

Fruits for the Week

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MERCY OF ALLAH (*RAHMATULLAH*)

Allah (SWT) says: “*We sent thee not, but as a mercy for all creatures.*” (Al-Anbiya: 107)

The Qur’an tells us that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was sent to the world to teach the ways of mercy and compassion. According to one of the Prophet (SAW)’s sayings (*hadith*), related in the *Sahih* of Imam Muslim, “*Allah has a hundred mercies, one of which He has sent down amongst jinn and men and cattle and beasts of prey. With this they are kind and merciful to one another and the wild creature inclines to tenderness to her offspring. The remaining ninety-nine mercies have been reserved by Allah Himself, so that He may show mercy to His servants on the Day of Resurrection.*”

This *hadith* is quite specific about the importance of mercy in the eyes of Allah (SWT) who is All-Merciful. All of Allah (SWT)’s creation is, in fact, an expression of divine mercy. And it is this self-same virtue that Allah (SWT) desires to see in the hearts of human beings. According to another *hadith*, the Prophet (SAW) said: “*Be merciful to people on earth and Allah on high will be merciful to you.*”

This is the basis of a divine code of ethics in accordance with which man too should have feelings of well-wishing and compassion to others. Everyone should look with sympathy for his fellow men and remain sensitive to their needs. The relation of one man to another should be that of love and people should consider it a matter of the greatest good fortune that they are able to serve others. According to an *hadith qudsi*, Allah (SWT) says: “*My mercy prevails over my anger.*” Man would do well to adopt this divine ethics. That is, in social interaction, when one has an unpleasant

experience with another, he should not permit his feelings of anger and revenge to be aroused. What, ideally, he should do is allow his sense of mercy to prevail over his ire. He would thus refrain from taking any step towards injuring others.

The culture desired by Allah (SWT) in human society being that of mercy (*rahmat*), the spirit of tolerance should be predominant in all aspects of human behaviour. People have a feeling of mercy in their hearts for one another which should manifest itself at all times in their conversations and transactions. This culture of *rahmat* approved by Allah (SWT) is not limited only to human beings, but extends also to the animal world. We must be equally sympathetic to animals. The *hadith* gives us so many guidelines on how to look after animals and treat them with fairness. These are duties laid down by Allah (SWT). One who is cruel to animals risks depriving himself of Allah (SWT)’s mercy. One incident concerned a woman who although not religious, took pity on a dog she found lying on the ground, dying of thirst. There was a well nearby, but she had nothing with which to draw water from it. Then she thought of her shawl. She lowered this into the well, then squeezed the water which it soaked up into the mouth of the dog. She continued to do so until its thirst was quenched. The animal’s life was thus saved. Allah (SWT) was so pleased with this human gesture of mercy that He decreed that she should enter paradise. Wallahu A’lam.

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