

SHAWKAT - COMPASSION

QUR'AN - (The Qur'an with Annotated Interpretation in Modern English by Ali Ünal)

وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُضِيعَ إِيمَانَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرُؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

God will never let your faith go to waste. Surely God is for the people All-Pitying, All-Compassionate. (Surah Al- Baqarah, 143)¹

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْتَرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَؤُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ

And (in contrast, there is) among the people one who sells himself in pursuit of God's good pleasure. God is All-Pitying towards His servants (and therefore commends to them reverent piety and fear of His punishment). (Surah Al- Baqarah, 207)²

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ
رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

There has come to you (O people) a Messenger from among yourselves; extremely grievous to him is your suffering; full of concern for you is he, and for the believers, full of pity and compassion. (Surah At-Tawbah, 128)³

وَلَوْلَا فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَتُهُ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ

Were it not for God's grace and favor upon you, and His mercy, and that God is All-Pitying, All-Compassionate (especially towards His believing servants, what terrible consequences would such evils have caused in your community)! (Surah An-Nur, 20)⁴

¹ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=2&min=140&show=10

² http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=2&min=200&show=10

³ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=9&min=120&show=10

⁴ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=24&min=10&show=10

ثُمَّ قَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِرُسُلِنَا وَقَفَّيْنَا بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ وَجَعَلْنَا فِي
 قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ رَأْفَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَرَهْبَانِيَّةً ابْتَدَعُوهَا مَا كَتَبْنَاَهَا عَلَيْهِمْ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ
 رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ فَمَا رَعَوْهَا حَقَّ رِعَايَتِهَا فَآتَيْنَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ
 فَاسِقُونَ

Thereafter, We sent, following in their footsteps, others of Our Messengers, and We sent Jesus son of Mary, and granted him the Gospel, and placed in the hearts of those who followed him tenderness and mercy. And monasticism, they innovated it We did not prescribe it to them only to seek God's good pleasure; but they have not observed it as its observance requires. So We have granted those among them who have truly believed their reward, but many among them have been transgressors. (Surah Al-Hadid, 27)⁵

HADITH

It was narrated from Abu Sa'eed that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"On the day when He created the heavens and the earth, Allah created one hundred (degrees of) mercy, of which He placed one on earth, by virtue of which mothers show compassion to their children and animals as well as the birds show compassion to one another. And He kept back ninety-nine

Narrated `Umar bin Al-Khattab:

Some Sabi (i.e. war prisoners, children and woman only) were brought before the Prophet (ﷺ) and behold, a woman amongst them was milking her breasts to feed and whenever she found a child amongst the captives, she took it over her chest and nursed it (she had lost her child but later she found him) the Prophet said to us, "Do you think that this lady can throw her son in the fire?" We replied, "No, if she has the power not to throw it (in the fire)." The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, "Allah is more merciful to His slaves than this lady to her son."⁶

Nu'man bin Bashir (May Allah bepleased with them) reported:

Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever".⁷

Abu Bakr bin Al-Munkadir narrated from Jabir that the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w) said:

"There are three (characteristics) for which whomever has them,Allah will expose His side,and admit him to Paradise:Being courteous to the guest,kind to parents,and doing good for slaves."⁸

⁵ http://mquran.org/index.php?option=com_quran&action=viewayat&surano=57&min=20&show=10

⁶ <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/78/30>

⁷ <http://sunnah.com/riyadussaliheen/1/224>

⁸ <http://sunnah.com/urn/678000>

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Usama b. Zaid reported:

While we were with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), one of his daughters sent to him (the Messenger) to call him and inform him that her child or her son was dying. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) told the messenger to go back and tell her that what Allah had taken belonged to Him, and to him belonged what He granted; and He has an appointed time for everything. So you (the messenger) order her to show endurance and seek reward from Allah. The messenger came back and said: She adjures him to come to her. He got up to go accompanied by Sa'd b. 'Ubada, Mu'adh b. Jabal, and I also went along with them. The child was lifted to him and his soul was feeling as restless as if it was in an old (waterskin). His (Prophet's) eyes welled up with tears. Sa'd said: What is this, Messenger of Allah? He replied: This is compassion which Allah has placed in the hearts of His servants, and God shows compassion only to those of His servants who are compassionate.¹⁰

Narrated Anas bin Malik:

We went with Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) (p.b.u.h) to the blacksmith Abu Saif, and he was the husband of the wet-nurse of Ibrahim (the son of the Prophet). Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) took Ibrahim and kissed him and smelled him and later we entered Abu Saif's house and at that time Ibrahim was in his last breaths, and the eyes of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) (p.b.u.h) started shedding tears. `Abdur Rahman bin `Auf said, "O Allah's Apostle, even you are weeping!" He said, "O Ibn `Auf, this is mercy." Then he wept more and said, "The eyes are shedding tears and the heart is grieved, and we will not say except what pleases our Lord, O Ibrahim ! Indeed we are grieved by your separation."¹¹

It was narrated that Aisha, said:

"Some Bedouin people came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and said: 'Do you kiss your children?' He said: 'Yes'. He said: 'But we, by Allah, never kiss (our children)'. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: 'What can I do if Allah has taken away mercy from you?'"¹²

⁹ <http://sunnah.com/urn/1293970>

¹⁰ <http://sunnah.com/muslim/11/13>

¹¹ <http://sunnah.com/bukhari/23/62>

¹² <http://sunnah.com/ibnmajah/33/9>

COMMENTARIES

Tafseer by Al-Jalalyn – a verse by verse tafseer

There has come to you (O people) a Messenger from among yourselves; extremely grievous to him is your suffering; full of concern for you is he, and for the believers, full of pity and compassion. (Surah At-Tawbah, 128)

Verily there has come to you a messenger from among yourselves, that is, one of you — Muhammad (s) — for whom it is grievous, hard, that you should suffer, that is, your suffering, your experiencing hardship and encountering harm [is hard on him]; who is full of concern for you, that you should be rightly guided; to the believers full of pity, profoundly compassionate, merciful, desiring good for them.¹³

From the Risale-I Nur Collection by Beduizzam Said Nursi – a thematic tafseer

The Words, Tenth Word, Fifth Truth

**The gate of Compassion and Muhammadan Worship,
the Manifestation of the Names of
Answerer of Prayer and Compassionate**

Is it at all possible that a Lord possessing infinite compassion and mercy, Who most compassionately fulfils the smallest need of His lowliest creatures in the most unexpected fashion, Who heeds the muffled plea for help of His most obscure creature, and Who responds to all the petitions He hears, whether vocal or mute — is it at all possible that such a Lord should not pay heed to the greatest petition of the foremost among His servants, the most beloved among his creatures, that He should not hear and grant his most exalted prayer? The kindness and ease manifested in the feeding and nurturing of weak and young animals show that the Monarch of the cosmos exercises his dominicality with infinite mercy.

