

Lesson 28: Etiquettes of Society

Our Selection of Friends

وَيَوْمَ يَعْصُمُ الظَّالِمُ عَلَى يَدِيهِ يَقُولُ يَا لَيْتَنِي أَتَخَذْتُ مَعَ الرَّسُولِ سَبِيلًا يَا وَيْلَتِي لَيْتَنِي لَمْ أَتَخَذْ فُلَانًا خَلِيلًا لَقَدْ أَضَلَّنِي
}عَنِ الذِّكْرِ بَعْدٌ إِذْ جَاءَنِي وَكَانَ الشَّيْطَانُ لِلنِّسَانِ خَذُولًا

Upon the day the evildoer shall bite his hands, saying, 'Would that I had taken a way along with the Messenger!, Alas, would that I had not taken So-and-so for a friend! He indeed led me astray from the Remembrance, after it had come to me; Satan is ever a forsaker of men.' (Al Furqan 25:27-29).

Islam has advised us plentifully on many facets of friendship selecting friends, how to know them, the parameters and borders of friendship, etiquettes of socialising and their rights. It is encouraged to befriend certain individuals, whereas it is prohibited to befriend others. Some of these advices are listed below:

- If you are in doubt with regards to an individual as to whether you should befriend them or not, look at their friends to find out more about them

فانضرعوا الى خلطائهن 119

- Being alone is better than befriending a bad person.
- The Prophet (pbuh) was asked – Who is the best of friends? To which he replied: One who, when you see them reminds you of Allah ﷺ, and with what they say, increases your knowledge, and by their actions, are reminded of Resurrection Day.
- Imam Ali (pbuh) states that it is when you lose your abilities that you can distinguish your true friends

from your enemies.

- Imam Ali (pbuh) states a good friend is the best family.
- In narrations, it has been said that true friendships are tested with anger, money, and travel. If the friendship survives these tests, it is a true one.

Brotherhood

{إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخْوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرَحَّمُونَ}

The believers indeed are brothers; so set things right between your two brothers, and fear God; haply so you will find mercy. (Al Hujurat 49: 10).

One of the features of Islam is that reconciliation starts at the roots of faith. For example, in this Ayah, for reconciliation, the etiquette of an individual and society must be based upon intellectually and foundations of faith. All the faithful are brothers, so why the arguments and ill-feelings?

The utilization of brotherhood is an innovation of Islamic teachings.

At the beginning of Islam, the Prophet along with seven hundred and forty people were at a place called “Nakhila”, when Archangel Jibreel descended and stated that Allah ﷺ has formed contracts of brotherhood between angels, and the Prophet also formed brotherhood relations between his companions in which each individual became the brother of the other – Abu Bakr with Omar, Salman with Abu Dhar, Talha with Zubair, Miqdad with Ammar, Aisha with Hafsa, Um Salma with Saffiya, and the Prophet himself with Imam Ali (pbuh) .[1](#)

The term brotherhood is not limited to that of the male gender, but also encompasses women.

{وَإِنْ كَانُوا إِخْوَةً رَجَالًا وَنِسَاءً}

And if they are brothers, men or women (Al Nissa 4: 176).

What is more important than getting a brother is the protection of the brotherhood. In the narrations, those who dump brotherly relations are strongly condemned, and the advice is that if your brother in faith leaves you, that you should approach and visit them.

صل من قطعك[2](#)

Imam Sadiq(pbu) states that the true believer is the brother of a true believer, so much so they are like one body, if a part of the body becomes ill, the whole body becomes uncomfortable.

