



## ENMITY

### العداوة

#### Objectives >>>

#### Students should:

- That we are only allowed to be enemies with people if they are enemies of Allah (SWT) or the Prophet
- That sometimes we do not like people or we don't get along with some people for some reason  
That we are not permitted to be bad to people who are bad to us
- The principles of dealing with those we don't get along with

## SOCIAL ISLAM

## LEVEL 3

### Enmity

Ibn 'Abbas, a close companion of the Prophet (saw) reported that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: "The strongest faith is to be sincere for the sake of Allah, to hate for the sake of Allah (al-Tabarrī), to love for the sake of Allah (al-Tawallī), and to discard for the sake of Allah."

### AL-TABARRĪ

This means to consider the enemies of Allah (SWT) as our enemies. This includes people like:

- Those who wage war against Islam and kill and hurt Muslims
- Those who mock Islam and spread lies about Islam

When the Prophet (saw) was asked about the most important action for a faithful person, he said:

"The best and the strongest channel is to have friendship for the sake of Allah and to harbour enmity for the pleasure of Allah. Loving the friends of Allah and expressing dislike for the enemies of Allah."<sup>i</sup>

### DISLIKING PEOPLE

Sometimes we do not like people or don't get along with people for some reason. It could be because that person has treated us unfairly or done something that hurt us.

When we feel that someone has hurt us or been unfair to us, there are a few steps we should take:

- Ask ourselves: ‘are they really being unfair to me’ or ‘did they really mean to hurt me?’
- Did I do something to them that made them do what they did to me?
- How can I stop them from hurting me without making a bigger problem for myself?
- How can I make this person into my friend?

Instead of breaking relations with the person, getting angry with them, or getting revenge against them, we should try to keep calm and solve the problem.

## **POTATOES GONE BAD**

A kindergarten teacher has decided to let her class play a game. The teacher told each child in the class to bring along a plastic bag containing a few potatoes. Each potato will be given a name of a person that the child hates, so the number of potatoes that a child will put in his/her plastic bag will depend on the number of people he/she hates.

So when the day came, every child brought some potatoes with the name of the people he/she hated. Some had 2 potatoes; some 3 while some had up to 5 potatoes.

The kindergarten teacher then told the children to carry with them the potatoes in the plastic bag wherever they go (even to the toilet) for one week. Days after days passed by, and the children started to complain due to the unpleasant smell let out by the rotten potatoes.

Besides, those having 5 potatoes also had to carry heavier bags. After 1 week, the children were relieved because the game had finally ended.

The kindergarten teacher asked: ‘How did you feel while carrying the potatoes with you for 1 week?’ The children let out their frustrations and started complaining of the trouble that they had to go through having to carry the heavy and smelly potatoes wherever they went. Then the kindergarten teacher told them the hidden meaning behind the game.

The kindergarten teacher said: ‘This is exactly the situation when you carry your hatred for somebody inside your heart. The stench of hatred will contaminate your heart and you will carry it with you wherever you go. If you cannot tolerate the smell of rotten potatoes

for just one week, can you imagine what is it like to have the stench of hatred in your heart for your lifetime?’

**Moral:** Throw away any hatred for anyone from your heart so that you will not carry sins for a lifetime. Forgiving others is the best attitude to take: ‘Learn to Forgive and Forget.’

## **PRINCIPLES OF DEALING WITH OUR ENEMIES**

In Islam we are not permitted to be bad to our enemies or people we dislike just because they have been bad to us especially if they are Muslims.

When Imam ‘Ali (as) was struck with a sword by Ibn Muljam, the people chased Ibn Muljam and brought him to the Imam. Ibn Muljam’s hands were tied with rope so tight that it was piercing his flesh. The Imam (as) turned towards the Muslims and said:

“You should not be so cruel with your fellow-beings, slacken his ropes, don't you see that they are cutting his flesh and he is in agony?”

He even commanded the Muslims to give milk to Ibn Muljam to quench his thirst.

## **CONVERT YOUR ENEMIES TO FRIENDS**

A neighbour of the Prophet that tried her best to irritate him by throwing garbage in his way every day. One day, when he walked out of his home there was no garbage. This made the Prophet inquire about the old woman and he came to know that she was sick. The Prophet went to visit her and offer any assistance she might need. The old woman was extremely humbled and at the same time ashamed of her actions in light of the concern that the Prophet showed her.

By seeing the example of compassion of Prophet Muḥammad, she became convinced that Islam must be the true religion and followed the Prophet (saw).

## **ASSESS YOURSELF**

When someone has enmity towards us, we should first assess ourselves and ask, “Did we do anything to trigger this enmity?” We need to take account of our own deeds as Satan will always give us excuses for our own bad actions.

The Prophet (saw) says that when Gabriel descended upon him he would constantly ask him to remind his community to:

- Not worship idols
- Don't make enemies for themselves

Imam 'Ali (as) says:

“The peak of ignorance is to make others hate you”

We should be careful not to create or cause enmity by saying or doing things, which may hurt someone.

Imam 'Ali (as) says:

“Everything has a seed, do not sow the seed of enmity. Perhaps an unnecessary joke may hurt someone and create hatred”

The Prophet said:

“Like for others what you like for yourself...do not swear at people since they will become your enemies.”

## DO NOT ANNOUNCE

If we dislike someone or have enmity with someone we should not announce or express it. In contrast we should express friendship and love for each other.

Imam al-Şādiq (as) says:

“It is sufficient for me to know who my enemies are, I do not need to express this to them”

Imam 'Ali (as) says:

“among the bad choices is exposing one's enemies”

If we really cannot be nice and show goodness to a person, we should at least keep quiet and try to ignore them. We should try our best not to show our hatred to the person, no matter how much they may annoy us.

## FAIRNESS TO ENEMIES

Islam teaches us that we should be friendly to all people. It teaches us that we should deal with justice and fairness even with our enemies. Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an:

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah as witnesses to fair dealings and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just, that is next to piety. Fear Allah, indeed Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do.”

The Prophet (saw) showed fairness to his enemies, even the enemies in religion:

- He made treaties with the Jews and pagans and honoured the treaties until the other party broke them
- He received the Christians of Najrān with kindness in his Mosque in Medina. They argued with him about Islam but he returned them with honour and respect.

## UNITE PEOPLE

If we are the third party in a conflict between two people in the family or community, we should make sure we are not talebearers or gossips and we should make sure we are not fuelling the fire. Tale-bearing is not loyalty or a sign of friendship. We are even allowed to lie in order to decrease tension between people. We should try to bridge gaps between people rather than making the gaps bigger.

## FORGIVING ENEMIES

Forgiving each other, especially forgiving one's enemies is one of the most important Islamic teachings. Allah has described Believers in Qur'an as:

“Those who avoid major sins and acts of indecencies and when they are angry they forgive” (42:37)

The forgiveness desired by Islam is that we forgive when we have the power to take revenge.

“Of all the things we can give other people in life, forgiveness is one of those that requires the most effort.

## Review Questions

### Q1. What is al-Tabarrī

- a. Disliking your enemies
- b. To consider the enemies of Allah as our enemies
- c. To love those who love Allah

### Q2. What is one of the principles of dealing with our enemies?

- a. Badmouth them
- b. Forgive them
- c. Beat them up

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(Al-Kafi Vol 2 pg. 125)

References:

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