

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Welcome With Open Arms?

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A child achieves full marks in a SPAG test at school. Another is voted ‘man of the match’ and is the cause of victory for the school team. One can imagine the attention such children would attract. Let us suppose, however, a third child was disabled; does his disability really make him unworthy of the same privilege?

It is quite unfortunate – and very embarrassing – that materialistic progress is considered the sole and only achievement, completely overlooking the virtues and lofty status of the weaker ones among us. Imām Al-Bukhārī رحمه الله has reported a ḥadīth in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ has said:

« هل تنصرون وترزقون إلا بضعفائكم؟! »

“You gain neither victory nor livelihood except through (the blessings and invocations of) the weak among you.”⁽¹⁾

It can generally be noticed that when such an individual is encountered with, he/she becomes the ‘butt’ of all jokes. Islām has abolished such behaviour and granted respect and honour to each of its adherents.

A comment was once made to the Prophet ﷺ regarding his wife, Ṣafīyyah رضي الله عنها, who was petite in nature. He ﷺ replied:

« لقد قلت كلمة لو مزجت بماء البحر لمزجته! »

“You have made such a statement that if it were to be mixed in the water of the ocean, it would pollute the water!”⁽²⁾

The Prophet ﷺ also said:

« كل المسلم على المسلم حرام : دمه وعرضه وماله » .

“The blood, honour and property of a Muslim are sacred to another Muslim.”⁽³⁾

These are just two of the many sacred texts affirming mutual respect amongst all members of the community. But what is Islām’s position with regards to employment; does it discriminate between individuals upon whom different fortunes have been destined?

⁽¹⁾ Al-Bukhārī (2896).

⁽²⁾ Abū Dāwūd (4875) and At-Tirmidhī (2502)

⁽³⁾ Muslim (2564).

All the major books of *Ḥadīth*, *Tafsīr* and *Sīrah* have recorded the fact that one of the two *mu'adhdhins* of *Al-Masjid An-Nabawī*, 'Abdullāh Ibn Umm Maktūm ﷺ, was visually impaired. Despite being blind, the Prophet ﷺ did not consider his disability to be a hindrance in calling to Ṣalāh.

The Holy Qur'ān informs us of the previous nations; Sayyidunā Mūsā ﷺ had a secure means of employment, working for his father-in-law in Madyan (Midian) for a decade.

﴿ قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَنْكِحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَنِي حِجَابٍ فَإِنْ أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ ۖ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ ﴿٢٧﴾ ﴾

“He (the father) said (to Mūsā): ‘I wish to marry to you one of these two daughters of mine, on condition that you act as my employee for eight years. If you then complete ten (years), it will be of your own accord. I do not want to put you in any trouble; you will find me, InShā’Allāh (God-willing), one of the righteous.’”⁽⁴⁾

Let us not forget what the ‘Ulamā’ of *Tafsīr* have written in their commentaries of *Sūrah ṬāHā*, under the āyahs:

﴿ قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ﴿١٥﴾ وَيَسِّرْ لِي أَمْرِي ﴿١٦﴾ وَأَخْلِلْ عُقْدَةَ مِنِّ لِسَانِي ﴿١٧﴾ يَفْقَهُوا قَوْلِي ﴿١٨﴾ ﴾

“He said: ‘My Lord, put my heart at peace for me, make my task easy for me and remove the knot from my tongue so that they may understand my speech.’”⁽⁵⁾

This passage is indicating to a speech impediment, evident from Fir‘awn’s remark:

﴿ أَمْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِّنْ هَذَا الَّذِي هُوَ مَهِينٌ وَلَا يَكَادُ يُبِينُ ﴿٥٢﴾ ﴾

“Or (do you not see that) I am much better than this one (Mūsā) who is worthless and can hardly express himself?”⁽⁶⁾

We can, therefore, conclude that the *Sharīah* does not discriminate between the disabled and the able, provided the disability is no drawback to the job.

When implemented, such teachings of Islām boost the self-esteem of the less-fortunate community, giving them high levels of self-confidence and gratitude. Imām Ibn Kathīr ﷺ, in his *Tafsīr*, relays a dialogue which occurred between Imām Muḥammad Ibn Ka‘b Al-Quraẓī ﷺ and a younger man.

Man: You’re a fine man, had it not been for the fact that you mispronounce words and make grammatical errors when reading!

⁽⁴⁾ [Al-Qaṣaṣ: 28/27].

⁽⁵⁾ [ṬāHā: 20/27].

⁽⁶⁾ [Az-Zukhruf: 43/52].

Al-Qurazī: *My nephew, can you understand me when I speak to you?*

Man: Yes.

Al-Qurazī: *Mūsā (ﷺ) only asked his Rabb to untie the knot on his tongue, just enough for them to fathom his speech.⁽⁷⁾*

Let us not forget that mocking individuals for a past sin/crime is completely *ḥarām*; mocking them for something which is beyond their capacity is pure cruelty and oppression. It is vital to refrain from causing such people to make *du‘ā* against us. Rather, we ought to do whatever we can to acquire their noble *du‘ā* in our favour.

Allāh ﷻ declares in the Holy Qur‘ān:

﴿لَا يُحِبُّ اللَّهُ الْجَهْرَ بِالسُّوءِ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ إِلَّا مَنْ ظَلِمَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ سَمِيعًا عَلِيمًا﴾

“Allāh does not like the evil words to be said openly except from anyone wronged. Allāh is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.”⁽⁸⁾

The Prophet ﷺ has also said:

« واتق دعوة المظلوم ، فإنه ليس بينها وبين الله حجاب . »

*“Fear the *du‘ā* of the oppressed one; for, indeed, between it and Allāh, there lies no barrier.”⁽⁹⁾*

⁽⁷⁾ *Tafsīr Al-Qur‘ān Al-‘Aẓīm* (by Al-Imām Ibn Kathīr ﷺ) under the commentary of [ṬāHā: 20/27].

⁽⁸⁾ [An-Nisā’: 4/148].

⁽⁹⁾ Al-Bukhārī (1496) and Muslim (19).