



Tolerance

Embracing Diversity

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ALLAH TELLS US IN THE QUR'AN

O mankind! We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another.
(Surah Al Hujurat 49:13)



MEANING OF TOLERANCE IN THE LANGUAGE

It comes from the root (سمح) which is ease or someone who's approving of what I want from him.

MEANING OF TOLERANCE IN THE RELIGION

It has two meanings:

First

To do something without reminding of being a favor

Second

Tolerance in dealing with others which includes making matters easy for them and without being dominating.



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LET US LOOK AT SOME AYAT ABOUT TOLERANCE FROM THE QUR'AN

Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish (i.e. don't punish them). [Al A'raaf:199]

This ayah is inclusive of good manners towards all people, which includes dealing with them in goodness by taking whatever is shown from them and to overlook their shortcomings.



Pardoning calls for the one showing it to be tolerant and merciful. The heart which is imprinted on tolerance and mercy is closer to taqwa than the heart which is hardened and harsh.

Allah prohibited His Messenger (ﷺ) from being coarse and harsh hearted. As Allah says:

And by the Mercy of Allah, you dealt with them gently. And had you been severe and harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about you; so pass over (their faults), and ask (Allah's) Forgiveness for them; and consult them in the affairs. Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him). [Ale Imran:159]

By Allah's mercy upon you O Prophet (ﷺ) and your Companions, Allah bestowed His favor upon you to be lenient towards them and lower your wings to them. So you became gentle with them and showed them the best manners. Thus they gathered with you, loved you and followed your commands. And if you were rude and hard hearted then they would have turned away because that will cause them to drive away and hate anyone who holds this evil character.



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And if the debtor is in a hard time (has no money), then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay, but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know. [Al Baqarah:280]



In this ayah, Allah addresses the creditors (those who are owed money) to be easy upon the debtors (those who owe money). Allah teaches them to be tolerant and to overlook.

There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower. [Al Baqarah:256]

LET US LOOK AT SOME AHADITH ABOUT TOLERANCE FROM THE PROPHET (ﷺ)

عن جابر بن عبد الله، رضي الله عنهما أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: ((رَحِمَ اللَّهُ رَجُلًا سَمَحًا إِذَا بَاعَ، وَإِذَا اشْتَرَى، وَإِذَا اقْتَضَى))

Jabir (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "May Allah show mercy to a man who adopts a kind attitude when he sells, buys and demands for the repayment of loans." [Al-Bukhari Book 12, Hadith 1368]

وعن عبد الله بن مسعود رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ألا أخبركم بمن يحرم على النار أو بمن تحرم عليه النار؟ على كل قريب هين سهل

'Abdullah bin Mas'ud narrated that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"Shall I not inform you of whom the Fire is unlawful and he is unlawful for the Fire? Every person who is near (to people), amicable, and easy (to deal with)."

[Sahih At Targheeb 1744, Authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih]

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وعن أبي موسى الأشعري رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: إنَّ الله خلق آدم من قبضة قبضها من جميع الأرض، فجاء بنو آدم على قدر الأرض، جاء منهم الأحمر، والأبيض، والأسود، وبين ذلك، والسهل، والحزن، والخبيث، والطيب.

Narrated Abu Musa Al-Ash'ari: that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Indeed Allah Most High created Adam from a handful that He took from all of the earth. So the children of Adam come in according with the earth, some of them come red, and white and black, and between that, and the easy, the aggressive, the unpleasant, and the good." [At Tirmidhi 2955, Authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih]

Here we find four outer and inner descriptions. And the meaning of 'easy' is to be gentle and lenient. And the 'sadly' is the one who's aggressive and violent. And the 'good' who is beneficial to all and the 'unpleasant' who is harmful to all.



The tolerant self is like the good, flat land. All that's needed from it is good. If you want to cross it then it's easy, and if you want to farm and harvest it then it's gentle, and if you want to build on it then it's doable, and if you want to sleep on it then it's relaxing. And thus is the similitude of the believer.

