

upon the guarantee of Allah, His Messenger (pbuh), and the religion of Islam. Whoever violates these obligations against any one of them by so much as an abusive word, by slandering his reputation, or by doing him some injury or assisting in it, has breached the guarantee of Allah, His Messenger (pbuh), and the religion of Islam."⁽¹⁾

And Ibn Hazm said,

"If the enemy of a *dhimmi* comes with his forces to take him, it is our obligation to fight this enemy with soldiers and weapons and to give our lives for him, thus honoring the guarantee of Allah and His Messenger (pbuh). To hand him over to the enemy would mean to dishonor this guarantee."⁽²⁾

Friendship with Non-Muslims

A question which troubles some people and which is sometimes discussed openly is the following: How can we show kindness, affection, and good treatment to non-Muslims when Allah (Glorified be He) Himself prohibits Muslims to take non-believers as friends, allies, or supporters in such verses as the following:

﴿O you who believe, do not take the Jews and Christians as friends; they are the friends (only) of each other. And whoever among you turns to them (for friendship) is certainly one of them; indeed, Allah does not guide the people who do wrong. Yet thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease racing toward them...﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 51-52)

The answer to this is that these verses are not unconditional, to be applied to every Jew, Christian, or non-Muslim. Interpreting them in this manner contradicts the injunctions of the Qur'an which enjoin affection and kindness to the good and peace-loving peoples of every religion and permit marriage to the women of the People of the Book, with all that Allah says concerning marriage *﴿... and He has put love and mercy between you﴾* (Ar-Rum: 21). Besides, Allah says concerning the Christians,

1. Al-Qarafi, *Al-Furuq*.

2. Ibn Hazm, *Maratib al-Ijma`*.

﴿... And thou wilt find those who say, 'Surely we are Christians' to be nearest to them (the Muslims) in affection...﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 82)⁽¹⁾

The verses cited above were revealed in connection with those people who were hostile to Islam and made war upon the Muslims. Accordingly, it is not permissible for the Muslim to support or assist them - that is, to be their ally - nor to entrust them with secrets at the expense of his own religion and community. This point is explained in other verses, in which Allah (Glorified be He) says,

﴿O ye who believe! Take not into your intimacy those outside your ranks: they will not fail to corrupt you. They only desire your ruin: rank hatred has already appeared from their mouths: what their hearts conceal is far worse. We have made plain to you the signs, if ye have wisdom. Ah! ye are those who love them, but they love you not...﴾

(Al `Imran: 118-119)

These two verses throw light on the character of such people, who conceal great enmity and hatred against the Muslims in their hearts and whose tongues express some of the effects of such hostility.

Allah (Glorified be He) also says,

﴿Thou wilt not find a people who believe in Allah and the Last Day loving those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they may be their fathers or their sons or their brothers or their kin...﴾

(Al-Mujadalah: 22)

Opposition to Allah is not merely disbelief but includes hostility toward Islam and Muslims.

Allah also says,

﴿O you who believe, do not take My enemy and your enemy as friends, offering them affection, even though they have disbelieved in what has come to you of the truth, driving out the Messenger and yourselves because you believe in Allah, your Lord...﴾

(Al-Mumtahanah: 1)

1. The terms "Masihī" (Christian) and "Masihīyah" (Christianity) do not appear in the Christian scriptures nor can they be attributed to Prophet `Isa (peace be upon him). The followers of Prophet `Isa were known as *Nasara* (helpers) and this is the word used in the Arabic text of the Qur'an. The name "Masihī" (Christian) was originally used by those who held the followers in contempt.

This verse was revealed in connection with the pagans of Makkah, who declared war on Allah and His Messenger (pbuh), driving the Muslims out of their homes simply because they said, "Our Lord is Allah". With this type of people, friendship and alliance cannot be permitted. Yet in spite of this, the Qur'an did not dismiss the hope that one day there might be a reconciliation; it did not declare utter disappointment in them but encouraged the Muslims to entertain the hope of better circumstances and improved relationship, for in the same *surah* Allah says,

﴿ It may be that Allah will bring about affection between you and those who are your enemies from among them. And Allah is All-Powerful, and Allah is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful. ﴾

(Al-Mumtahanah: 7)

This Qur'anic statement gives the assurance that this bitter hostility and deep hatred will pass away, as it is also stated in the *hadith*,

"Hate your enemy mildly; he may become your friend some day."⁽¹⁾

The Prohibition against befriending the enemies of Islam is even more emphatic when they are stronger than the Muslims, crushing hopes and generating fear in the minds of people. In such a situation, only hypocrites and those in whose hearts there is a disease hasten to befriend them, giving them help today in order to benefit from them tomorrow. Allah (Glorified be He) describes this situation as follows:

