

Fast 14: Prophets and Messengers of Allah — Mercy of the Prophet Muhammad

- In the last Study we were showing how the Holy Prophet Muhammad fulfilled the prophecy made by Buddha that another Buddha would arise in the world whose very name means kindness. The Quran tells the Holy Prophet about his opponents:

“But if they reject you, then say: Your Lord is the Lord of all-encompassing mercy; and His punishment cannot be averted from the guilty people.” (6:147)

فَإِنْ كَذَّبُوكَ فَقُلْ رَبُّكُمْ ذُو رَحْمَةٍ وَاسِعَةٍ وَلَا يُرَدُّ بَأْسُهُ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ ﴿١٤٧﴾

The mercy of Allah is mentioned here in addressing those who rejected the Holy Prophet, and it is said that His mercy *extends to all*, even to them. But those of them who are guilty of actually persecuting the weak and the oppressed may ultimately face punishment, unless they turn away from these evil deeds.

- The Quran also tells the Holy Prophet:

“You have no concern in the matter whether He (Allah) turns to them (mercifully) or punishes them; surely they are wrongdoers.” (3:128)

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبَهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿١٢٨﴾

In connection with this verse, it is reported that once the Holy Prophet, while leading the morning prayer, called upon Allah to curse certain enemies. So Allah stopped him by revealing to him this verse, telling him that how Allah deals with these enemies is not his concern. To forgive them or punish them is up to Allah. Notice here, as well as in the verse quoted previously (6:147), that the mercy of Allah is mentioned *first* and the possibility of punishment is mentioned *second*.

- In the Hadith books, numerous incidents are mentioned which shows that the Holy Prophet was the epitome of kindness, thus fulfilling Buddha’s prophecy. We refer to some of these below.
- Once the Holy Prophet was asked by some of his followers to curse the idol-worshippers. He replied: “I have not been sent to curse, but I have been sent as a mercy.” (Sahih Muslim, hadith 2599)
- The Holy Prophet was very conscious that, as a human being, he might lose his temper and scold or curse a Muslim who did not deserve it. He did not want Allah to accept his curse against them. So he told his followers that he had made a pact with Allah by saying to Him:

“I am a human being and I am pleased just as a human being is pleased and I lose my temper just as a human being loses his temper. So for any person from amongst my followers whom I curse and who does not deserve it, let that, O Lord, turn into a source of purification and purity and nearness to Allah on the Day of Resurrection.” (Sahih Muslim, hadith 2603)

So he wanted Allah to convert his condemnation of someone, if that condemnation was unfair, into a prayer for his good. The Holy Prophet acknowledged that he could mistakenly rebuke someone and he did not want Allah to treat that person as if he deserved that rebuke, but rather treat him as he actually deserved.

- Kindness to animals is a key teaching of Buddha. It is also found prominently in the actions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The Islamic teaching in this respect stems from the following verse of the Quran:

“And there is no animal in the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but (they are) communities like yourselves.” (6:38)

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَيْرٍ يَطِيرُ
بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَّةٌ أَمْثَالُكُمْ^ط

The Holy Prophet indicated that every such community has the right of existence.

- The right of all creatures to live and to feed as they do naturally is enshrined as follows:

“And the earth, He has set it for (all His) creatures.” (55:10)

وَالْأَرْضَ وَضَعَهَا لِلْأَنْعَامِ^{١٠}

“And there is no animal in the earth but on Allah is the sustenance of it, and He knows its abode and its repository. All is in a clear record.” (11:6)

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ
مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا^ط كُلٌّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ^{١١}

“And how many a living creature does not carry its sustenance! Allah sustains it and yourselves.” (29:60)

وَكَأَيِّنْ مِنْ دَابَّةٍ لَا تَحْمِلُ رِزْقَهَا^{١٢} اللَّهُ يَرْزُقُهَا
وَإِيَّاكُمْ^{١٣}

“Do they not see that We drive the water to a land having no vegetation, then We bring forth with it seed-produce, of which their cattle and they themselves eat.” (32:27; see also 10:24)

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّا نَسُوقُ الْمَاءَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الْجُرُزِ
فَنُخْرِجُ بِهِ زَرْعًا تَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ أَنْعَامُهُمْ وَأَنْفُسُهُمْ^{١٤}

The vegetation and fruit that grows on the earth is described elsewhere in the Quran as “a provision for you and your cattle” (79:33 and 80:32), i.e., for humans and

animals. In all these verses, man is told in no uncertain terms that God Himself undertakes the responsibility for feeding all other creatures on earth, just as He provides food for man.

It says in 11:6, quoted above, that how animals feed, and where they live and where they shelter, is all “in a clear record”. It is from this record that man obtains knowledge by studying nature, and which we see often broadcast in nature documentaries.