

Jum'a Khutbah, Makkah

All praise is due to Allaah. May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, his household and companions.

Fellow Muslims! Fear Allaah and take lessons from those who have gone before you. They have been taken away by death and you will certainly follow them. Allaah says, “Have they not travelled through the land, and have they hearts wherewith to understand and ears wherewith to hear? Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind.” (Al-Hajj 22:46)

Dear Muslims! Mankind are in need of mercy of the Merciful Lord as they are in need of love and compassion. They are in need of a forbearing one who can tolerate their ignorance and weakness. They are in need of a big heart that can give and not take, and that can alleviate their distress and sorrow and not add to it.

Indeed, apathy relegates man to the position of animal or makes him look like a lifeless tool or stone. Man is distinguished from other things by his heart and soul and not only by his flesh and bone. It is by soul and heart that he feels, reacts, shows compassion and feels pains. Mercy is a perfect quality in the human nature that makes man feel the pain of others and makes him try to remove that pain, as it makes him overlook people's faults, wish for their guidance and excuse them. Compassion is a manifestation of a perfect nature and good manners that makes man act righteously and sees him through the crises. The Messenger of Allaah said, “Allaah makes mercy one hundred parts. He revealed a part thereof to the earth. It is by this single part that the creatures show compassion among themselves, that is why you see an animal raises up its hoof so as not to harm its young.”

Mercifulness is an attribute of our Lord that befits His Majesty and does not resemble that of His creatures in any way. He is the Most-Merciful of those who show mercy and his mercy encompasses everything. The angels of mercy, while invoking for the believers, praise their Lord by this great attribute. They say,

“Our Lord, You comprehend all things in mercy and knowledge. So, forgive those who repent and follow Your way and save them from the torment of the blazing fire.” (Ghaafir 40:7)

Umar said: Some captives were brought to the Messenger of Allaah and there was a woman among them whose breasts were full of milk. Suddenly, this woman saw an infant in the midst of the captives. She took hold of it, brought it into her bosom and started suckling it. The Prophet then told the companions, “Do you think that this woman would throw her child in the fire?” We said, “No, By Allaah she would not, if she is able not to.” He then said, “Allaah the Exalted is more merciful with His slave than this woman with her child.” (Al-Bukhaaree)

Brethren in Faith! Allaah's mercy is the link between Him and His slaves. It is out of His mercy that He sent Messengers and revealed Books to them. It is also by His mercy that He will reward those who believe and do good deeds. Allaah says,

“O mankind! There has come to you a good advice from your Lord and a healing for that (disease) which is in your breasts – a guidance and a mercy for the believers.” (Yoonus 10:57)

The rightly guided believers get mercy in accordance with their guidance. The more a slave is guided, the more his portion of Allaah's mercy will be. It is through mercy that Allaah ordained commandments and prohibitions and created undesirables in this world so that man would not rely on the pleasure of this life but rather seek for the bliss of the Hereafter. He sent His Prophet Muhammad as a mercy to mankind and He says,

“And We have sent you not (O Muhammad) but as a mercy for the worlds.” (Al-Anbiyaa 21:107)

Allaah sent him with a knowledgeable and kind heart; a good conduct, compassionate nature and generous hand. He is the most compassionate of Allaah's slaves and most patient. Allaah says about him,

“And by the mercy of Allaah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you.” (Aal ‘Imraan 3:159)

Islaam is also a message of blessing, peace and mercy for all mankind. Islaam calls unto mutual compassion and makes that a sign of faith. When a compassionate and good-hearted Muslim meets people, he becomes generous with them and strives to alleviate their sufferings. The Messenger of Allaah said, “You can never be (true) believers until you show mercy to one another.” The companions said, “We all show mercy, O Messenger of Allaah!” The Prophet replied, “It is not the compassion that anyone of you shows to his friend. It is the compassion and mercy that you show to the people in general.” (At-Tabaraanee)

You are not required to show mercy to your acquaintances only but to the generality of people and the sayings of the Prophet shows this. He said in one of these sayings, “Allaah does not show mercy to him who does not show mercy to people.” (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Ibn Battaal said, "This hadeeth encourages showing mercy to all creatures including the believer, the unbeliever, the animals, the slaves and others. It also includes feeding the needy, assisting others to carry their loads and not oppressing others by even beating."

