

Lesson 14: All That Is Sacred In Islam



Respecting All That Is Sacred In Islam

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَرْفَعُوا أَصْوَاتَكُمْ فَوْقَ صَوْتِ النَّبِيِّ وَلَا تَجْهَرُوا لَهُ ۗ بِالْقَوْلِ كَجَهْرِ بَعْضِكُمْ لِبَعْضٍ أَن تَحْبَطَ
{أَعْمَالُكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ لَا تَشْعُرُونَ}

O believers, raise not your voices above the Prophet's voice, and be not loud in your speech to him, as you are loud one to another, lest your works fail while you are not aware. (Al-Hujurat 49:2).

With all the different principles and beliefs, the respective elders of each group is respected in a special way. Cities, streets, universities, airports, schools and organizations are named after such people. Likewise, in Islam, individuals and even some plants and inanimate objects are considered sacred.

In Islam, the roots of what is sacred and great is linked to its relationship with Allahﷻ Himself and the stronger that relationship, the more sacred and great they become and we must give and protect the respect due to them. However, note that with regards to to being sacred:

1. Allahﷻ is the source of all sacredness and polytheists that equate others with God, will on the day of resurrection confess to their deviation and say to their imaginary idols – the secret of our misfortune is our equating you (the idols) with the Lord of the Worlds:

{إِذْ نُسَوِّكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ}

***When we made you equal with the Lord of all Being.
(Ash Shu'ara 26:98)***

In the Qur'an, the glorification and perfection of Allahﷻ is repeated often, which means we must respect and sanctify Allahﷻ where we recognise that it cannot even be imagined that Allahﷻ has an iota of imperfection or shortcoming. Not only Allahﷻ in His nature, but His name is also pure:

{سَبِّحْ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الْأَعْلَى}

Magnify the Name of thy Lord the Most High. (Al A'la 87:1).

2. The book of Allahﷻ also is sacred and respected. When Allahﷻ knows the Holy Qur'an as Great:

{وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ}

And the Mighty Qur'an (Al Hijr 15:87).

We must therefore know the Holy Qur'an as Great, and when the Holy Qur'an is known (Holy Qur'an 56:77), we must then revere it, and since the Holy Qur'an is praiseworthy (Qur'an 50:1), we must therefore praise it.

3. The rights of the Divine Guides, all of the Prophets and their successors and especially that of the Prophet (pbuh) and his Purified Household (pbuh), have been given a special status which in the aforementioned Surah¹, the respect they deserve has partly been mentioned such as not going ahead of them, not raising or voice to be louder than theirs, and in other Ayahs, to send our praises to the Prophet (pbuh).

{إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا}

God and His angels bless the Prophet. O believers, do you also bless him, and pray him peace. (Al Ahzab 33:56).

Of course, it must be noted that after the passing of the Prophet, the above respect will also apply to and for visitation of the Prophets resting place, and to the resting places of his Purified Household (pbuh), and Progeny (pbuh), and those who have taken his place, and everyone around him who are associated with him, especially the scholars and just jurists and the religious authorities, as per narrations, those who are in place of the Prophet (pbuh), all deserve our utmost respect. In the narrations it is stated that anyone who refutes a just jurist says, is like the one who refutes what the Purified Household (pbuh), of the Prophet have said, and one who refutes what they have said, is like one who refutes what Allahﷻ says.²

Not only the Prophets in person, but what is linked to them also has sanctity and greatness. In the Holy

Qur'an we read

وَقَالَ لَهُمْ نَبِيُّهُمْ إِنَّ آيَةَ مُلْكِهِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ التَّابُوتُ فِيهِ سَكِينَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَبَقِيَّةٌ مِّمَّا تَرَكَ آلُ مُوسَىٰ وَآلُ هَارُونَ تَحْمِلُهَا
{الْمَلَائِكَةُ إِن فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِينَ}

***And their Prophet said to them, 'The sign of his kingship is that the Ark will come to you, in it a Shechina from your Lord, and a remnant of what the folk of Moses and Aaron's folk left behind, the angels bearing it. Surely in that shall be a sign for you, if you are believers.'* (Al Baqarah 2:248).**

The chest that Prophet Moses' (pbuh) placed him in when she sent floating, was used after his death to place the tablets and scrolls and of what was with him in terms of prophetic miracles and the belongings of his offspring. The chest was so sacred that the Angels would carry it and then bring it back to lead them to victory against an evil powerful tyrant.

4. In Islam, the parents have a special sanctity and greatness associated with them. In the Qur'an, monotheism precedes respecting and doing good to the parents five times and showing gratitude towards them is placed next to showing gratitude to Allahﷻ.

{أَشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ}

'Be thankful to Me, and to thy parents. (Luqman 31: 14).

Respecting the parents is to the point where looking at them with the look of love and respect is considered worship and we are advised to not raise our voices above theirs, and if we go on a trip that causes harm to them is prohibited, and prayers during that travel must be prayed in full (not shortened).

5. In Islam, certain periods of time, such as the Night of Power, some places, such as Mosques, some rocks, such as the Black Stone, some waters, such as Zam-Zam, some soil, such as the soil of Imam Husseinx, some clothes, such as the pilgrimage clothing, are considered sacred and special respect must be duly given to them. Prophet Mosesx in respect of the "Valley of Moses" took off his footwear when he entered:

{فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى}

Put off thy shoes; thou art in the holy valley, Towa. (Taha 20: 12).