Is it at all possible that a compassion merciful to this degree in the exercise of dominicality should not accept the prayer of the most virtuous and beautiful of all creation?¹ This truth is explained in the Nineteenth Word, but let us repeat our statement of the matter here:

¹³<http://www.altafsir.com/Tafasir.asp?tMadhNo=1&tTafsirNo=74&tSoraNo=9&tAyahNo=128&tDisplay=yes&UserProfile=0&LanguageId=2>

O friend listening to these words together with my own soul! We said in the comparison that a meeting took place on a certain island, and a most noble commander delivered a speech there. In order to find out the truth indicated in the comparison, come, let us depart from this age, and in our mind and imagination travel to the Arabian Peninsula in the blessed age of the Prophet, in order to visit and watch him while he is performing his duties and engaging in worship. See, just as he is the means for the attainment of eternal bliss, by means of his messengerhood and guidance, so too he is the cause for the existence of that bliss and the means for the creation of Paradise, by means of his worship and prayer.

Now see! That being is praying for eternal bliss in such supreme supplication, with such sublime worship, that it is as if this island, or even the whole world, were praying and supplicating together with him. For the worship he performs contains within itself not only the worship of the community that follows him, but also that of all the other prophets, in its essential form, by virtue of the correspondence existing between him and them. Moreover, he performs his supreme prayer and offers his supplications in such a vast congregation that it is as if all luminous and perfect men, from the time of Adam down to the present, were following him in prayer and saying “amen” to his supplications!¹ He is praying for so universal a need —immortality— that not merely the people of this earth, but also the inhabitants of the heavens and the entirety of creation are participating in his supplications and silently proclaiming, “yes, o Lord! Grant his prayer; we too desire it.” He petitions for everlasting bliss with such touching sadness, in so yearning, so longing, and so pleading a fashion, that he causes the whole of the cosmos to weep and thus to share in his prayer.

See, he desires and prays for bliss, for such a purpose and goal that he elevates man and all creatures from captivity in the abysmal state of utter annihilation, from worthlessness, uselessness, and purposelessness to the apex of preciousness, eternity, exalted function, and the rank of being a script penned by God.

See, he makes his petition with such elevated plea for succour, makes his supplication with so sweet a request for mercy, that it is as if he caused all beings, the heavens and God’s throne itself to listen, and to echo his prayer ecstatically with cries of “amen, o Lord, amen!”²

See, he requests bliss and eternity from a Being, One so All-Hearing, Generous and Powerful, so All-Seeing, Merciful and Knowledgeable that He sees, hears, accepts and takes pity upon the most secret wish, the slightest desire of the most obscure of his creatures, this, in observable form. He answers all pleas even if they are silently proffered. He bestows all things and answers all pleas in so wise, percipient and merciful a fashion that no doubt remains that all that nurturing and regulating can derive only from One All-Hearing and All-Seeing, One Generous and Merciful.

Let us listen to what the Pride of All Being is requesting, that source of honour for all of mankind, that one unique in all of creation, who bears on his back the burden of all men, who standing on this earth lifts up his hands towards God’s throne and offers up a prayer which in its reality contains the essence of the worship of all of mankind. See, he is asking for eternal bliss for himself and for his community. He is asking for eternity and Paradise. He is making his plea together with all the Divine Sacred Names that display their beauty in the mirrors of all created being. You can see, indeed, that he is seeking intercession from those Names.

If there were not countless reasons and causes for the existence of the hereafter, a single prayer of that exalted being would be enough for the creation of Paradise, a task as easy for the power of the Merciful Creator as the creation of spring.¹

Indeed, how could the creation of spring be difficult for the Possessor of Absolute Power Who each spring makes the face of the world into a plain of resurrection, and brings forth there a hundred thousand examples of resurrection? In just the same way that the messengerhood of the Prophet was the reason for the foundation of this realm of trial —the saying “were it not for thee, were it not for

thee, I would not have created the spheres”² being an indication of this— so too the worship he performed was the cause for the foundation of the abode of bliss.

Is it at all possible that the flawless perfection of artistry, the peerless beauty of dominicality expressed in the order of the world and the comprehensive mercy that reduce all to bewilderment, should not answer his prayer, and thus tolerate an extreme form of ugliness, cruelty and disorder? Is it possible that it would listen to the most petty and insignificant desires and grant them, but dismiss significant and important desires as worthless, and fail to fulfil them? No, a thousand times no! Such beauty can never accept such ugliness and itself become ugly.

So just as the Prophet opened the gates of this world with his messengerhood, he opens the gates of the hereafter with his worship.

*May the blessings of the Compassionate One be upon him, to the extent of all that this world and paradise contain. O God, grant blessings and peace to Your servant and Messenger, that Beloved One who is the Master of both Realms, the Pride of all the Worlds, the source of life in both spheres, the means for the attainment of happiness here and in the hereafter, he who flies on two wings, who is the messenger to both men and jinn — to him, and to his Family, and all of his Companions, as well as his brethren from among the prophets and messengers. Amen.*¹⁴

The Words, Twenty - Fourth Word, Fifth Branch

Fear

That is to say, the things you love either will not recognize you, or they will scorn you, or they will not accompany you. They will part from you in spite of you. Since this is so, direct your fear and love to the One by Whom your fear will become pleasurable abasement, and your love, shadowless happiness. Yes, to fear the Glorious Creator means finding a way to His compassionate mercy, and taking refuge in it. Fear is a whip; it drives you into the embrace of His mercy. It is well-known that a mother gently scares her infant, for example, and draws it to her breast. The fear is most pleasurable for the child, because it drives him to her tender embrace. Whereas the tenderness of all mothers is but a flash of Divine mercy. That means there is a supreme pleasure in fear of God. If there is such pleasure in fear of God, it is clear what infinite pleasure there is to be found in love of God. Moreover, one who fears God is saved from the calamitous and distressing fear of others. Also, because it is for God’s sake, the love he has for creatures is not tinged with sorrow and separation.