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TOLERANCE OF ISLAM

Islam calls on all Muslims to adorn themselves with the quality of tolerance. Tolerance is from the qualities of Islam which includes Allah's pardoning and His forgiveness towards the sinning slaves. It also includes His forbearance upon His slaves and ease of the Islamic legislation upon them. It also includes reducing burdens on them, and forbidding them from exaggeration and extremism in the religion.



Allah intends for you ease, and He does not want to make things difficult for you.

[Al Baqarah:185]

Allah does not want to place you in difficulty, but He wants to purify you, and to complete His Favour on you that you may be thankful. [Al Maeda:6]

Allah wishes to lighten (the burden) for you; and man was created weak (cannot be patient to leave sexual intercourse with woman). [An Nisa:28]

- قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: إِنَّ الدِّينَ يَسْرُ، وَلَنْ يَشَادَّ الدِّينَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا غَلَبَهُ، فَسَدِّدُوا وَقَارِبُوا وَأَبْشُرُوا، وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِالْغَدْوَةِ، وَالرَّوْحَةِ، وَشَيْءٍ مِنَ الدَّلْجَةِ

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "The religion (of Islam) is easy, and whoever makes the religion a rigour, it will overpower him. So, follow a middle course (in worship); if you can't do this, do something near to it and give glad tidings and seek help (of Allah) at morn and at dusk and some part of night". [Al-Bukhari Book 1, Hadith 145].

The Prophet (ﷺ) forbade disobedience and extremism in the religion.

فعن عبد الله بن مسعود رضي الله عنه قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: هلك المتنطعون قالها ثلاثاً.

'Abd Allah b. Mas'ud reported the Prophet (ﷺ) as saying: "May the extremists be perished," saying it three times. [Sunan Abi Dawud 4608].

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The Prophet (ﷺ) even supplicated against the one who makes things difficult on the Muslims.

فقال: اللهم من ولي من أمر أمتي شيئاً فشقَّ عليهم، فاشقق عليه، ومن ولي من أمر أمتي شيئاً فرفق بهم، فارفق به.

'Aishah (May Allah be pleased with her) reported:

I heard the the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) supplicating in my house: "O Allah! Treat harshly those who rule over my Ummah with harshness, and treat gently those who rule over my Ummah with gentleness." [Sahih Aj Jamie 1312, Authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih].

He also commanded Muslims to ease the burdens on one another and not make matters of the religion difficult.

فعن أبي مسعود رضي الله عنه، قال: أتى رجلُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فقال: إني لأتأخر عن صلاة الغداة من أجل فلان مما يطيل بنا، قال: فما رأيت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قط أشد غضباً في موعظة منه يومئذ، قال: فقال: يا أيها النَّاسُ إِنَّ مِنْكُمْ مَنْفَرِينَ، فَأَيُّكُمْ ما صلى بالنَّاسِ فليتجوَّزْ، فَإِنَّ فِيهِمُ الْمَرِيضَ، وَالْكَبِيرَ، وَذَا الْحَاجَةَ.

A man came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said "I keep away from the morning prayer only because such and such person prolongs the prayer when he leads us in it. The narrator added: I had never seen Allah's Messenger more furious in giving advice than he was on that day. He said, "O people! There are some among you who make others dislike good deeds cause the others to have aversion (to congregational prayers). Beware! Whoever among you leads the people in prayer should not prolong it, because among them there are the sick, the old, and the needy." [Sahih al-Bukhari 6110]

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BENEFITS OF BEING TOLERANT



The one who's tolerant is able to live a good and happy life because by his tolerance he is able to quickly adapt to situations in his environment. Even if it's something which he dislikes.



He's able to accept decrees with pleasure and submission, no matter how much he might dislike it.



The one who's tolerant is loved and trusted by the people because he's easygoing with them and overlooks their shortcomings. If he's called to advising someone then he does it with gentleness and ease, without wanting any kind of exposure. He's the one to close gaps and not spread slips or cause cracks.



He's also tolerant in his financial dealings with others. If he sells then he's easy going and if he buys then he's easy going. If he judges then he's tolerant and if a ruling is called on him then he's also tolerant.



The tolerant person attracts much goodness in this worldly life since people like to deal with the one who's lenient. They end up loving and trusting him.