Fellow Muslims! Allaah's mercy is sought through obeying Him and His Messenger and standing firm on the matter of Islaam. Allaah says, "And obey Allaah and the Messenger that you may attain mercy." (Al-Imraan 3:132)

It is also sought through the fear of Allaah, He says, "And fear Allaah that you may receive mercy." (Al-Hujuraat 49:10)

Mercy can also be attained through observance of prayers, paying Zakaah, enjoining good and forbidding evil. Allaah says, "The believers, men and women are supporters of one another; they enjoin (on the people) all that is good and forbid all that is evil; they perform prayer, give the zakaat and obey Allaah and His Messenger. Allaah will have mercy on them. Surely, Allaah is All-Mighty, All-Wise." (At-Tawbah 9:71)

Man, because of his sins and shortcomings, is in need of Allaah's mercy. Allah says, "Why seek you not the forgiveness of Allaah that you may receive mercy." (An-Naml 27:46)

Also, one of the major causes of Allaah's mercy is to show mercy to His slaves. The Prophet said, "Those who show mercy to their fellow beings will be shown mercy by the Merciful Lord. So, show mercy to those on the earth, He Who is in the heaven will show mercy to you." (At-Tirmidhee)

It is for this reason that a believer who is strong in his faith is distinguished by kind-heartedness. He has compassion for the distressed and the poor, aids the wronged and hates crimes. He is always a source of good and peace for those around him.

Fellow Muslims! Since this is so, one's parents are the most deserving of one's mercy. Being kind to them brings mercy and happiness. They are followed by one's children. Usaamah bin Zayd said, "The Messenger of Allaah would sit me on his thigh and sit Al-Hasan on his other thigh and then say: O my Lord, I am compassionate with them, so show mercy to them." (Al-Bukhaaree)

There are however some people whose hearts are devoid of compassion and are harsh in their behaviour and words. The Messenger of Allaah once kissed Al-Hasan and Al-Husayn in the presence of Al-'Aqra bin Aabis. Al-'Aqra said, "I have ten children and I have never kissed any of them." The Prophet then looked at him and said, "He, that does not show mercy to others will not be shown mercy." (Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

The rights of kith and kin are also connected with those of the parents. The Messenger of Allaah said, "Bond of kinship is a branch of mercy, so whoever maintains it, Allaah protects him and whoever severs it, Allaah will cut him off." A Muslim should not cut his relationship with his relatives by not assisting them or commiserating with them in times of hardship. Surely, harshness and severing the bond of kinship deprive one of Allaah's blessings and favour and expose one to His wrath.

Among acts that bring mercy are treating servants and employees in the best possible way, being gentle with them and over-looking their shortcomings. One should not maltreat them, force them to do what they cannot or laugh at them. For, when Allaah gives one an authority over something and misuses it, He withdraws it and that can lead him to undesirable ending. Anas bin Maalik said, "I served the Messenger of Allaah for ten years and he never rebuked me once or told me about something that I did: Why did you do that? or something I did not do: Why did you leave that?" (Muslim)

In another Hadeeth, a man came to the Prophet and asked him: How many times should I overlook the errors of my servant? The Prophet replied: "70 times in a day." (Abu Daawood)

There are however some heartless and cruel people who exploit the weakness of the servants and inflict all kinds of harm on them. It is about these people that the Prophet said, "Whoever beats a person with a whip wrongfully, revenge will be taken on him on the Day of Resurrection."