Indeed, man loves firstly himself, then his relations, then his nation, then living creatures, then the universe, and the world. He is connected with all these spheres. He may receive pleasure at their pleasure and pain at their pain. However, since nothing is stable in this world of upheavals and revolutions swift as the wind, man’s wretched heart is constantly wounded. The things his hands cling onto tear at them as they depart, even severing them. He remains in perpetual distress, or else plunges into heedless drunkenness. Since it is thus, my soul, if you have sense, gather together all those loves and give them to their true owner; be saved from those calamities. These infinite loves are particular to One possessing infinite perfection and beauty. When you give it to its true owner, you will be able to love everything without distress in His name and as His mirrors. That means this love should not be

¹⁴ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.81>

spent directly on the universe. Otherwise, while being a delicious bounty, it becomes a grievous affliction.¹⁵

The Words, The Thirty-Second Word, Second Stopping-Place

The Fourth Sign: Rather than looking to its likes and opposites, the pleasure, loveliness, and beauty of a thing look to where those qualities are manifested. For example, generosity is a fine and pleasing attribute. The pleasure a generous person obtains from the joy and pleasure of those he has favoured is thousands of times more gratifying than the relative pleasure obtained from feeling superior to other generous people.

Also, a kind and compassionate person receives true pleasure proportionately to those towards whom he has been compassionate find ease and comfort. For example, the pleasure a mother receives from the happiness and comfort of her children, because of her compassion, is so strong she would sacrifice her very soul for their comfort. The pleasure of such compassion will even make a hen attack a lion in order to protect her chicks.

Thus, the true pleasure, goodness, happiness and perfection in elevated attributes do not look to peers and opposites, but to their dependants and the places they are manifested. The beauty, therefore, of the Glorious and Perfect One's mercy, Who is Ever-Living and Self-Subsistent, Clement and Benevolent, Compassionate and Merciful, looks to those who receive His mercy.

There are endless degrees in the happiness, ease and joy of those who receive the manifestation of His mercy and compassion, and especially those who receive its endless varieties in everlasting Paradise. We may understand that, according to the degrees of their happiness and joy, the Merciful and Compassionate One experiences exalted, pure, holy, and beautiful meanings, like fondness and love, in a manner appropriate to Him, that may be described through qualities which are proper to Him. He possesses utterly pure and holy qualities which we may not mention because the Shari'a does not permit it, but which may be described as 'sacred pleasure,' 'holy love,' 'pure joy' and 'sacred happiness.' We have proved in many places that they are infinitely more exalted, elevated, holy, and pure than the love, joy, and happiness that we see in the universe and may perceive among creatures. If you wish to take a look at a flash of those meanings, then look through the telescope of the following comparisons.

For example, a noble-hearted and magnanimous personage laid out a fine banquet on his magnificent voyaging ship in order to feed the poor, the needy, and hungry. Then he himself watched from on deck. You can understand how pleased and happy the thankful pleasure and appreciative gratitude of the poor, hungry and needy made that generous personage; how much it gratified him.

Man is not the true owner of even the humblest repast and is merely like a distributor. Therefore, if his joy is thus, you can draw an analogy with the sacred meanings of love and results of mercy that pertain to the Merciful and Compassionate One and which we are powerless to express. For He causes men, jinn, and animals to journey in the seas of space, and to board the mighty earth, which is a dominical ship. Then, loading the table of the face of the earth with innumerable varieties of foods, He invites all living creatures to the feast, which is a sort of light snack or appetizer. For besides this, He will make each of every sort of perfect delight a table laden with bounties in a permanent and everlasting realm. He will inaugurate an unending and comprehensive banquet of innumerable pleasures and subtle wonders, which will be true food for His countless and endlessly needy and yearning slaves.

¹⁵ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.368>

And, for example, a skilful and practised craftsman who likes to display his ingenuity, after inventing an object like a gramophone which plays without records, will set it up, try it out and then show it off. If it gives the desired and expected results perfectly, how proud will its inventor feel, how pleased and gratified will he be. He will say to himself: "May God bless this!"

And so, if an insignificant man is so pleased with the smooth working of a gramophone and with his craftsmanship which is only superficial, for in reality he creates nothing, then how should the All-Glorious Maker be? For He created the mighty universe as an orchestra and gramophone, and He made the earth, and all the animate creatures on it, and among animate creatures especially man. And man's head He created in such a fashion that it is a dominical gramophone and Divine orchestra so that science and philosophy are struck with wonderment at the art and craftsmanship displayed in it.

Thus, all these beings show all the results desired of them to the utmost degree and in the best possible way. They are completely obedient to the commands that give them existence, which are described by the creatures' particular worship and glorification and their appointed salutations to God. The pride, pleasure and joy together with the sacred meanings and pure qualities, which we are unable to describe, that are obtained from these and from the attainment of the dominical aims sought from the beings, are so exalted and holy that if all the minds of mankind were to unite and become one mind, it would still be unable to reach or comprehend their substance.

And another example. What pleasure and enjoyment a just ruler who loves to enforce justice and right receives from giving the oppressed their rights and receiving their thanks and from punishing the wrongdoers and taking revenge for the oppressed. You can draw an analogy with the sacred meanings pertaining to the Absolutely Wise One, the Truly Just One, the All-Compelling and Glorious One, which arise from establishing justice, and not only for men and jinn, but for all creatures.

That is to say, the sacred meanings arising from bestowing the right of existence and the right of life on everything, from protecting existence and life from aggressors, and from arresting and restraining those ghastly creatures from their aggression; and that arise especially from the judgement of men and jinn at the Great Gathering in the realm of the hereafter. And besides this, the sacred meanings arising from the greatest manifestation of justice and wisdom that is apparent in animate creatures.

Thus, as may be seen from these three examples, just as a great many degrees of loveliness, beauty, grace, and perfection are present in all the thousand and one Divine Names, so there are a great many degrees of love, pride, glory, and grandeur.