The tolerant person also gains Allah's pleasure and much goodness in the hereafter.



He is loved by Allah, His Messenger (ﷺ) and the angels.



A tolerant person is loved by his family and community.



Tolerance in buying and selling is a great door to attain provision and to increase it.



Tolerance leads to ease of affairs in all matters.



With tolerance a person can attain happiness and a good life.



Tolerance in dealing with people of other religions leads them to have security and rest. This will make them love those who are tolerant and to enter Islam which is based on tolerance of others.

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DEPICTIONS OF TOLERANCE



Tolerance in dealing with others:

A person shouldn't be harsh in dealing with others, especially to those who are serving you.

فعن أنس رضي الله عنه قال: خدمتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ عشرَ سنين، فما قال لي: أف، ولا: لم صنعت؟ ولا: ألا صنعت؟

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: that "I served the Prophet (ﷺ) for ten years. He never said Uff and never blamed me by saying: 'Why did you do so' or why did you not do so?'. [Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2015]



Tolerance in buying and selling:

The one selling should not be overly profiting but should be generous, and the one buying should be easy going and not go deep into small differences in price. He should especially be generous if the one selling is poor and needy.



Tolerance in fulfilling the needs of others:

The one who eases the affairs and distresses of others then Allah will make his affairs easy in this life and the next.

فعن أبي هريرة رضي الله عنه أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: من نَفَسَ عن مؤمن كربة من كرب الدنيا، نفس الله عنه كربة من كرب يوم القيامة، ومن يَسِّرَ على معسر، يَسِّرَ الله عليه في الدنيا والآخرة، ومن ستر مسلماً، ستره الله في الدنيا والآخرة، والله في عون العبد ما كان العبد في عون أخيه.

Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) as saying: He who alleviates the suffering of a brother out of the sufferings of the world, Allah would alleviate his suffering from the sufferings of the Day of Resurrection, and he who finds relief for one who is hard-pressed, Allah would make things easy for him in the Hereafter, and he who conceals (the faults) of a Muslim, Allah would conceal his faults in the world and in the Hereafter. Allah is at the back of a servant so long as the servant is at the back of his brother. [Sahih Muslim 2699]

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Tolerance towards those who are indebted:

And if the debtor is in a hard time (has no money), then grant him time till it is easy for him to repay, but if you remit it by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know. [Al Baqarah:280]

If the one indebted is facing difficulties then one should consider covering his debt fully, partially or dropping it and this is from the tolerance of a person. The one who's owed money should not demand for his money harshly or in front of the people.

MEANS TO ATTAIN THE QUALITY OF TOLERANCE



To look forward to the benefits and blessings which Allah promised to those who adorn themselves with this quality. And to look forward to the happiness they will attain in this life and the next.

To beware of Allah's warning to those who are harsh, extreme and make things difficult. And to beware of the harms and losses they will acquire in this life and the next.

TOLERANCE OF THE PROPHET (ﷺ)

The Prophet (ﷺ) was tolerant in his dealings and he is the perfect role model in tolerance.

أنس رضي الله عنه ما لاقاه من النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم من حسن المعاملة فيقول: ((خدمتُ النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم عشر سنين، فما قال لي: أف، ولا: لم صنعت؟ ولا: ألا صنعت؟

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: that "I served the Prophet (ﷺ) for ten years. He never said Uff and never blamed me by saying: 'Why did you do so' or why did you not do so?'. [Jami` at-Tirmidhi 2015]

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He was the best-mannered of all people.

And verily, you (O Muhammad ﷺ) are on an exalted standard of character. [Al Qalam: 4]

He was tolerant in fulfilling the needs of others, even if they were servants.

فعن أنس رضي الله عنه قال: إن كانت الأمة من إماء أهل المدينة لتأخذ بيد رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فتنتطق به حيث شاءت

Anas bin Malik said, "Any of the female slaves of Medina could take hold of the hand of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and take him wherever she wished."

[Sahih al-Bukhari 6072]

And from his tolerance is his pardoning towards those who wanted to kill him.

