



NIZAMIYE MOSQUE COMPLEX

“Where heart and mind meet”

BROTHERHOOD IN ISLAM

إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوَيْكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ

The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy {49:10}

1. FIRST ASPECT

They are sinful in the view of truth.

O unjust man nurturing rancour and enmity against a believer! Let us suppose that you were on a ship, or in a house, with nine innocent people and one criminal. If someone were to try to make the ship sink, or to set the house on fire, because of that criminal, you know how great a sinner he would be. You would cry out to the heavens against his sinfulness. Even if there were one innocent man and nine criminals aboard the ship, it would be against all rules of justice to sink it.

So too, if there are in the person of a believer, who may be compared to a dominical dwelling, a Divine ship, not nine, but as many as twenty innocent attributes such as belief, Islam, and neighbourliness; and if you then nurture rancour and enmity against him on account of one criminal attribute that harms and displeases you, attempting or desiring the sinking of his being, the burning of his house, then you too will be a criminal guilty of a great atrocity.

2. SECOND ASPECT

They are also sinful in the view of wisdom, for it is obvious that enmity and love are opposites, just like light and darkness; while maintaining their respective essences, they cannot be combined.

If love is truly found in a heart, by virtue of the predomination of the causes that produce it, then enmity in that heart can only be metaphorical, and takes on the form of compassion. The believer loves and should love his brother, and is pained by any evil he sees in him. He attempts to reform him not with harshness but gently. It is for this reason that the Hadith of the Prophet (saw) says:



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“No believer should be angered with another and cease speaking to him for more than three days.”

If the causes that produce enmity predominate, and true enmity takes up its seat in a heart, then the love in that heart will become metaphorical, and take on the form of artifice and flattery.

O unjust man! See now what a great sin is rancour and enmity toward a brother believer! If you were to say that ordinary small stones are more valuable than the Ka'ba and greater than Mount Uhud, it would be an ugly absurdity. So too, belief which has the value of the Ka'ba, and Islam which has the splendour of Mount Uhud, as well as other Islamic attributes, demand love and concord; but if you prefer to belief and Islam certain shortcomings which arouse hostility, but in reality are like the small stones you too will be engaging in great injustice, foolishness, and sin!

The unity of belief necessitates also the unity of hearts, and the oneness of our creed demands the oneness of our society. You cannot deny that if you find yourself in the same regiment as someone, you will form a friendly attachment to him; a brotherly relation will come into being as a result of your both being submitted to the orders of a single commander. You will similarly experience a fraternal relation through living in the same town with someone. Now there are ties of unity, bonds of union, and relations of fraternity as numerous as the Divine Names that are shown and demonstrated to you by the light and consciousness of belief.

Your Creator, Owner, Object of Worship, and Provider is one and the same for both of you; thousands of things are and the same for you. Your Prophet, your religion, your *qibla* are one and the same; hundreds of things are one and the same for you. Then too your village is one, your state is one, your country is one; tens of things are one and the same for you. All of these things held in common dictate oneness and unity, union and concord, love and brotherhood, and indeed the cosmos and the planets are similarly interlinked by unseen chains. If, despite all this, you prefer things worthless and transient as a spider's web that give rise to dispute and discord, to rancour and enmity, and engage in true enmity towards a believer, then you will understand -unless your heart is dead and your intelligence extinguished- how great is your disrespect for that bond of unity, your slight to that relation of love, your transgression against that tie of brotherhood!



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3. THIRD ASPECT

In accordance with the meaning of the verse:

No bearer of burdens can bear the burden of another {6:164}

which expresses pure justice, to nurture rancour and enmity towards a believer is like condemning all the innocent attributes found in him on account of one criminal attribute, and is hence an act of great injustice. If you go further and include in your enmity all the relatives of a believer on account of a single evil attribute of his, then, in accordance with the following verse in which the active participle is in the intensive form,

Verily man is much given to wrongdoing {14:34}

you will have committed a still greater sin and transgression, against which truth, the Shari'a and the wisdom of Islam combine to warn you. How then can you imagine yourself to be right, and say: "I am in the right"?

In the view of truth, the cause for enmity and all forms of evil is in itself evil and is dense like clay: it cannot infect or pass on to others. If someone learns from it and commits evil, that is another question. Good qualities that arouse love are luminous like love; it is part of their function to be transmitted and produce effects. It is for this reason that the proverb has come into being, "The friend of a friend is a friend," and also that it is said, "Many eyes are beloved on account of one eye."

So O unjust man! If such be the view of truth, you will understand now, if you have the capacity for seeing the truth, how great an offence it is to cherish enmity for the likeable and innocent brothers and relatives of a man you dislike.