It is because of this that the elevated and authoritative saints who manifested the Name of Loving One said: "Love is the very leaven of the universe. It is through love that all beings are in motion. It is from love that the laws of attraction, affinity, and ecstasy present in all beings spring." One of them wrote the following:

*The firmament is intoxicated, the angels and the stars are intoxicated,
The heavens are intoxicated, the moon and the earth are intoxicated,*

The elements are intoxicated, the plants, the trees and mankind are intoxicated,

Animate creatures are all intoxicated,

All the particles of all beings are altogether intoxicated, and yet more intoxicated.

That is to say, everyone receives the manifestation of Divine love and is intoxicated in accordance with his capacity. It is well-known that every heart has affection for someone who bestows kindnesses on it, and that it loves true perfection and is enamoured of noble beauty. And the heart loves even

more one who bestows kindnesses, not only on itself, but also on those it loves and feels compassion for.

And so, as we explained before, may it not be understood from the following just how deserving of love and passion is the All-Beauteous and Glorious One, the All-Perfect Beloved One, and how intoxicated and giddy is the whole universe with love of Him? For He is named with a thousand Names each of which is the source of thousands of perfections and the means for thousands of degrees of beauty. And through His bounties, in all the Names are thousands of treasuries containing bounties, and He makes all those beings we love happy.

It is because of this mystery that the saints who manifested the Name of Loving One declared: "We do not want Paradise. One flash of the Divine love will suffice us for ever."

It is also because of this that as is recorded in the Hadith: "A minute's vision of the Divine beauteousness in Paradise will far surpass all its other delights."¹⁶

Thus, these endless perfections of love only occur through the All-Glorious One's Names and His creatures within the sphere of His unity and oneness. That is to say, those perfections that are imagined to exist outside that sphere are not perfections at all.¹⁶

The Letters, The Twenty-Ninth Letter, Second Section, Third Point

One of the many instances of wisdom in fasting from the point of view of man's social life is as follows:

Human beings have been created differently with regard to their livelihoods. In consequence of this, God Almighty invites the rich to assist the poor, so that through the hunger experienced in fasting, they can truly understand the pains and hunger which the poor suffer. If there were no fasting, many self-indulgent rich would be unable to perceive just how grievous are hunger and poverty and how needy of compassion are those who suffer them.

Compassion for one's fellow men is an essential part of true thankfulness. Whoever a person is, there will always be someone poorer than himself in some respect. He is enjoined to be compassionate towards such a person. If he were not himself compelled to suffer hunger, he would be unable give the person – through compassion – the help and assistance he is obliged to offer. And even if he were able, it would be deficient, for he would not have truly experienced hunger himself.¹⁷

The Flashes, The Twenty-Fourth Flash, A Conversation With The Women, My Believing Sisters Of The Hereafter, First Point

Since one of the fundamental principles of the Risale-i Nur is compassion and women are champions of compassion, they are by nature more closely connected with the Risale-i Nur than others. Praise be to God, this natural sympathy is felt in many places. The self-sacrifice within such compassion seeks nothing in return and expresses true sincerity, and so is of the greatest importance at this time.

Yes, the fact that wanting nothing in return, a mother will sacrifice her life to save her young from danger, as demanded by her nature and with true sincerity, shows that women are capable of great

¹⁶ <http://www.erasale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.201.650>

¹⁷ <http://www.erasale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.202.458>

heroism. By developing this heroism, they may save their lives both in this world and in the hereafter. However, this important attribute does not unfold under the influence of certain bad currents of thought, or else it is exploited. A small example out of hundreds is as follows:

A compassionate mother undertakes every sort of self-sacrifice so that her child should not fall into danger in this worldly life and should receive every sort of benefit and advantage; she brings him up with this in view. Thinking, "My son is going to be a Pasha," she gives him all her property, takes him from the Qur'an school and sends him to Europe. But it does not occur to her that her child's eternal life has fallen into danger. She tries to save him from prison in this world and does not take into consideration his being sentenced to the prison of Hell. Reversing that innate compassion, she makes her innocent child a claimant against her in the hereafter, though he should be her intercessor. He will rebuke her saying: "Why did you not strengthen my belief and so cause me to be lost?" In this world too, since he did not receive a proper Islamic upbringing, he cannot respond to his mother's wondrous compassion in the way it deserves; in fact he does so very deficiently.

If she does not misdirect her true compassion and works to save her unhappy child from everlasting incarceration in Hell and from dying while in misguidance, which will result in eternal extinction, the equivalent of each of the child's good works will pass to the mother's book of good deeds. And after her death he will continuously send lights to her spirit with his good works, and in the hereafter, will be not a claimant but with all his spirit and life an intercessor for her, and a blessed child of her's for all eternity.

Yes, man's first master and most influential teacher is his mother. In connection with this, I shall explain the following to you, which I have always felt strongly in my own self:

I am eighty years old and have received lessons from eighty thousand people. Yet I swear that the truest and most unshakeable lessons I have received are those inculcated in me by my late mother, which have always remained fresh for me. They have been planted in my nature as though they were seeds planted in my physical being. I observe that other instruction has been constructed on those seeds. That is to say, the lessons instilled in my nature and spirit by my mother when I was one year old I now see at the age of eighty to be fundamental seeds amid great truths.

For instance, I consider it certain that I learnt from the compassionate behaviour and acts of my mother and from her teaching, to be compassionate, which is the most important of the four principles of my way, and to be kind and clement, which is the greatest truth of the Risale-i Nur. Yes, the compassion of motherhood comprises true sincerity and true self-sacrifice, but it is a misuse of it to not think of the hereafter – a treasury of diamonds for her innocent child – and to turn his face towards this world, which resembles temporary, transient fragments of glass, and to be kind to him in that way, is to misuse that compassion.

A proof of this heroism of women in respect of compassion, which wants absolutely no recompense and nothing in return, and of their sacrificing their very spirits, which in no way seeks personal benefit and no show, is that a hen, which bears a tiny sample of that compassion, will attack a lion and sacrifice its life for its chicks.

Now, sincerity is the most valuable and most essential principle in Islamic training and in deeds pertaining to the hereafter. True sincerity is present in the heroism of this kind of compassion. If these two points begin to develop among women, it will lead to considerable happiness within the domain of Islam. When it comes to the heroism of men, it can never be for nothing; they always want recompense in perhaps a hundred ways. At the very least they want glory and renown. But regrettably, unfortunate women practise hypocrisy in another form in order to be saved from the evil and oppression of tyrannical men; this sort arises from weakness and impotence.¹⁸

¹⁸ <http://www.erasale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.203.259>

The Letters, The Eighth Letter

In His Name!

