه), a wealthy individual, freed a total of 30,000 slaves.

Upon experiencing the generosity and kindness, many slaves in Makkah converted to Islam; as a result the non-Muslim owners subjected the slaves to cruelties and even killed some of them. Among the converts were: Khabab, Bilal, Yasir, Ammar, Sohaib, Labinta, Zunaira, Nahdia, Umm-Abees and Sumayya (رضي الله عنهم).

These days, we do not have slaves, but we may have workers and laborers who do have their rights; they must be treated with respect. We should assign them tasks which are within their abilities and must pay their fair wages on time.

Muhammad (ﷺ) ordered the Muslims:

أعطوا الأجير أجره قبل أن يجف عرقه

(مشكوة – باب الإجارة – ص 1258 – ابن ماجه)

*Pay a laborer his wages even before his sweat dries up.*

### THE RIGHTS OF THE MUSLIM BROTHERS

There was total anarchy before the dawn of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. All tribes were enemies among themselves. Even families used to fight continually. The acts of revenge-taking extended over several generations. Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ), united everyone on a single proclamation of: There is no God but Allah. The Prophet (ﷺ) established a universal brotherhood by eliminating all types of discrimination, i.e., lingual, ethnic, geographical, national, etc.

Allah (ﷻ) says in the Quran:

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا

*And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, you became brethren. [3:103]*

In another place, the Quran says:

رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَءُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ  
*Our Lord! Forgive us, and our brethren who came before us into the Faith, and leave not, in our hearts, rancor (or sense of injury) against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed Full of Kindness, Most Merciful. [59:10]*

Other verses of the Quran state:

رُحَمَاءَ بَيْنَهُمْ

*(The Muslims) are compassionate amongst each other [48:29]*

أَذِلَّةً عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

*... lowly with the believers [5:54]*

These two Hadiths of the Prophet (ﷺ) present a vivid picture of the Islamic brotherhood and affinity:

المؤمن كرجل واحد أن اشتكى عينه اشتكى كله وإن اشتكى رأسه اشتكى كله  
(مشكوة – ص 422 – مسلم)

*The mo'mins (المؤمنون) are like a human body. If the eye hurts, whole body feels the pain; if the head aches, whole body experiences the pain.*

المؤمن للمؤمن كالبنيان يشد بعضه بعضاً ثم شبك بين أصابه  
(مشكوة صحيحين)

*A Muslim is like a wall to the other Muslim; one part of which (wall) strengthens the other.)*

The Muslim nation is a strong fort made from bricks of individual Muslims. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "You will find the Muslims, treating each other with love, kindness and affection; they are like a human body; if one part of the body hurts, whole body suffers from pain and sleeplessness.

(مشكوة صحيحين)

In another Hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

كل المسلم على المسلم حرامٌ دمه و ماله و عرضه

(مشكوة مسلم)

*Every part of a Muslim is haraam (strictly forbidden) for other Muslim, his blood, his wealth, and his dignity.*

Jarir bin Abdullah (رضي الله عنه) had accepted Islam a few week's before the demise of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). Jarir (رضي الله عنه) said:

بايعتُ رسول الله على إقام الصلاة و إيتاء الزكاة و التصح لكل مسلم

(بخاري - ص 13)

*I pledged to the Prophet (ﷺ) that I would offer salah (daily prayers), give away zakah (prescribed charity) and work for the welfare of all Muslims.*

Jarir (رضي الله عنه) once bought from a slave his owner's horse for 300 Dirhams. When the owner found out about the sale, he told Jarir (رضي الله عنه) that he had paid too much for the horse. But Jarir (رضي الله عنه) kept insisting on paying more until he had paid 800 Dirhams to the owner. He then told the seller about his pledge of watching the interests of Muslims; he had to fulfill the pledge.

Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

المسلم من سَلِمَ المسلمون من لسانه و يده

(بخاري)

*A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands are other Muslims safe.*

In another Hadith, he (ﷺ) said:

والله في عون العبد ما كان العبد في عون أخيه

(مشكوة - ص 32 - مسلم)

*Allah (ﷻ) keeps helping a person until he keeps helping his brother.)*

It is obvious that Allah's (ﷻ) help is far superior to a human being's help. (In this Hadith, the word brother refers to any Muslim and not just to someone's biological brother.)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

مَنْ نَفَسَ عَنْ مُؤْمِنٍ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبَةٍ دُنِيَ نَفْسَهُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا نَفْسَ اللَّهِ عَنْهُ كُرْبَةً مِنْ كُرْبَةٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

(مشكوة - ص 32 - مسلم)

Whoever removes the worldly hardship of a Muslim, Allah (ﷻ) will do away with the hardship of the helping person in the Hereafter.

