

Rights of Brotherhood in Islam

In the name of Allah the most Beneficent the Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, Sovereign of the worlds, we praise Him, seek His help and guidance and ask Him forgiveness; we seek refuge in Allah from the evils of ourselves, and our evil deeds. Whoever Allah guides no one can mislead and whoever Allah misleads no one can guide. I bear witness that there is no other god except Allah who has no partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) is His slave and messenger, and that he fulfilled his trust, conveyed the message and advised this nation and left it on the white straight right path whose night is like its day and whoever deviates from it will perish.

I invoke the grace and the blessings of Allah upon His prophet Muhammad, his family and companions and upon his followers until the Day of Reckoning . I recommend you and myself to fear Allah, so fear Him and obey Him as He the Exalted said: “And have provision for surely the best provision is piety, so fear Me O you who have reason.” (197-2)

Our topic this time is on rights of brotherhood in Islam. Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) said: “You will not enter Paradise until you have faith, and you will not have faith until you love each other. Shall I direct you to something which if you fulfill you will love one another? Spread peace among yourselves. (It was reported by Muslim).

1) In this tradition our beloved Prophet (P.B.U.H.) recommends that we should spread peace. This is fulfilled through many things: by saluting each other with the salutation of peace through saying peace be with you; by spreading a state of peace and not conflict, and by trying to spread peace in the society through reconciling our differences. This, in fact, is

the slogan of Islam, namely spreading peace. For indeed “Islam” means peace among other things, and this is the first right of brotherhood in Islam.

2) A Muslim should be smiling when he meets his brothers in faith. The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: “Don’t belittle any good deed even to meet your brothers with a smiling face. He also said: “Your smile in the face of your brothers is an act of charity.” That is why the Messenger (P.B.U.H.) had a smiling face all the time.

A man came to Abu Darda and said: “Guide me to do a good deed that would benefit other Muslims?” Abu Darda replied: “Command them to do good and forbid them from evil.” The man said: “I can’t.” Then Abu Darda said: “Repel evil from them.” The man said: “I can’t.” Then Abu Darda said: “Spend charity on them.” He again said: “I can’t.” then Abu Darda said: “Meet them with a smiling bright face.” The man however said: “I still can’t.” Fed up with what he heard, Abu Darda finally said: “Then may Allah smite you with a thunder bolt from Heaven by which He would make the land and the people get rid of you.

3) The third right of brotherhood in Islam is to love for one’s brothers what one loves for himself. Allah says in the Quran: “And believers are loyal to one another.” (71-9) Confirming this the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: “Each of you cannot be a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.”

Not only this but the early Muslims used to prefer their brothers over their own selves. That is why the Quran praised them in the following: “And they prefer (their brothers) over themselves even if they are hungry.” (9-59)

4) To avoid harming other Muslims by words or actions. As a matter of fact Islam forbids vain or evil talk. The Quran says: “Those who turn away from vain talk.” (3-23) The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) said: “The Muslim is he from whom people are safe from his tongue and hand (actions).

One day, Aisha, the Prophet’s wife heard some Jews in Medina offending the Prophet by greeting him

with the wish that poison would strike him. Getting angry at their offence she retorted: “And upon you be poison and curse O you children of apes and swine.” Hearing this the Prophet pacified her saying: “You should have said only, same be upon you also.” For the Muslim, he added is not an offender, nor a curser nor a mischief monger nor one who uses dirty language.

5) Humbleness and modesty: A Muslim should exercise humbleness and modesty in his dealing with other Muslims, nay even with all other people. That is why one precious piece of advice a pious father called Luqman gave to his son as the Quran reports is that: “Never turn your cheek to other people in arrogance.” (18-31) Describing believers the Quran also says: “They are hard on disbelievers but humble and modest towards believers” (54-5). In practice the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to be humble with all other people. It is reported that once a Bedouin met him; when he saw him he trembled in fear. Seeing this the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: “Calm down. I am only the son of a woman who used to eat dry meat in Makka (meaning a poor woman).

The Prophet (P.B.U.H.) used to tell his companions: “Don’t exaggerate in praising me, as Christians exceeded the limits in praising the Messiah son of Mary, for I am the slave and Messenger of Allah.” He also used to declare: “Whoever humbles himself to Allah, Allah will raise him (in respect) and He will not enter Paradise who has in his heart an atom’s weight of arrogance.”

6) To turn deaf ears to other people’s slandering of your brothers or sisters. This means the elimination of backbiting and slandering in the Muslim society. That is why the Messenger (P.B.U.H.) once passed by two graves. He stood in front of them and said: “They (the dead ones) are punished due to minor sins.” One of them used to spread calumny and slander among people. Thus Muslims are reminded that: “He who slanders others in front of you will eventually slander you.”

7) To do good to them all as best as you can. In this context Allah says in the Quran: “And cooperate with one another in all that is good and pious and

don't cooperate in sin and aggression." (2-5) The Messenger of Allah (P.B.U.H.) was asked: "Who is the dearest person to Allah?" He said: "Those who are most useful to (other) people." That is why in another tradition the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "And Allah will surely help the person as long as he helps his brother."

8) To treat them nicely and with best manners: In this connection Allah says about Prophet Muhammad: "And you are indeed of supreme conduct." (4-68) The Messenger of Allah, therefore says: "The most perfect believers are those who are best in conduct and who are nicest to their household." In another tradition the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "He is not one of us who does not respect the seniors among us and does not have mercy upon the juniors of us."

9) Don't boycott your brothers over three days: Allah says in the Quran: "Believers are indeed brothers so reconcile your brothers." (10-49) The Messenger of Allah also said: "Let not any one of you desert his brother more than three days." They meet and each of them turns away from the other; but the best of the two is the one who starts with the salutation of peace. In another tradition the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) said: "Don't exchange hatred, envy or boycotting for every Muslim is a brother to other Muslims. Thus he should not wrong him, nor surrender him, whoever walks to fulfil the needs of other Muslims Allah will attend to his needs."

10) Not to enter upon a Muslim his house without his permission. Allah says in the Quran: "O you who believe enter not houses other than your own without first announcing your presence and invoking peace upon their folk; that is better for you so that you may be pious." (37-24)

11) To acknowledge the rights of scholars among them by showing respect and grant honour to them.

12) Fulfilling one's promise to them.

13) To settle the rights of other Muslims and to return to them whatever has been taken from them without right.

14) To grant to other Muslims the status they deserve, and acknowledge their prestige.

15) To reconcile the differences among Muslims and to restore harmony.

16) To hide their shame and to conceal their weaknesses.

17) To preserve their wealth and honour.

18) To say God bless you to any one who sneezes.

19) To avoid mingling with the evil mongers among them.

20) To visit the sick Muslims. For there is a sacred tradition in which Allah says to his slaves on the Day of Judgement: "My slave I was sick and yet you did not visit me?" The slave would exclaim: "How can I visit you when you are the Lord of the worlds?" Allah would answer: "Did you not know that my slave so and so fell ill; don't you know that had you visited him you would find that with me?"

21) To attend funeral prayer and to follow a funeral to the grave.

22) Visiting graves of Muslims and invoking Allah's mercy upon them.

These are the main rights of Muslim Brotherhood.

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MWL SERIES ON ISLAM
NO. 21

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