And there is nothing but it glorifies Him with praise. (17:44)

There are numerous instances of wisdom in the names of Most Merciful and Compassionate being included in “In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate” and at the start of all good things. Postponing the explanation of these to another time, I shall for now recount a feeling of mine:

My brother, to me the names of Merciful and Compassionate appear as a light so vast it embraces the whole universe and satisfies all the eternal needs of all spirits, and so luminous and powerful it secures a person against all his innumerable enemies. The most important means I have found for attaining to these names, these two vast lights, are poverty and thanks, impotence and compassion. That is, worship and realizing one’s neediness. What comes to mind in this connection and I say contrary to the great mystics and religious scholars, and even to Imam-i Rabbani, one of my masters, is this: the intense and brilliant emotion the Prophet Jacob (Upon whom be peace) felt for Joseph (Upon whom be peace) was not love or passion, but compassion. For compassion is much more acute and brilliant and elevated than passionate love, and purer and more worthy of the rank of prophethood. Intense love and passion for worldly (meczâî) beloveds and creatures are not fitting for the elevated rank of prophethood. This means Jacob’s feelings, which the All-Wise Qur’an describes with brilliant eloquence, and were a way of attaining to the name of All-Compassionate, were a high degree of compassion. As for passionate love, which is a way of attaining to the name of All-Loving, it is more like Zulaikha’s love for Joseph (Upon whom be peace). That is to say, however much higher the Qur’an of Miraculous Exposition shows Jacob’s (Upon whom be peace) emotions to be than Zulaikha’s, compassion is higher than passionate love

to the same degree. My master, Imam-i Rabbani, did not consider worldly love to be altogether fitting for the rank of prophethood and therefore said: “Joseph’s virtues pertained to the hereafter, so love for him was not of a worldly kind that it should have been defective.”¹ But I say: “Master! That is an artificial interpretation, the truth of the matter must be this: Jacob’s was not love but a degree of compassion a hundred times more brilliant, more extensive, and more elevated than love.” Yes, in all its varieties, compassion is subtle and pure, while many sorts of love and passion may not be condescended to.

Furthermore, compassion is extremely broad. Because of the compassion a person feels for his child, he may well feel a kindness towards all young and all living beings even, and act as a sort of mirror to the comprehensive name of All-Compassionate. Whereas passionate love restricts its gaze to its beloved and sacrifices everything for it. Or else while elevating and praising its beloved, it denigrates others and in effect insults them and abuses their honour. For example, someone said: “The sun espied my beloved’s beauty and was embarrassed. Not to see it, it veiled itself in cloud.” Lover, fine sir! What right do you have to impute shame to the sun, which is a light-filled page of eight Greatest Names?

Moreover, compassion is sincere and wants nothing in return; it is pure and seeks no recompense. The self-sacrificing, unselfish tenderness of animals towards their young is evidence for this at the lowest level. Passionate love, however, desires remuneration and seeks return. The weepings of passionate love are a sort of demanding, a desiring remuneration.

Thus, Jacob’s (Upon whom be peace) compassion, the most brilliant light of Sura Yusuf – the most brilliant of the Qur’an’s Suras – points to the names of Merciful and Compassionate. It informs us that

the way of compassion is the way of mercy. And as a salve for the pain of compassion, it induces a person to utter:

For God is the Best of Protectors and He is the Most Merciful of the Merciful! (12:64)

The Eternal One, He is the Eternal One!

Said Nursi¹⁹

Fethullah Gulen - The Messenger of God: Muhammad – a thematic tafseer

The Prophet of Universal Mercy

The beginning of existence was an act of mercy and compassion without which the universe would be in chaos. Everything came into existence through compassion, and by compassion it continues to exist in harmony.

Muslim sages say that the universe is the All-Compassionate One's breath. In other words, the universe was created to manifest the Divine Name the All-Compassionate. Its subsistence depends on the same Name. This Name manifests itself first as the All-Provider, so that all living creatures can receive the food or nourishment they need to survive.

Life is God Almighty's foremost and most manifest blessing, and the true and everlasting life is that of the Hereafter. Since we can deserve this life by pleasing God, He sent Prophets and revealed Scriptures out of His compassion for humanity. For this reason, while mentioning His blessings upon humanity in Surat al-Rahman (the All-Merciful), He begins: Al-Rahman. He taught the Qur'an, created humanity, and taught it speech (55:1-4).

All aspects of this life are a rehearsal for the afterlife, and every creature is engaged in action toward this end. Order is evident in every effort, and compassion resides in every achievement. Some "natural" events or social convulsions may seem disagreeable at first, but we should not regard them as incompatible with compassion. They are like dark clouds or lightning and thunder that, although frightening, nevertheless bring us good tidings of rain. Thus the whole universe praises the All-Compassionate.

Muslim sages consider the universe a "created book" issuing from His Attribute of Will. To write a book that people could not understand would be pointless. Therefore, He created Muhammad to tell people what the universe really means, and to relay His Commandments in the Qur'an through Muhammad so that we can know what is expected of us. Only by following these Commandments can we attain an eternal life of happiness. The Qur'an is the ultimate and most comprehensive Divine Revelation; Islam is the last, perfected, and universal form of Divine Religion; and Prophet Muhammad is the embodiment of Divine Compassion, one sent by God as a mercy for all worlds.

¹⁹ <http://www.erisale.com/index.jsp?locale=en#content.en.202.46>

Prophet Muhammad is like a spring of pure water in the heart of a desert, a source of light in an all-enveloping darkness. Whoever appeals to this spring can take as much water as needed to quench their thirst, to become purified of all their sins, and to become illumined with the light of belief. Mercy was like a magic key in his hands, for with it he opened hearts that were so hardened and rusty that no one thought they could be opened. But he did even more: he lit a torch of belief in them.

The Messenger preached Islam, the religion of universal mercy. However, some self-proclaimed humanists say that Islam is "a religion of the sword." This is completely wrong. They make a great deal of noise when animals are killed or when one of their own is harmed, but are silent when Muslims are massacred. Their world is built on personal interest. It should be pointed out that abusing the feeling of compassion is just as harmful—sometimes even more harmful—than having no compassion at all.