فعن جابر رضي الله عنه أنه غزا مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قبَل نجد، فلما قفل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قفل معهم فأدركتهم القائلة في واد كثير العضاة، فنزل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وتفرق الناس يستظلون بالشجر، ونزل رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تحت سمرة، فعلق بها سيفه، ومنا نومة، فإذا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يدعوننا، وإذا عنده أعرابي فقال: إن هذا اخترط عليَّ سيفي وأنا نائم، فاستيقظت وهو في يده صلتاً قال: من يمنعك مني؟ قلت: الله ثلاثاً، ولم يعاقبه وجلس

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and the people dismounted and dispersed to rest in the shade of the trees. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) rested under a tree and hung his sword on it. We all took a nap and suddenly we heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) calling us. (We woke up) to see a bedouin with him. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "This bedouin took out my sword while I was sleeping and when I woke up, I found the unsheathed sword in his hand and he challenged me saying, 'Who will save you from me?' I said thrice, 'Allah.' The Prophet (ﷺ) did not punish him but sat down. [Sahih Al Bukhari 2910]

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And from his tolerance is his dealing with the Bedouin who took him strongly by the neck demanding to be given something.

عن أنس رضي الله عنه قال: كنت أمشي مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وعليه برد نجراني غليظ الحاشية، فأدركه أعرابي، فجبذه بردائه جبذة شديدة، ورجع نبي الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في نحر الأعرابي، حتى نظرت إلى صفحة عاتق رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قد أثرت بها حاشية البرد من شدة جبذته، ثم قال: يا محمد مر لي من مال الله الذي عندك، فالتفت إليه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، ثم ضحك، ثم أمر له بعتاء.

Anas (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: I was walking with Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) who was wearing a Najrani cloak with a very thick border when a bedouin happened to meet him. He took hold of the side of his cloak and drew it violently. I noticed that the violence of jerk had bruised the neck of Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). The bedouin said: "O Muhammad! Give me out of Allah's wealth that you possess." The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) turned to him and smiled and directed that he should be given something.

[Al-Bukhari 5809].

TOLERANCE OF THE RIGHTEOUS PREDECESSORS TOWARDS NON-MUSLIMS

One of the Companions slaughtered a sheep and gifted some to his Jewish neighbor. When asked, 'did you gift your Jewish neighbor?'. He said, 'I heard the Prophet (ﷺ) saying: 'Gabriel impressed upon me (the kind treatment) towards the neighbour (so much) that I thought as if he would order me to make them my heirs.' - Sahih Muslim 2625

During the reign of one of the Companions, he said to give from the communal money of the Muslims to any non-Muslim who was old in age, weak in strength and was unable to work.



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SIGNS OF A TOLERANT PERSON



CHEERFUL FACE

He is receiving people with goodness, joining them in listening to them, in thinking and heart. Such a person is loved by the people, holds a dear affinity to them and is near to their hearts.

The Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized this character in his speech and actions.

عن جابر رضي الله عنه، إذ قال: قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: ((كل معروف صدقة، وإنَّ من المعروف أن تلقى أخاك بوجه طلق، وأن تفرغ من دلوك في إناء أخيك.

Jabir reported that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Every act of kindness is a charity. Part of kindness is that you offer your brother a cheerful face and you pour some of your bottle of water into his water vessel." [Sahih At Targheeb 2684, Authenticated by Al Albani as Sahih]

Such a person is not like the one who's harsh and hard, who's not happy to meet others. If he's gathered with others, he's out of touch, as if he's strange to them and they're strange to him. This makes him hated and distant from the hearts of the people.



INITIATING IN GREETING THE PEOPLE WITH SALAM AND GOOD TALK

Whoever is tolerant will initiate these actions and the one who's inclined to this shows he's easygoing and gentle. He's loving and not rude or harsh.



GOOD COMPANION AND NOT EXTREME IN MATTERS

Whoever is tolerant is easygoing with his companions, family, children, helpers and all whom he mixes with and is in charge of. The one who's tolerant is not the one to take people into account. He overlooks, is not extreme and does not make the small things a big deal. Rather he gives excuses for those who don't give him his full rights or show him the respect and service he truly deserves.



مركز السلام الإسلامي

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