﴿ Yet thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease racing toward them (the enemies of Islam), saying, 'We are afraid that a change of fortune may befall us.' But it may be that Allah will give (thee) the victory or some decision from Himself, and then they will become regretful for what they thought secretly within themselves. ﴾

(Al-Ma'idah: 52)

And again,

﴿ Give to the hypocrites the tidings that they will have a grievous punishment. Do those who take the unbelievers as friends instead of

1. Narrated by At-Tirmidhi and Al-Bukhari. Al-Bayhaqi narrated it in *Shu'ab al-Iman* on the authority of Abu Hurayrah. As-Suyuti called it *hasan* transmitting the first part as "*Love your friend mildly; he may be your enemy some day*".

believers seek honor among them? For indeed all honor belongs to Allah alone. ﴿﴾

(An-Nisa': 138-139)

Seeking Help from Non-Muslims

There is no harm done if Muslims, at either the private or governmental level, seek help from non-Muslims in technical matters which have no connection with the religion - for example, in medicine, industry, or agriculture. At the same time it is of course extremely desirable that Muslims become self-sufficient in all such fields.

We see from the life of the Prophet (pbuh) that he employed `Abdullah ibn Urayqit, a polytheist, to be his guide on his emigration from Makkah to Madinah. Scholars have concluded from this that a person's unbelief does not mean that he is basically untrustworthy, for what could be more risky than depending on a guide to show the route, particularly in emigrating from Makkah to Madinah?

Going considerably beyond this, scholars say that it is permissible for the leader of the Muslims to seek help from non-Muslims, especially the People of the Book, in military matters, and to give them an equal share of spoils with the Muslims. Az-Zuhri reported that the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) sought help from some of the Jews in a war and gave them a share of the spoils, and that Safwan ibn Umayyah fought on the side of the Prophet (pbuh) while still an idolater.⁽¹⁾ The condition for seeking help from a non-Muslim is that he be trusted by the Muslims; otherwise, help may not be sought from him. Since it is prohibited to seek help from unreliable Muslims, such as those who spread rumors and anxieties, this is the more true in the case of non-believers.⁽²⁾

The Muslim is permitted to give gifts to non-Muslims and to accept gifts from them. It is sufficient here to mention that the Prophet (pbuh) accepted gifts from non-Muslim kings.⁽³⁾ Scholars of *Hadith* state that there are many *hadiths* which report that the Prophet (pbuh) accepted gifts from

1. Narrated by Sa`id in his *Sunan*.

2. *Al-Mughni*, vol. 8, p. 41.

3. Narrated by Muslim and At-Tirmidhi.

non-Muslims, and Umm Salamah, a wife of the Prophet, reported that the Prophet (pbuh) said to her, *"I have sent An-Najashi ⁽¹⁾ a robe and some silk."*⁽²⁾

Indeed, Islam respects a human being in general because he is human; how much the more then, if he is from the People of the Book or if he is a *dhimmi*? Once a funeral procession passed by the Prophet (pbuh) and he stood up. Thereupon someone remarked, "O Messenger of Allah, it is the funeral of a Jew." The Prophet (pbuh) replied, *"Was he not a soul?"*⁽³⁾

Thus, truly, in Islam every human being has a dignity and a place.

The Extension of Islam's Universal Mercy Even to Animals

The universal mercy of Islam embraces not only human beings, whether Muslims, People of the Book, or unbelievers, but all other living creatures of Allah as well. Accordingly, Islam prohibits cruelty against animals. Thirteen hundred years before any societies for the prevention of cruelty against animals were established, Islam made kindness towards animals a part of its faith and cruelty against them a sufficient reason for a person to be thrown into the Fire.

The Prophet (pbuh) related to his Companions the story of a man who found a dog panting with thirst. The man went down into a well, filled his shoes with water which he gave to the dog, and continued to do so until the dog's thirst was quenched. The Prophet (pbuh) said, *"Then Allah praised his (deed) by forgiving him (his sins)."* The Companions asked, "Is there a reward for us in relation to animals, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied *"There is a reward in (relation to) every living creature."*⁽⁴⁾

Side by side with this radiant picture of Allah's forgiveness and pleasure, the Prophet (pbuh) drew another picture depicting Allah's anger and punishment. He said,

"A woman was sent to the Fire because of a cat. She imprisoned it and neither fed it nor set it free to feed upon the rodents of the earth."⁽⁵⁾

1. The then ruler of Abyssinia who was Christian but secretly embraced Islam. (Translator)

2. Narrated by Ahmad and At-Tabarani.

3. Narrated by Al-Bukhari.

4. Narrated by Al-Bukhari.

5. Narrated by Al-Bukhari.