And at another time, the Prophet said:

سباب المسلم فسوق و قتاله كفر

(بخاري - ص 13 - ج 1)

Calling a Muslim bad names is evil and fighting with him is kufr (rejection of faith.)

And he (ﷺ) also said:

والذي نفسي بيده لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يحب لأخيه ما يحب لنفسه

(بخاري)

I swear by the one in whose hands is my soul (Allah) that none of you will have (true Islamic) faith until you like for your Muslim brother what you like for yourself.

## THE RIGHTS OF THE HUMAN BEINGS

These days, the so-called civilized nations make tall claims of upholding the human rights. But in recent times, we have seen ruthless crimes against humanity being committed in places like Afghanistan, Chechnya and the Middle East. The irony is that there are 56 Muslim countries; they own a vast reserve of human and material resources. Most of the Muslim countries share borders among themselves. Peace and harmony would prevail on the Earth, if the leadership of these countries truly implemented the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). During his own lifetime, the Prophet had (ﷺ) implemented Islam as a complete way of life.

Allah (ﷻ) in the Quran says:

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

Speak fair to the people. [2:83]

This order refers to all human beings, not just the Muslims; the justice encompasses inviting them to Islam. In the Islamic teachings, justice to everyone is a basic human right.

Allah (ﷻ) says:

وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَا نُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ

And let not the hatred of others make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just; that is next to piety. [5:8]

He (ﷻ) also says:

وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا

And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive. [76:8]

Note that when the above verse of the Quran was revealed on Muhammad (ﷺ), most of the captives used to be non-Muslims.

The Prophet (ﷺ) ordered the Muslims to treat their captives from Battle of Badr with kindness. So the Muslims used to serve their captives the food which was better than what they ate themselves.

(تفسير عثماني)

In a Hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ), it is mentioned:

ارحموا من في الأرض يرحمكم من في السماء  
(مشكوة - ص 423 - أبو داؤد / ترمذي)

*Treat the ones on Earth well and the one in sky (Allah) will treat you well.*

And in another Hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

لا يؤمن أحدكم حتى يحب للناس ما يحب لنفسه  
(مسند احمد - ص 272 - ج 3)

*None of you can be a mo'min (a true Muslim) unless you love for the humans what you love for yourself.*

In above Hadith, no distinction is made among Muslims and non-Muslims.

Umar (رضي الله عنه), one of the Rightly Guided Caliphs once saw a blind beggar in a street. Umar (رضي الله عنه) brought the beggar home and gave him some money; he then started welfare payments for that person from the *bayt-ul-maal* (بيت المال/national treasury.)

(كتاب الخراج إمام أبو يوسف - ص 72 - سيرة النبي ص 173 ج 6)

Islam teaches Muslims to offer not only the *zakah* (the prescribed charity) but also other donations to the non-Muslims. According to a Hadith, the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) donated to a Jewish family. Safiah, the Prophet's wife (رضي الله عنها) gave away 30,000 Dirhams to her relative Jews in charity.

(سيرة النبي - ص 173 - ج 6)

## THE RIGHTS OF THE ANIMALS

Islam's message of love and kindness extends to animals as well. Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

ما من مسلم يغرس غرساً أو يزرع زرعاً فيأكل منه إنسانٌ أو طيرٌ أو بهيمةٌ إلا كانت له صدقة  
(مشكوة - باب فصل الصدقة - ص 168 - بخاري و مسلم)

*If from a Muslim's crops, a human being, a bird or an animal eats some, it becomes charitable donation on (the owner) Muslim's behalf.*

This means that benefiting both the humans and the animals is a source of reward for a Muslim.