Amputating a gangrenous limb is an act of compassion for the whole body. Likewise oxygen and hydrogen, when mixed in the proper ratios, form water, a most vital substance. When this ratio changes, however, each element resumes its original combustible identity.

Similarly, it is quite important to apportion compassion and to identify who deserves it, for "compassion for a wolf sharpens its appetite, and not being content with what it receives, it demands even more." Compassion for wrongdoers makes them more aggressive and encourages them to work against others. In fact, true compassion requires that such people be prevented from doing wrong. When the Messenger told his Companions to help people when they were just and unjust, they asked him to explain this seeming paradox. He replied: "You help such people by preventing them from engaging in injustice." So, compassion requires that those who cause trouble either be deprived of their means for, or prevented from, doing so. Otherwise, they eventually will take control and do as they please.

The Messenger's compassion encompassed every creature. In his role as an invincible commander and able statesman, he knew allowing blood-stained, blood-thirsty people to control others would be the most terrible form of tyranny imaginable. Therefore, out of compassion, he required that lambs should be able to live in security against wolves' attacks. He desired, of course, that everyone be guided. In fact, this was his greatest concern: Yet it may be, if they believe not in this Message, you will consume yourself, following after them, with grief (18:6).

But how should he deal with those who persisted in unbelief and fought him to destroy both him and his Message? He had to fight such people, for universal compassion encompasses every creature. This is why, when he was wounded severely at Uhud, he raised his hands and prayed: "O God, forgive my people, for they don't know."²⁰

The Makkans, his own people, inflicted so much suffering on him that he finally emigrated to Madina. Even after that, the next 5 years were far from peaceful. However, when he conquered Makka without bloodshed in the twenty-first year of his Prophethood, he asked the Makkan unbelievers: "How do you expect me to treat you?" They responded unanimously: "You are a noble

²⁰ Bukhari, "Anbiya'," 54; Muslim, "Jihad," 104.

one, the son of a noble one." He then told them his decision: "You may leave, for no reproach this day shall be on you. May God forgive you. He is the Most Compassionate of the Compassionate."²¹

Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror said the same thing to the defeated Byzantines after conquering Istanbul 825 years later. Such is the universal compassion of Islam.

The Messenger displayed the highest degree of compassion toward the believers: There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves; grievous to him is your suffering; anxious is he over you, full of concern for you, for the believers full of pity, compassionate (9:128). He lowered unto believers his wing of tenderness through mercy (15:88), and was the guardian of believers and nearer to them than their selves (33:6). When one of his Companions died, he asked those at the funeral if the deceased had left any debts. On learning that he had, the Prophet mentioned the above verse and announced that the creditors should come to him for repayment.²²

His compassion even encompassed the Hypocrites and unbelievers. He knew who the Hypocrites were, but never identified them, for this would have deprived them of the rights of full citizenship they had gained by their outward confession of faith and practice. Since they lived among Muslims, their unbelief in eternal life may have been reduced or changed to doubt, thus diminishing their fear of death and the pain caused by the assertion of eternal non-existence after death.

God did not send a collective destruction upon the unbelievers, although He had eradicated many such people in the past: But God would never chastise them while you were among them; God would never chastise them as they begged forgiveness (8:33). This verse refers to unbelievers of whatever time. God will not destroy peoples altogether as long as those who follow the Messenger are alive. Besides, He has left the door of repentance open until the Last Day. Anyone can accept Islam or ask God's forgiveness, regardless of how sinful they consider themselves to be.

For this reason, a Muslim's enmity toward unbelievers is a form of pity. When 'Umar saw an 80-year-old priest, he sat down and sobbed. When asked why he did so, he replied: "God assigned him so long a life span, but he has not been able to find the true path." 'Umar was a disciple of the Messenger, who said: "I was not sent to call down curses on people, but as a mercy" and

I am Muhammad, and Ahmad (praised one), and Muqaffi (the Last Prophet); I am Hashir (the final Prophet in whose presence the dead will be resurrected); the Prophet of repentance (the Prophet for whom the door of repentance will always remain open), and the Prophet of mercy.

Archangel Gabriel also benefited from the mercy of the Qur'an. Once the Prophet asked Gabriel whether he had any share in the mercy contained in the Qur'an. Gabriel replied that he did, and explained: "I was not certain about my end. However, when the verse: (One) obeyed, and moreover, trustworthy and secured (81:21) was revealed, I felt secure about it." When Ma'iz was punished for fornication, a Companion verbally abused him. The Messenger frowned at him and said: "You have backbitten your friend. His repentance and asking God's pardon for his sin would be enough to forgive all the sinners in the world."²³

²¹ Ibn Hisham, *Sira*, 4:55; Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidaya*, 4:344.

²² Muslim, "Fara'iz," 14; Bukhari, "Istiqraz," 11.

²³ Muslim, "Hudud," 17-23; Bukhari, "Hudud," 28.

The Messenger was particularly compassionate toward children. Whenever he saw a child crying, he sat beside him or her and shared his or her feelings. He felt the pain of a mother for her child more than the mother herself. Once he said: "I stand in prayer and wish to prolong it. However, I hear a child cry and shorten the prayer to lessen the mother's anxiety."

He took children in his arms and hugged them. Once when hugging his beloved grandsons Hasan and Hussayn, Aqra ibn Habis told him: "I have 10 children, and have never kissed any of them." The Messenger responded: "One without pity for others is not pitied." According to another version, he said or added: "What can I do for you if God has removed compassion from you?"

Once, he said: "Pity those on Earth so that those in the Heavens will pity you." Once when Sa'd ibn 'Ubada became ill, the Messenger visited him at home and, seeing his faithful Companion in a pitiful state, began to cry. He said: "God does not punish because of tears or grief, but He punishes because of this," and he pointed to his tongue.²⁴ When 'Uthman ibn Mad'un died, he wept profusely. During the funeral, a woman remarked: "'Uthman flew like a bird to Paradise." Even in that mournful state, the Prophet did not lose his balance and corrected the woman: "How do you know this? Even I don't know this, and I am a Prophet."

