

Slaves of the All-Merciful



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Introduction



*The slaves of the All-Merciful are those who walk with humility on the earth,
and who, when the ignorant speak to them, say, "Peace";*

those who pass the night prostrating and standing before their Lord;

*those who say, "Our Lord, avert us from the punishment of Hell, its
punishment is inescapable pain. It is indeed an evil lodging and abode."*

*Those who, when they spend, are neither extravagant nor mean, but take a
stance midway between the two.*

*Those who do not call on any other god together with Allah and do not kill
anyone Allah has made inviolate, except with the right to do so, and do not
fornicate; anyone who does this shall pay the penalty and on the Day of Rising
his punishment will be doubled and he will be humiliated in it timelessly, for
ever, except for those who turn in repentance and believe and act rightly. Allah
will transform the wrong actions of such people into good — Allah is Ever-
Forgiving, Most Merciful — for certainly all who repent and act rightly have
turned sincerely towards Allah.*

*Those who do not bear false witness and who when they pass by worthless talk,
pass by with dignity.*

*Those who, when they are reminded of the signs of their Lord, do not turn their
backs, deaf and blind to them.*

*Those who say, "Our Lord, give us joy in our wives and our children and make
us a good example for those who are God-fearing."*

Such people will be repaid for their steadfastness with the Highest Paradise, where they will meet with welcome and with "Peace". They will remain in it timelessly for ever. What an excellent lodging and abode!

Say: "What has My Lord to do with you if you do not call on Him? But you have denied the truth, so punishment is bound to come." (25:63-77)

Allah, exalted is He, only created human beings to worship Him. He sent us His Messengers to teach us how to perfect our submission until our hearts are purified and our devotion is complete and true. He honoured those who have achieved this high status by referring to them in the Majestic Qur'an as His slaves. In the struggle between right guidance and misguidance, which has gone on throughout man's history, these great ones won the highest victory. They gained mastery over their own selves and submitted them in complete obedience to Allah. As a reward He honoured them with a special relationship and joined their name with His. In the last verses of Surat al-Furqan, He calls them His slaves, the slaves of the All-Merciful, and outlines the special characteristics that distinguish them from other human beings.

The slaves of the All-Merciful are the living proof of Islam. In return for their obedient devotion, He gives them His special attention and protection. The Muslims and all people depend on these because if it were not for their worship, Allah would destroy the human race. When they are no more, the Last Day will come on the earth, and this is confirmed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who said that the Hour will not come until only evil people remain on the earth. (Muslim, Ahmad and Ibn Majah)

Slaves of the All-Merciful! In the above verses of Surat al-Furqan, Allah, exalted is He, mentions the special characteristics of these elite human beings whom He has raised to a very high status amongst His creation, both in this world and the Hereafter.

Slaves of the All-Merciful! Allah, exalted is He, honours His special slaves by joining their name with His.

Slaves of the All-Merciful! They have human form but they are not like other human beings. They are very near to Allah, exalted is He. They are the ones about whom He says:

Yes, the friends of Allah will feel no fear and will know no sorrow.
(10:62)

Slaves of the All-Merciful! They are the ones whom Allah, exalted is He, describes in the *hadith qudsi* when He says:

My slave draws nearer to Me by nothing more pleasing to Me than what I have made obligatory on him, and then continues to draw nearer to Me by supererogatory devotions until I love him: and when I love him I become his hearing with which he hears, his sight with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Should he ask of Me, I will surely grant his request; should he ask Me for protection I will surely protect him. Never do I hesitate in anything as I hesitate in taking the soul of My believing slave: he dislikes death, and I dislike displeasing him, but it is something inevitable. (Al-Bukhari & Muslim).

Slaves of the All-Merciful! They are the ones who will be safe on the Day of Greatest Terror.

The greatest terror will not grieve them, and the angels will meet them, "This is your day which you were promised." (21:103)

Slaves of the All-Merciful! They are those on the straight path who say:

"Our Lord is Allah", and then go straight, on them will the angels descend. "Do not fear and do not grieve but rejoice in the Garden that you have been promised!" (41:30-32)

Slaves of the All-Merciful! They are the people whom Allah, exalted is He, ordered His Messenger ﷺ to keep company with.

Keep yourself patiently with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, desiring His Face. (18:28)

Slaves of the All-Merciful! They are the people beloved of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Abu Sa'id al-Khudri ؓ related: Once the Prophet entered the mosque and found a group of the Companions sitting together in remembrance of Allah and he asked them: "Why are you gathered here?" "We are gathered here to remember Allah and to thank Him for the gift of Islam," they replied. "By Allah! Are you only gathered for this reason?" he asked them. "By Allah! We are only gathered for this reason," they replied. The Prophet repeated his question three times and they replied three times with the same answer. After this he said: "I did not ask you again and again because I didn't believe you. I asked you because the angel Gabriel, peace be upon him, came and told me that Allah, exalted is He, is proud of you and is praising you amongst His angels because of what you are doing." (Muslim)

Slaves of the All-Merciful! They are the ones whose souls are tranquil and whose hearts have found peace.