In a Hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

غُفِرَ لامرأة مؤمنةٍ مَرَّتْ بِكَلْبٍ عَلَى رَأْسِ رَكِيٍّ يَلْهَثُ كَادَ يَقْتَلُهُ الْعَطَشُ فَنَزَعَتْ خَفَهَا فَأَوْثَقَتْهُ بِخِمَارِهَا فَنَزَعَتْ لَهُ مِنَ الْمَاءِ فَغَفَرَ لَهُ بِذَلِكَ قِيلَ إِنَّ لَنَا فِي الْبَهَائِمِ أَجْرًا قَالَ فِي كُلِّ ذَاتِ كَبِدٍ رَطْبَةٌ أَجْرٌ

(مشكوة - ص 168 - صحيحين)

*A sinful woman was forgiven; she once passed by a well besides which a dog was about to die of thirst. She took off her sock; used her head covering to hang it down the well; and soaked the sock. She then squeezed it to put water in the dog's mouth. Solely due to this act of kindness, she was blessed with forgiveness (from sins.)*

A similar story of saving a dying dog's life is mentioned in another Hadith.

(بخاري - ص 318 - باب فصل سقى الماء)

When the Prophet (ﷺ) was asked whether treating the animals also carried some reward, they were told that serving every living creature earned rewards. In another Hadith, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

من أحيا أرضاً ميتةً فله فيها أجر و ما أكلت العافية منه فهو له صدقة

(مشكوة - ص 169 - دارمي)

*Whosoever gives life to a dead piece of land (by growing plants in it) gets reward for doing so. And if someone hungry eats from the produce, it is charity on the grower's behalf.*

The hungry include people, birds and animals.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

عُذِّبَتْ إمرأة في هرة أمسكتها حتى ماتت من الجوع فلم تكن تطعمها و لا ترسلها فتاكل من خشاش الارض

(مشكوة - ص 168 - بخاري، مسلم)

*Punishment (in the Hereafter will be) was given to a woman who kept her cat confined until she died of hunger; she was neither fed by the woman, nor was she allowed to find the bugs to eat herself.*

In a Hadith, it is said the Prophet (ﷺ) once went to the orchard of an *ansari* (a Muslim sponsoring/helping the migrants of Makkah). The Prophet (ﷺ) there saw a tearful camel. He (ﷺ) patted the camel's forehead and asked who the owner of the camel was. One of the young *ansaris* who claimed the ownership was told by the Prophet (ﷺ), "Aren't you fearful of God who created you? This animal has complained to me that you starved it and you were cruel to it." It is the Mercy of Allah (ﷻ) that the Prophet (ﷺ) was able to perceive the animal's pain. The heart of a true Muslim is soft and is full of empathy.

The rights of the animals are that they are not burdened beyond their capabilities and that they are properly fed.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said:

انَّ لله مائة رحمة انزل منها رحمة واحدة بين الجنِّ و الانس و البهائم الهوامِّ فيها يتعاطفون و بها يتراحمون و بها

تعطف الوحش على ولدها و آخر الله تسعا و تسعين رحمة يرحم بها عباده يوم القيامة

(مشكوة - باب الاستغفار و التوبة و ما بعده - ص 207 - بخاري، مسلم)

*Allah (ﷻ) has 100 blessings; one of which He has bestowed upon the jinns, humans and animals (cattle, beasts, etc.) Due to this single blessing, the living creatures love*

each other; even the wild animals love their offspring. Allah (ﷻ) has reserved the other 99 blessings of His until the Hereafter; these blessings, He (ﷻ) will bestow upon the human beings on the Judgment Day.

The universe is limited in time and measure so it gets 1% share of Allah's blessings whereas the Hereafter is limitless; that's where Allah's (ﷻ) infinite blessings will appear. Note that the 99% figure is just to explain the concept; actually Allah's (ﷻ) mercy and blessings are immeasurable. There is a Hadith Qudsi about Allah's (ﷻ) blessings in the Hereafter:

أعددتُ لعبادي الصالحين ما لا عين رأت ولا أذن سمعت ولا خطر على قلب بشر

(مشكوة - باب صفة الجنة - 495 - بخاري، مسلم)

*I (Allah (ﷻ)) have prepared for my pious people the blessings that no eye has (fully) seen, no ear has heard of and no heart (mind) has come across.*

A Hadith of the Prophet (ﷺ) says:

*If a woman of the Paradise were to appear on this Earth, all of it would be filled with her fragrance.*

(مشكوة - ص 496 - صحيحين)

*A Paradise-dweller of the lowest rank will get the Paradise ten times the size of this Earth.*

(مشكوة - باب الحوض و الشفاعة - ص 492 - بخاري، مسلم)

According to another Hadith:

أدنى أهل الجنة الذي له ثمانون ألف خادم

(مشكوة - ص 499 - باب صفة الجنة - ترمذي)

*A Paradise-dweller of the lowest rank will get 80,000 servants.*