

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) The Merciful

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Muhammad was a symbol of love and mercy. The Qur'an says: "we sent you not but as a mercy for all creatures" (Qur'an, 21:107). The most important feature of his mercy was that it was universal and not confined to the Muslims or to the Arabs. His mercy covered all members of humanity. Once he was asked to invoke a curse upon the non-believers. But he replied, in anger: "I was not sent on the earth to curse; I was sent only as a mercy." He also said: "I am just a mercy which has been bestowed." (Baihaqi in Shuab al-Iman) The Prophet Muhammad was extremely merciful to all, including his enemies and the unbelievers. Many sayings about incidents of his mercy towards men, women, children and animals are recorded in the pages of history. He said: "Allah will not show mercy to him who does not show mercy to others" (Bukhari, 5997). A nomadic Arab came to the Prophet and asked him: "Do you kiss children? We do not kiss them." The Prophet replied: "I cannot help you, since Allah has withdrawn mercy from your heart". (Bukhari, 5998) Showing mercy to children was as important as prayer. He would not respect those who fail to show mercy to children: "He does not belong to us who does not show mercy to our young ones or respect our old ones, and who does not recommend what is right and reputable and prohibit what is wrong and disreputable". (Tirmidhi, 1921) To crown his statement about showing mercy to every creature regardless of his condition he made the following statements:

If anyone strokes an orphan's head, doing so only for Allah's sake, he will have blessings for every hair over which his hand passes; and if anyone treats well an orphan girl or boy under his care, he and I will be like this in paradise. Putting two of his fingers together. (Tirmidhi, 1918)

The abounding mercy of the Prophet won him very many friends and supporters of the Faith among the Arabs and brought them very close to him. The Qur'an mentions his kindness and mercy in these words: "He is most kind and merciful

to the believers” (Qur’an, 9:128). And *Surah Anbiya’* refers to this great and noble quality of the Prophet in these words: “We have not sent you but as a mercy for all creatures” (Qur’an, 21:107). The Arabic word *rahmah* has a very wide and comprehensive meaning and became well established in the lifetime of the Prophet. It means mercy, compassion, kindness, sympathy, etc.

There are many *Ahadith* of the Prophet which show the divine aspects of mercy in Islam: “The believers are like a single man; if his eye is affected, he is all affected, and if his head is affected, he is all affected” (Muslim, 6589). He (the Prophet) then interlaced his fingers as a demonstration. This can also be demonstrated “He who strives on behalf of a widow and a poor person is like one who strives in Allah’s Way” (Bukhari, 6006).

Prophet Muhammad’s public communication reveals several values that he espoused and practiced in his interactions with all he came in contact. The values he suggests are important to remember and to practice in order to become a successful leader, able to inspire and direct those around you.