

Principles and guidelines for Muslims' relations with non-Muslims

We want to know in detail how Muslims regard non-Muslims, and how they should deal with them according to Islamic sharee'ah?



Praise be to Allaah.

1- Islam is the religion of mercy and justice.

2- Muslims are commanded to call non-Muslims to Islam with wisdom and beautiful preaching and by debating in a manner that is better. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And argue not with the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians), unless it be in (a way) that is better (with good words and in good manner, inviting them to Islamic Monotheism with His Verses), except with such of them as do wrong”

[al-'Ankaboot 29:46]

3- Allaah does not accept any religion other than Islam. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers”

[Aal 'Imraan 3:85]

4- The Muslims should give the kaafirs the opportunity to hear the words of Allaah. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And if anyone of the Mushrikoon (polytheists, idolaters, pagans, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allaah) seeks your protection then grant him protection so that he may hear the Word of Allaah (the Qur'aan) and then escort him to where he can be secure”

[al-Tawbah 9:6]

5- The Muslims should differentiate between different kinds of kaafirs in their dealings with them. They should make peace with those who make peace, and wage war against those who wage war, and wage jihad against those who stand in the way of spreading the message of Islam and causing it to prevail of earth.

6- With regard to matters of love and hate in the heart, the Muslims' attitude towards non-Muslims is based on the latter's attitude towards Allaah. If they worship Allaah and do not associate anything in worship with Him, then they love them. If they associate others in worship with Him, or disbelieve in Him, or worship others alongside Him, or are hostile towards His religion and hate the truth, then it is obligatory to hate them in our hearts.

7- Hating them in our hearts does not mean that we should oppress or mistreat them under any circumstances, because Allaah said to His Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon

him), describing what his attitude should be towards the People of the Book:

“and I am commanded to do justice among you. Allaah is our Lord and your Lord. For us our deeds and for you your deeds”

[al-Shoora 42:15 – interpretation of the meaning]

Even though he is a Muslim and they are following Judaism or Christianity.

8- The Muslims believe that it is not permissible, under any circumstances whatsoever, for a Muslim to mistreat a non-Muslim who is not hostile towards Islam; so the Muslim should not commit aggression against him, or frighten him, or terrorize him, or steal his wealth, or embezzle him, or deprive him of his rights, or deny him his trust, or deny him his wages, or withhold from him the price of his goods when buying from him or withhold the profits of a partnership if he is in a business partnership with him.

9- The Muslims believe that it is obligatory upon the Muslims to honor treaties or agreements made with a non-Muslim party. If a Muslim has agreed to their conditions when seeking permission to enter their country (i.e., a visa) and has promised to adhere to that, then it is not permissible for him to commit mischief in their land, to betray anyone, to steal, to kill or to do any destructive action, and so on.

10- The Muslims believe that in the case of non-Muslims who wage war against them and drive them out of their homes, or help others to do so, it is permissible for Muslims to shed the blood of these non-Muslims and confiscate their wealth.

11- The Muslims believe that it is permissible for a Muslim to treat kindly those non-Muslims who are not hostile, whether by offering financial help, feeding the hungry, giving them loans if needed or interceding with regard to permissible matters, or speaking kindly to them or returning their greetings, and so on. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allaah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion nor drove you out of your homes. Verily, Allaah loves those who deal with equity”

[al-Mumtahanah 60:8]

12- There is no reason why Muslims should not cooperate with non-Muslims with regard to establishing truth and combating falsehood, to support the oppressed and ward off danger from mankind, such as cooperating to fight pollution or to protect the environment, or to combat epidemic diseases and so on.

13- The Muslims believe that there are differences between Muslims and non-Muslims in specific rulings such as diyah (blood money), inheritance, marriage, guardianship in marriage, entering Makkah etc., as is explained in the books of Islamic fiqh (jurisprudence). This is based on the commands of Allaah and His Messenger Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him). We cannot regard as equal one who believes in Allaah alone with no partner or associate and one who disbelieves in Allaah or one who disbelieves in Allaah and joins others in worship with Him, or who turns away from the true religion.

14- Muslims are commanded to call people to Allaah in all the Muslim countries and other lands. They must convey the true religion of Allaah to the world and build mosques in all parts of the world, and send daa'iyahs (callers) to non-Muslim countries and invite their leaders to enter the religion of Allaah.

15- The Muslims believe that other people who are following other religions are not following any true religion, so the Muslims do not allow others to send missionaries to build churches in Muslim countries. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Is then he who is a believer like him who is a Faasiq (disbeliever and disobedient to Allaah)? Not equal are they”

[al-Sajdah 32:18]

Whoever thinks that Islam is equal to other religions is making a serious mistake. But the Muslim scholars have opened the door to debate with non-Muslims and allow the opportunity to discuss with and listen to non-Muslims and explain the truth to them.

Finally, Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Say (O Muhammad): O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allaah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allaah.’ Then, if they turn away, say: ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims’”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:64]

“And had the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) believed, it would have been better for them”

[Aal ‘Imraan 3:110].

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