The Holy Mosque of Mecca is considered sacred and non-Muslims have no right to enter it

{ إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ }

The idolaters are indeed unclean; so let them not come near the Holy Mosque. (At Tawba 9:28).

Places of worship and mosques are sacred and when we go to such places, we should go clean and well presented.

{ خُذُوا زِينَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ }

Take your adornment at every place of worship. (Al Araf 17:31).

And anyone who is in a state of uncleanliness or impurity (Junub) has no right to pause in a mosque:

{ وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِي سَبِيلٍ حَتَّى تَغْتَسِلُوا }

Or defiled unless you are traversing a way - until you have washed yourselves (An Nissa 4:43).

The Mosque is of such an honourable status that such people as Abraham, Ismael, Zakariyah and Maryam (pbuh), may peace and blessings be upon them all, were charged with the responsibility of purifying them:

{ طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ }

Purify My House (Al Baqarah 2: 125).

Even the mother of Maryam, who thought she was carrying a son, swore her child to serving the Al Aqsa Mosque

{ إِنِّي نَذَرْتُ لَكَ مَا فِي بَطْنِي مُحَرَّرًا }

Lord, I have vowed to Thee, in dedication, what is within my womb. (Al Imran 3:35).

6. A person with belief also has sanctity and greatness, so much so that the honor of the believer is more than the honor of the Ka'baa and the persecution and backbiting them is prohibited and defending their right is obligatory, and even after death, it is prohibited to exhume the grave.

Insulting The Prophet (pbuh), Allah's Defence

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿إِنَّا أَعْطَيْنَاكَ الْكَوْثَرَ ﴿١﴾ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحَرْ ﴿٢﴾﴾

﴿إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ ﴿٣﴾﴾

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate Surely We have given thee abundance; so pray unto thy Lord and sacrifice. Surely he that hates thee, he is the one cut off (Al-Kawthar 108: 1-3).

The stronger the attack on religion and what is sacred in it, the stronger the defence must be. There were many bold attacks upon the Prophet, accused as a sorcerer, fortune teller, poet and possessed, all of which were rebuffed in the Holy Qur'an. He was told that he was possessed by jinn, but Allahﷻ says:

{مَا أَنْتَ بِمَجْنُونٍ}

Thou art not, by the blessing of thy Lord, a man possessed. (Al Qalam 68:2).

He was told that he was not a messenger of God, for which Allahﷻ states:

{إِنَّكَ لَمِنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ}

Thou art truly among the Envoys (messengers) (Ya Sin 36:3).

He was accused of being a poet possessed, but Allahﷻ states:

{وَمَا عَلَّمْنَاهُ الشِّعْرَ وَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَهُ}

We have not taught him poetry; it is not seemly for him. (Ya Sin 36:69).

To that individual, an Ayah was revealed:

{إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ الْأَبْتَرُ}

Certainly, he who insults you is the one who is cut off. (Al Kawthar 108:3)

Indeed, the answer to the one who insults the best of creations as being “cut off” is to be given Kawthar, and the everyone’s eyes were bedazzled and everyone’s mind was awed.

For the last Ayah of Surah Al-Kawthar (108:3), ***we understand that Kawthar is the opposite of “cut off”.***

The Prophet (pbuh) was mocked as being one who is “cut off”³, but Allahﷻ states in the Holy Qur’an “he is the one cut off” (Al-Kawthar 108:3).

“Cut off” is a term used by Arabs to describe one who is left with no heir as a result of having no sons, and with their death, they leave no trace behind. “Kawthar” in this Surah is used as an answer to that mockery, and the best evidence of it are the twelve Divinely Guided leaders from Syeda Fatima(as), the daughter of the Prophet.

Of course, “Kawthar”, or as translated “Abundance”, has a general meaning and includes every abundant good, but not every abundance is “Kawthar”. The Holy Qur’an states:

{ فَلَا تُعْجِبْكَ أَمْوَالُهُمْ وَلَا أَوْلَادُهُمْ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ بِهَا }

{ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَتَزْهَقَ أَنْفُسُهُمْ وَهُمْ كَافِرُونَ }

So let not their possessions or their children please thee; God only desires thereby to chastise them in this present life, and that their souls should depart while they are unbelievers (Al Tawba 9:55).

During the events of the liberation of Mecca, in which the disbelievers entered Islam in waves and waves, Allahﷻ gives the single order of glorification:

{ وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا فَسَبِّحْ }

When comes the help of God, and victory, then glorify (An Nasr 110:2-3).

But in return for being given “Kawthar”, Allahﷻ states to the Prophet:

{ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَأَنْحِرْ }

so pray unto thy Lord and sacrifice (Al Kawthar 108:2).

Indicating the provision of “Kawthar” is more significant than the waves of disbelievers entering Islam.

- [1.](#) Al-Hujurat 49:2
- [2.](#) (Bihar Al Anwar بحار الأنوار) V27 P238
- [3.](#) Having no surviving son to be his heir.

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