Those who have *iman* and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah. Only in the remembrance of Allah can the heart find peace. (13:28)

O self at rest and at peace, return to your Lord well-pleasing and well-pleased! Enter among My slaves! Enter My Garden. (89:30-32)

Have they not achieved the ultimate goal of Islam?

What has been mentioned here about the slaves of the All-Merciful is like a drop in the ocean in comparison to their real worth. If we desire to be one of them, if we long to attain to their exalted ranks, we must hasten to learn about their special qualities and strive to imitate them. Islam is about striving for perfection according to the example of our beloved Prophet ﷺ and the noble ones whose hearts have been illuminated by the light that he brought. The slaves of the All-Merciful are living proof of the authenticity of the Message of Islam. They walk in the footsteps of the Messenger and his Companions, sitting at the feet of the noble scholars and keeping company with the right-acting. They have struggled with their selves and increased their devotions until they have become beloved to the All-Merciful, and He has purified their hearts, illuminated them and drawn them near to Him.

If we desire the greatest gift Allah, exalted is He, bestows on a human being: to be raised among the ones who are connected to Him, the slaves of the All-Merciful, then we must follow in their noble footsteps. May Allah grant us success. Ameen.

The great honour of being selected as Allah's slave

Some people who claim to follow the revealed books have misinterpreted the biblical statement that Allah created man in His own image, taking only the superficial meaning of this profound statement instead of seeking the sublime possibility of our human potential. They claim that it is better to be a son of God than a slave of Allah. This comparison clearly indicates a lack of knowledge of *tawheed*, which is the science by which we understand the unity of Allah, the unity of His Lordship of His creation, and the unity of His names and attributes. Allah, exalted is He, has described Himself in the Noble Qur'an with these words: "There is nothing like Him" (42:11). The observable natural order in the universe and the earth clearly indicates that it has emanated from one unique independent source. It is this unique source, our Creator, Allah, exalted is He, whom we worship. A son is a duplicate of his father, having similar attributes and an independent will. Thus, if Allah were to have a son, there would be two independent creators and consequently a conflict of wills resulting in chaos. This is inconceivable, and people commit a serious logical error by attributing divinity to the prophet Isa (Jesus) ﷺ who was given birth to by his mother and seen to eat, drink and walk in the marketplace. While committing this error, they somehow manage to overlook the even more miraculous creation of their original ancestor, the prophet Adam ﷺ although his origin is described without contradiction in all the revealed books.

To be a slave is to be abased or to abase yourself, either willingly or unwillingly, to someone or something that you are completely dependant upon. The opposite condition is to be a free person. The question is, "How can any human beings claim to be free while their lives are

dominated by their dependence on this world?" We humans, who must eat, drink, work and rest, are slaves to both our real physical needs and our imaginary desires, and we devote most of our time and effort to fulfilling them. Is there anyone of us not devoting himself to a goal of some kind, seeking wealth or power, acquiring a symbol of worldly success or trying to attract the attention of a suitable mate? In spite of all our concerted efforts, our effect on the universe, even our success in gaining control over natural events has been quite insignificant. Even our most brilliant nuclear physicists cannot control the complex processes that take place within their own bodies. It would be wiser to admit our incapacity before our Creator.

Few people realise that a life spent pursuing the perceived symbols of material success is a life spent in slavery. When slavery was abolished in the USA, did African Americans become free? Free perhaps from the visible shackles of their tangible owners, but never free from the invisible bonds of their intangible desires. Their only freedom and our only freedom, is freedom of choice – freedom to choose the master to whom we devote our time and effort.

The bonds that enslave people to this material world are bonds of fear. Fear of death, hunger, rejection, loss, humiliation and failure. Islam, submission to the Unique Creator, the Eternal Source and Destination of all, teaches us that the life we have been given in this world is for a limited time only, during which our provision is guaranteed, and so all these fears are unfounded. The All-Merciful Creator has provided us with guidance on a straight path through this life, if we follow it. What we should fear is that He might allow us to go astray or even deny His guidance, thus preventing our safe return to Him and condemning ourselves to an eternity of misery and suffering. He is the Independent, the Before Endless Time, the Absolute Source of the creation, the Bringer into Being, the Sustainer, the Provider, the Destroyer and the Going On After Endless Time. These are only a few of His Divine Names by which He manifests His Reality in His universe for those who possess intelligence.