

Treatment of non-muslims

Friday Reminder (11th January 2008) delivered by Shaykh Muhammad Taher

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

O Muslims - let us take a look at the significance of the migration (Hijrah) by focusing upon the life of Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him (pbuh) before it.

The Prophet (pbuh) was born in Mecca in the most noble of households, and was from the most noble of lineages. He (pbuh) himself said, "I was born from the best (i.e. Quraish tribe) of the best (i.e. Kinana tribe) of the best (i.e. Khuzaimah tribe)"

Before reaching prophet-hood, the Prophet (pbuh) lived a normal life like other people did. The only distinguishing features were that he occupied himself with attaining the truth - both doing and encouraging good actions. He was the best of people in his manners and was the furthest away from doing bad deeds. He would be kind to his neighbours and when dealing with others. He would advise them regarding their ignorant practices and deeds with forbearance.

God the Almighty brought together many good and praiseworthy qualities in the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) including patience, forbearance, gratitude, justice, humility, modesty and bravery. He was known as 'Al-Ameen'- the trustworthy. People would leave things with him, with full confidence and trust in him.

One of the leaders of those who opposed the Prophet (pbuh) in Mecca called Nadar Ibn Al-Harith said: "Muhammad grew up amongst you; he was truthful in his speech, great in keeping his trusts, until he came to you in his later years (as a prophet) and you called him a magician! No by God, he is no magician."

When the Prophet (pbuh) saw Angel Gabriel and became afraid, Lady Khadija (RA) said, comforting him:

"By God, God shall never subject you to any indignity..., for you always maintain your ties with those of your kin, carry burdens of others, help the weak, you give to the poor, you are kind to [lit. 'cool the eyes of'] your guest and you lend your support to those who seek justice and redress".

In short, she reminded him that he (pbuh) always gave to people what they needed from him. So if these are your traits, your mannerisms, your qualities and way of dealing with people, God will never disappoint you or ever let harm afflict you!

[Even God testifies to] the great qualities all being drawn into one human being- in His saying "Surely, you have an elevated character" (Surah Qalam/the Pen 68:4)

O Muslims- God Almighty also says: "In the Messenger of God you have the best example, for those who hope for God, the Day of Judgment and remember God much" [Surah Ahzab 33:21]

Have you seen how the Prophet lived and behaved with people in Mecca? We know how the people of Mecca treated him and his companions- how they tortured, abused and harmed them, usurping their rights and oppressing them. Yet he and his companions did not use this as an excuse to inflict or encourage any harm in response.

But instead we have seen how the prophet's behaviour was despite others' harmful treatment of him - their lying & going against him. O Muslims, what do you think of the treatment for the one who doesn't harm you. How should you deal with the one that is good to you? How should you deal with the one who shares the same country as you? We hear in the following verses, God's view of justice when He says:

"God commands to justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps that you may remember" [Nahl 16:90]

"God does not forbid you - from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, God loves the those who act justly"
[Mumtahana 60:8]

"Is the reward of goodness, anything except goodness" [Surah arRahman 55:60]

Yes O Muslims, this is the truth, it is even-handedness (insaaf), it is justice (adl) - it is not permitted for a muslim to embody characteristics that are not praiseworthy. We are commanded in our religion to have good and noble manners with muslims and non muslims. And even if others do say harmful things, we should not say: 'there is no blame upon us concerning the unlearned' [Surah al-Imran 3:75] as the God advised it was incorrect of the people of the former scriptures to do so.

The prophet (pbuh) never deceived or betrayed anyone before he was sent as a prophet or after. He never harmed anyone that did him good before his prophethood or afterward. It is not befitting for us to even think of deceiving, betraying or harming others as though we are excused by their lack of belief. And likewise the noble companions that were nurtured in his care acted in the same way as the Prophet (pbuh). Remember always, the saying of the prophet (pbuh) that: "the muslim (the one who submits to God) is one whose hand and tongue people (and this is people in general not just muslims) are safe from."