The Rights of Our Brothers

The Prophet (pbuh) stated that upon brothers in faith have thirty rights which are expected and demanded of each other, they are:

1. Forgiveness and mercy
2. Keeping each other's secrets
3. Compensating for their errors
4. Accepting their excuse
5. Protecting them from the ill intended
6. Wanting the best for each other
7. Keeping promises
8. Visiting one who is ill
9. Attending their funeral
10. Accepting their invitations and gifts
11. Rewarding in return for gifts
12. Thanking them for their services
13. Strive to help
14. Protecting their honor
15. Attending to their needs
16. Be the means of resolving their problems
17. Guiding them when lost
18. Blessing them when they sneeze
19. Answer their greetings (Salam)
20. Respecting their words
21. Preparing their gift in a good manner

22. Accepting their oath
23. Befriending their friends and not be their enemy
24. Not leaving them where an unfortunate event occurs
25. Anything they want for themselves, should be wanted for them
26. And....

Reconciliation and Peace

Islam looks towards a peaceful and reconciliatory life, one of the Divine blessings that is in the Holy Qur'an, is the affection in the hearts of Muslims. This can be seen in this Ayah:

{إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ}

Remember God's blessing upon you when you were enemies, and He brought your hearts together. (Al Imran 3: 10).

Reconciliation is a reason for the granting of mercy and forgiveness from Allah ﷺ:

{وَإِنْ تُصْلِحُوا وَتَتَقَوَّا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ غَفُورًا رَّحِيمًا}

If you set things right, and are godfearing, God is All-forgiving, All-compassionate. (An Nissa 4: 129).

And whomever intervenes to assist in reconciliation will be the subject of reward themselves:

{مَنْ يَشْفَعْ شَفَاعَةً حَسَنَةً يَكُنْ لَّهُ نَصِيبٌ مِّنْهَا}

Whoso intercedes with a good intercession shall receive a share of it (An Nissa 4:85).

Islam has specified certain rulings with regards to reconciliation between people, such as:

1. Lying is considered a greater sin, however, if utilised for reconciliation will not be considered a sin nor is it punishable.

لا كذب على المصلح

2. Whispering and speaking softly in to the ear is a satanic deed and is not recommended in Islam, but if it is for reconciliation is not prohibited.

لَا خَيْرٌ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِّنْ نِجَوَاهِمُ الَا مِنْ امْرٍ بِصَدَقَةٍ اَوْ مَعْرُوفٍ اَوْ اِصْلَاحٍ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ

3. Acting upon an oath is obligatory and renegeing on an oath is considered a sin and prohibited, but this is forgone if one swears to never reconcile between two people.[3](#)

4. Although the execution of the will of the deceased is obligatory, if one fears it will cause sedition between people it is recommended to withhold executing the will until there is reconciliation between the affected parties.[4](#)

Religious Connections and Relationships

In the twenty first Ayah of Surah Ar Raad, as an indication of the wisdom, Allah ﷺ discusses those who have a relationship with what He has ordered.

{وَالَّذِينَ يَصِلُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ}

Who join what God has commanded shall be joined. (Ar Raad 13:21).

And in narrations we have that what Allah ﷺ has ordered for a strong connection is the familial relationship, meaning the guarding and protection of the strong interfamily relationships as well as the strong link with the Guardian and Divine Leadership and to proactively support the line of Guardianship.[5](#)

Relationships which Allah ﷺ has ordered strong links with include:

1. Cultural links to academics.[6](#)
2. Social links to the people.[7](#)
3. Affectionate relationship with the parents.[8](#)
4. Financial links with those in need.[9](#)
5. Intellectual links with in social circles.[10](#)
6. Political links to the Guardians.[11](#)
7. All forms of relationships with believers.[12](#)
8. Spiritual relationships with religious role models.[13](#)

1. (Bihar Al Anwar V38 P335 بحار الأنوار V38 P335)
 2. (Bihar Al Anwar V78 P71 بحار الأنوار V78 P71)
 3. Surah Al-Baqarah 2:224
 4. Surah Al-Baqarah 2:182
 5. (Tafsir Safi تفسير الصافي)
 6. Holy Quran 16:43, 21:7
 7. Holy Quran 3:200
 8. Holy Quran 2:83, 4:36, 6:151, 17:23, 46:15
 9. Holy Quran 2:245, 57:11
 10. Holy Quran 3:159
 11. Holy Quran 4:59
 12. Holy Quran 49:10
 13. Holy Quran 33:21
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