A member of the Banu Muqarrin clan once beat his maidservant. She informed the Messenger, who sent for the master. He said: "You have beaten her without any justifiable right. Free her."²⁵ Freeing a slave free was far better for the master than being punished in the Hereafter because of that act. The Messenger always protected and supported widows, orphans, the poor and disabled even before announcing his Prophethood. When he returned home in excitement from Mount Hira after the first Revelation, his wife Khadija told him: "I hope you will be the Prophet of this Umma, for you always tell the truth, fulfill your trust, support your relatives, help the poor and weak, and feed guests."²⁶

His compassion even encompassed animals. We hear from him: "A prostitute was guided to truth by God and ultimately went to Paradise because she gave water to a dog dying of thirst. Another woman was sent to Hell because she left a cat to die of hunger." Once while returning from a military campaign, a few Companions removed some young birds from their nest to stroke them. The mother bird came back and, not finding its babies, began to fly around screeching. When told of this, the Messenger became angry and ordered the birds to be put back in the nest.²⁷

Once he told his Companions that God reproached an earlier Prophet for setting fire to a nest of ants.²⁸ While in Mina, some of his Companions attacked a snake in order to kill it. However, it managed to escape. Watching this from afar, the Messenger remarked: "It was saved from your evil, as you were from its evil." Ibn 'Abbas reported that when the Messenger saw a man sharpening his knife directly before the sheep to be slaughtered, he asked: "Do you want to kill it many times?"

²⁴ Bukhari, "Jana'iz," 45; Muslim, "Jana'iz," 12.

²⁵ Muslim, "Ayman," 31, 33; Ibn Hanbal, 3:447.

²⁶ Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, 1:195;

²⁷ Abu Dawud, "Adab," 164, "Jihad," 112; Ibn Hanbal, 1:404.

²⁸ Bukhari, "Jihad," 153; Muslim, "Salam," 147.

'Abd Allah ibn Ja'far narrates: "The Messenger went to a garden in Madina with a few Companions. A very scrawny camel was in a corner. Seeing the Messenger, it began to cry. The Messenger went to it and, after staying beside it for a while, severely warned the owner to feed it properly."

His love and compassion for creatures differed from that of today's self-proclaimed humanists, for he was sincere and balanced in this regard—a Prophet raised by God, the Creator and Sustainer of all beings, for the guidance and happiness humanity and jinn, and the harmony of existence. As such, he lived for others, and was a mercy for all the worlds, a manifestation of Compassion.²⁹

Fethullah Gulen - The Messenger of God: Muhammad – a thematic tafseer

Islam as a Religion of Universal Mercy

Life is the foremost and most manifest blessing of God Almighty, and the true and everlasting life is that of the Hereafter. Since we can deserve this life only by pleasing God, He sent Prophets and revealed Scriptures out of His Compassion for humanity. While mentioning His blessings upon humanity, He begins:

All-Merciful. He taught the Qur'an, created humanity, and taught it speech. (Al-Rahman 55:1-4)

All aspects of this life are a rehearsal for the afterlife, and every creature is engaged toward this end. Order is evident in every effort, and compassion resides in every achievement. Some "natural" events or social convulsions may seem disagreeable at first, but we should not regard them as being incompatible with compassion. They are like dark clouds or lightning and thunder that, although frightening, nevertheless bring us the good tidings of rain. Thus the whole universe praises the All-Compassionate.

Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, is like a spring of pure water in the heart of a desert, a source of light in an all-enveloping darkness. Those who appeal to this spring can take as much water as is needed to quench their thirst, to become purified of their sins, and to become illuminated with the light of faith. Mercy was like a magical key in the Prophet's hands, for with it he opened hearts that were so hardened and rusty that no one thought they could be opened. But he did even more: he lit a torch of belief in them.

The compassion of God's Messenger encompassed every creature. He desired that everyone be guided. In fact, this was his greatest concern:

Yet it may be, if they believe not in this Message, you will consume (exhaust) yourself, following after them, with grief. (Al-Kahf 18:6)

²⁹ <http://fgulen.com/en/fethullah-gulens-works/faith/prophet-muhammad/24812-the-prophet-of-universal-mercy>

But how did he deal with those who persisted in oppression and persecutions; those who did not allow him and his followers to worship the One God; those who took up arms against him to destroy him? He had to fight such people, yet his universal compassion encompassed every creature. This is why when he was wounded severely at the Battle of Uhud, he raised his hands and prayed:

O God, forgive my people, for they do not know.³⁰

The Makkans, his own people, inflicted so much suffering on him that he finally emigrated to Madina. Even after that, the next 5 years were far from peaceful. However, when he conquered Makka without bloodshed in the twentyfirst year of his Prophethood, he asked the Makkan unbelievers: "How do you expect me to treat you?" They responded unanimously: "You are a noble one, the son of a noble one." He then told them his decision: "You may leave, for no reproach this day shall be on you. May God forgive you. He is the Most Compassionate."³¹ 825 years later Sultan Mehmed II³² said the same thing to the defeated Byzantines after conquering Constantinople. Such is the universal compassion of Islam.

The Messenger displayed the highest degree of compassion toward believers:

There has come to you a Messenger from among yourselves; grievous to him is your suffering; anxious is he over you, full of concern for you, for the believers full of pity, compassionate. (At-Tawbah 9:128)

He lowered unto believers his wing of tenderness through mercy ... (Al-Hijr 15:88)

... was the guardian of believers and nearer to them than their selves. (Al-Ahzab 33:6)

When one of his Companions died, he asked those at the funeral if the deceased had left any debts. On learning that he had, the Prophet mentioned the above verse and announced that the creditors should come to him for repayment.

His compassion even encompassed the hypocrites and unbelievers. He knew who the hypocrites were, but never identified them, for this would have deprived them of the rights of full citizenship that they had gained by their outward declaration of faith and practice. Since they lived among the Muslims, their denial may have been reduced or changed to doubt, thus diminishing their fear of death and the pain caused by the assertion of eternal non-existence after death.

God no longer destroys unbelievers collectively, although He had eradicated many such people in the past:

But God would never chastise them while you were among them; God would never chastise them as they begged forgiveness. (Al-Anfal 8:33)

This verse refers to unbelievers regardless of time and place. God will not destroy whole peoples as long as there are some who follow the Messenger. Moreover, He has left the door of repentance

³⁰ Qadi 'Iyad, *Shifa'*, 1:78-9; Hindi, *Kanz al-'Ummal*, 4:93.

