

IS ISLAM ANTISEMITIC? ¹

Is it true that all Jews are cursed and we Muslims should not have friendship with them?

Many misconceptions about this subject have come out of the lack of knowledge of Islam by others, and have to be cleared.

The thought that Islam is antisemitic is not at all true. Islam is declared as a religion of peace and Justice. Any war or punishment meted out to sinners, drafted in the Shariah Law, has been formulated by the Supreme Creator to maintain that peace. This is because the Quran is the latest Scripture sent by the Creator for the guidance of mankind, and HE HIMSELF has promised to preserve it from corruption till the end of time. If all follow its guidance, there is no doubt that man can live in peace and security. ^{2: 38}

When we ponder over the verses, nowhere in the Quran or Hadith (the way of our Prophet) does it say that we should not have friendship with Jews or, in that matter, with any other people who do not follow our religion. On the other hand, many verses in the Quran guide us on the means to show love and respect towards others.

"There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing." —Surah Al-Baqarah, 2: 256

Allah declares and curses the one who is unkind to the orphan, does not encourage the feeding of the poor, is heedless of what he says in his Prayer, and those who pray only to be seen (show off), while, when it comes to helping his neighbour, he turns away. ^{Sura Al-Maun 107}

Allah even declares: [Under certain conditions] *"And [lawful in marriage are] chaste women from among the believers and chaste women from among those who were given the Scripture before you, when you have given them their due compensation, desiring chastity, not unlawful sexual intercourse or taking [secret] lovers. And whoever denies the faith - his work has become worthless, and he, in the Hereafter, will be among the losers."* ^{Surah Maidah, 5: 5}

IF THEY WERE CURSED, WOULD SUCH MARRIAGES HAVE BEEN ALLOWED?

*The condition for marrying Jewish and Christian women is that it must not be for lust or illegal sex. However, if a man finds no Muslim woman to preserve his chastity, he may marry a chaste and devout Jewish or Christian woman. This means that one who is already married should not abandon his wife for another just for their attraction or lust. In cases where it becomes necessary to preserve his chastity, the women chosen should be chaste and righteous. Such women will surely obey their husbands and accept Islam as their way of life. Most men ignore this command. They only declare that since the Quran allows marrying Jews and Christians without any inhibitions, and ignore the warning that **"who denies the Faith, their deeds would become worthless"**.*

¹ Please note that the reference from the Quran has been given as sura: verse.
For example, Surah Baqarah: verse Number 2, is 2: 2

The Quran declares that *all the Prophets* sent on earth brought the same message:

THE FIRST CRITERION: “Worship NONE other than the Supreme Creator”: who Created the Universe and provides all comforts for mankind.

THE SECOND CRITERION is doing good deeds. HE declares that being kind and merciful to fellow beings, whether human beings or animals, is what would bring man closer to their LORD, and grant him the greatest reward of Heaven, where there will be no rancour or evil.

Most of the other religions ignored the First criterion.

Thus, it is not enough if we have a Muslim name or even if we are saying our five prayers. We will certainly be punished if we show hatred or cause harm to any other life unjustly.

HE further helps us to differentiate between *good deeds and evil*.

For example, HE has forbidden dealing with Riba, committing Zina (illegal sex), causing corruption, cheating others in measure and weight, usurping others’ property unjustly, etc.

All other religions have recorded this concept of Monotheism and doing good, and the latest were the Jews and Christians, whose scriptures are still present among them. The problem is that these Scriptures have been interpolated and altered to suit the desires of those who presented them to the common people. ^{2: 79}

Thus, some of the Jews became arrogant and considered themselves the chosen people who have a right to behave as they wish towards others. They did not feel mercy or pity towards their fellow beings.

“Then your hearts became hardened after that, being like stones or even harder. For indeed, there are stones from which rivers burst forth, and some of them split open, and water comes out, while there are some, who fall in prostration in fear of Allah. And Allah is not unaware of what you do.” ^{-2: 74}

It is such Jews who defiantly caused corruption in the land, and looked down upon others, who were cursed by GOD (Allah in Arabic). However, Allah declares that all the people of the Scriptures were not evil: “They are not [all] the same; among the People of the Scripture is a community standing [in obedience], reciting the verses of Allah during periods of the night and prostrating.” ^{3:113}

لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً مِّنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ

“And among *the People of the Scripture* is he who, if you entrust him with a great amount [of wealth], he will return it to you. And among them is he who, if you entrust him with a [single] silver coin, he will not return it to you unless you are constantly standing over him [demanding it]. That is because they say, ‘There is no blame upon us concerning the unlearned [who are not Jews].’ And they speak untruth about Allah while they know [it].” ^{3: 75}.

Hence, it is clear that *it is those who have ignored the commands of Allah* and who arrogantly disobeyed HIM who have been reprimanded and threatened with dire consequences.

This we can find when we go through the life of our Prophet ﷺ, we come to know how, in various circumstances, he and the later Caliphs stood for Justice, and judged the people according to their wrongdoing, no matter to what religion they belonged.

1. When a Jewish woman found joy in throwing garbage upon the Prophet while he passed by and stopped doing so for a few days, he enquired and, finding her ill, offered to help her.
2. In a case where a Muslim blamed a Jew for having stolen his armour, our dear Prophet ﷺ, on finding the Jew innocent, ordered the Muslim to be punished and acquitted the Jew.²
3. When Umar (ral) went on one of his rounds and found an old Jew begging in the streets, he immediately ordered his men to help him and provide for his food and shelter. He reprimanded his men for having left the Jew to beg.
4. When the Prophet ﷺ travelled to Madinah and was made Head of the State, he made a treaty with the Jews based completely on fairness and equal opportunities. It was when they betrayed the trust and broke the treaty they had made that the Prophet ﷺ ordered them to leave the city.
5. The betrayal of these Jewish tribes reached such an extent that they had to be fought against to retain the peace they had obtained in Medina, after having suffered the tortures of the Quraish in Mecca.
6. Here Allah orders the Muslims to fight against them till peace is restored. Yet, there were conditions laid down by which the enemy should not be tortured, women and children not harmed, fruit trees should not be destroyed, etc. While this is the norm in any war, Islam strictly forbids such outlandish behaviour, and orders Muslims to be kind to those who seek refuge and take them where they can hear what Islam truly is, and then take them to a place of safety.

Therefore, we should realise that all Jews are not cursed in the Quran, and we are not forbidden to befriend them, unless there is fear of their betrayal of our ranks during war.

I am sure no government would leave unpunished those who would betray their country.

Hence, let us realise that Islam does not preach hatred towards any one religion.

It teaches us to hate evil deeds, not the person who does them.

And no religion can be hated for the wrong done by some black sheep present among them.

I hope the world will understand the Greatness of Islam, whose laws are universal and just.

ISLAM DOES NOT TEACH HATRED OF FELLOW BEINGS, BUT TEACHES HATRED OF EVIL DEEDS.

² The story of To'mah who hid stolen armour in the Jew's house-
Source: The Holy Quran, King Fadh publications, Tafseer No. 621