Taking care of the sick and the disabled also brings mercy, for they live an incomplete life and are unable to achieve their aims because of their conditions. We should therefore, be gentle with them and beware of harming them. Cruelty in dealing with them is a great sin for Allaah says,

"No blame is there upon the blind nor is there blame or sin upon the lame, nor is there blame or sin upon the sick." (Al-Fath 48:17)

As for the children, they are also in need of special care and compassion. The Messenger of Allaah said, "He who does not show compassion to our young ones or recognizes the honour of our elderly ones is not of us." (Ahmad and Tirmidhee)

Brethren in Faith! Islaamic injunctions and teachings pertaining to showing compassion do not restrict it to fellow human beings alone but commands that we extend it to animals as well. Paradise was opened for a whore who fed a dog with water and her sins were forgiven while conversely, a woman was made to enter the Fire for her detention of a cat with no food until it died.

If showing mercy to a dog could remove the sins of a whore, then showing mercy to mankind should perform wonders. Conversely, if detaining a cat could earn a woman Hellfire, then how much more could wrongful detention of innocent human beings earn!

Islaam also takes care of animals even to the point of slaughtering. The Prophet said, "Allaah prescribes kindness in everything: when you kill an animal, kill it with kindness and when you slaughter an animal, slaughter it with kindness. Let the slaughterer amongst you sharpen his knife and give his slaughtered animal the least pain."

Fellow Muslims! Mutual showing of mercy fosters unity as excessive fun weakens the hearts and does not let one feel the pain of others and their distress. A man came to the Messenger of Allaah complaining about his hard heart. The Prophet told him: "Do you want to soften your heart? Show mercy to the orphans, rub your hand on his head in compassion and feed him from your food, your heart will become soft." It is only from the heart of the unfortunate one that mercy is removed. Allaah said,

"Is it they who would portion out the mercy of your Lord? It is We Who portion out their livelihood in this world, and We raise some of them above others in rank, so that some may employ others in their work. But the Mercy of your Lord is better than the (wealth of this world) which they amass." (Az-Zukhruf 43:32)

Brethren in Faith! Mercy is not mere affection with no compassion, sense of justice and orderliness. It is rather a quality that recognizes the rights of all. When a doctor performs surgery or amputates the limb of a sick person, he only does that for the greater benefit of the sick and out of compassion for him and in order to get him healed. So is the implementation of Islaamic legal punishments that aims at stopping the insolent fellows from continuing in their shameless acts and force them to follow the right course. This is mercy in its actual sense. Allaah says,

"And there is a (saving of) life for you in the Law of Equality in punishment, O men of understanding, that you may become pious." (Al-Baqarah 2:179)

Showing compassion to the criminals is major act of cruelty to the whole society and encouragement for the criminals to continue their shameless acts. That is why the Qur'aan calls this kind of compassion a pity and does not call it mercy. Allaah says, "Let not pity withhold you in their case, in a punishment prescribed by Allaah." (An-Noor 24:2)

The sternness that Islaam abhors is the one that does not help in actualizing justice or preventing evil deeds but which is mere harshness that emanates from perverted manner or whimsical desires.

One may however wonder how can a Muslim be stern with the disbelievers while conversely being compassionate to believers as shown in this verse, "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah. And those who are with him are severe against disbelievers and merciful among themselves." (Al-Fath 48:29)

The fact of the matter is that, Islaam came with comprehensive mercy that excludes no man or animal. But there are some men and animals that pose danger and terror to the whole mankind. Therefore, it is in the interest of mankind to stop the evils of those men and animals as a token of compassion for them and for the rest of the creation.

Islaam is a message of peace, blessing and mercy for all the worlds, but there are some creatures who would not let the world have this peace and mercy. It then becomes inevitable to stop those creatures and prevent them from disturbing the peace of other creatures. Allaah says,

"My Mercy embraces all things. That (mercy) I shall ordain for those who are pious and give Zakaah and those who believe in Our signs. Those who follow the Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (i.e. Muhammad)" (Al-A'raaf 7:157)