³¹ Ibn Hisham, *Sirat al-Nabawiyah*, 4:55; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, 4:344.

³² Sultan Mehmed II (the Conqueror) (1431-1481). The 7th Ottoman Sultan who conquered Istanbul in 1453.

open until the Last Day. Anyone can accept Islam or ask God's forgiveness, regardless of how sinful they consider themselves to be.

For this reason, a Muslim's enmity toward unbelievers is a form of pity. When 'Umar saw an 80-year-old man, he sat down and wept. When asked why, he replied: "God assigned him so long a lifespan, but he has not been able to find the true path." 'Umar was a disciple of God's Messenger, the prophet who said:

I was not sent to call down curses on people, but as a mercy.³³

I am Muhammad, and Ahmad (the praised one), and Muqaffi (the Last Prophet); I am Hashir (the last Prophet in whose presence the people will gather); the Prophet of Repentance (the Prophet for whose sake the door of repentance will always remain open), and the Prophet of mercy.³⁴

Archangel Gabriel also benefited from the mercy of the Qur'an. Once the Prophet asked Gabriel whether he had any share in the mercy contained in the Qur'an, Gabriel replied that he did, and explained: "I was not certain about my end. However, when the verse: (One) obeyed, and moreover, trustworthy and secured (At-Takwir 81:21) was revealed, I felt secure."³⁵

The Messenger of God was particularly compassionate toward children. Whenever he saw a child crying, he sat beside him or her and shared his or her feelings. He felt the pain of a mother for her child more than the mother herself. Once he said:

I stand in prayer and wish to prolong it. However, I hear a child cry and shorten the prayer to lessen the mother's anxiety."³⁶

He took children in his arms and hugged them. Once when he hugged and kissed his grandson Hasan, Aqrah ibn Habis told him: "I have 10 children, none of whom I have ever kissed." God's Messenger responded: "One without pity for others is not pitied."³⁷ According to another version, he added: "What can I do for you if God has removed compassion from you?"³⁸

He said: "Pity those on the Earth so that those in the heavens will pity you."³⁹ Once when Sa'd ibn 'Ubadah became ill, God's Messenger visited him at home. Seeing his faithful Companion in a pitiful state, he began to cry and said: "God does not punish because of tears or grief, but He punishes because of this," and he pointed to his tongue.⁴⁰ When 'Uthman ibn Mad'un died, he wept profusely. During the funeral, a woman remarked: "'Uthman flew like a bird to Paradise." Even in that mournful state, the Prophet did not lose his balance and corrected the woman: "How do you know this? Even I do not know this, and I am a Prophet."⁴¹

A member of the Banu Muqarrin clan once beat his female slave. She informed the Messenger of God, who then sent a message to the master. He said: "You have beaten her without any justifiable

³³ Muslim, Birr, 87.

³⁴ Hanbal, Musnad, 4:395; Muslim, Fada'il, 126.

³⁵ Qadi 'Iyad, as-Shifa' al-Sharif, 1:17.

³⁶ Bukhari, Adhan, 65; Muslim, Salat, 192.

³⁷ Bukhari, Adab, 18.

³⁸ Ibid., Adab, 18; Muslim, Fada'il, 64.

³⁹ Tirmidhi, Birr, 16.

⁴⁰ Bukhari, Jana'iz, 45.

⁴¹ Ibid, Jana'iz, 3.

right. Free her."⁴² Setting a slave free was far better for the master than being punished in the Hereafter because of a wrong act. The Messenger of God always protected and supported widows, orphans, the poor, and the disabled, even before his Prophethood. When he returned home in excitement from Mount Hira after the first Revelation, his wife Khadijah told him:

I hope you will be the Prophet of this community, for you always tell the truth, fulfill your trust, support your relatives, help the poor and weak, and feed guests.⁴³

His compassion even encompassed animals. We hear from him:

A prostitute was guided to truth by God and ultimately went to Paradise because she gave water to a poor dog dying of thirst inside a well. Another woman was sent to Hell because she made a cat die of hunger.⁴⁴

Once while returning from a military campaign, a few Companions removed some young birds from their nest to caress them. The mother bird came back and, not being able to find its babies, began to fly around, calling out for them. When told of this, God's Messenger became angry and ordered the birds to be put back in the nest.⁴⁵

While in Mina, some of his Companions attacked a snake in order to kill it. However, it managed to escape. Watching this from afar, he remarked: "It was saved from your evil, as you were from its evil."⁴⁶ Ibn Abbas reported that God's Messenger, upon observing a man sharpening his knife directly before the sheep to be slaughtered, asked him: "Do you want to kill it more than once?"⁴⁷

His love and compassion for creatures differed from that of today's selfproclaimed humanists. He was sincere and measured in his love and compassion. He was a Prophet raised by God, the Creator and Sustainer of all beings, for the guidance and happiness of conscious beings—humanity and jinn—and the harmony of existence. As such, he lived not for himself but for others. He is a mercy for all the worlds, a manifestation of Compassion.

He eradicated all differences of race and color. Once Abu Dharr got so angry with Bilal that he insulted him: "You son of a black woman!" Bilal came to the Messenger and reported the incident in tears. The Messenger reproached Abu Dharr: "Do you still have a sign of jahiliyah (ignorance)?" Full of repentance, Abu Dharr lay on the ground and said: "I will not raise my head (meaning that he would not get up) unless Bilal puts his foot on it." Bilal forgave him, and they were reconciled.⁴⁸ Such was the bond of kinship and humanity that Islam created among a once-savage people.⁴⁹

⁴² Muslim, Ayman, 31, 33; Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, 3:447.

⁴³ Ibn Sa'd, al-Tabaqat al-Kubra', 1:195.

⁴⁴ Bukhari, Anbiya, 54; Muslim, Salam, 153.

⁴⁵ Abu Dawud, Adab, 164; Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, 1:404.

⁴⁶ Sunan al-Nasa'i, Hajj, 114; Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, 1:385.

⁴⁷ Hakim, Mustadrak, 4:231.

⁴⁸ Bukhari, Iman, 22.

⁴⁹ <http://fgulen.com/en/fethullah-gulens-works/toward-a-global-civilization-of-love-and-tolerance/forgiveness-tolerance-and-dialogue/25226-islam-as-a-religion-of-universal-mercy>