

111957 - Feelings of love towards people vary

the question

What is the reason that makes the Muslim have feelings of love towards a few of the Muslims and not others?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The Muslim has many rights over his fellow Muslim, including:

The Right of brotherhood which Allaah mentions in His Book, where He says (interpretation of the meaning): “The believers are nothing else than brothers (in Islamic religion)” [al-Hujuraat 49:10].

He has the right of loyalty and support which are mentioned in the verse (interpretation of the meaning): “The believers, men and women, are Awliyaa’ (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another” [al-Tawbah 9:71].

The Muslim also has the right over his fellow Muslim that he should love good for him and wish for happiness and guidance without any hatred, envy or resentment.

It was narrated from Anas ibn Maalik (may Allaah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allaah be upon him) said: “No one of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” Narrated by al-Bukhaari (13) and Muslim (45).

On this basis, he should have a certain amount of love for all Muslims, Arabs and non-Arabs, near and far, white and black, which stems from the belief in Tawheed that they have in common. This is love that stems from love of Allaah that is instilled in the heart of every Muslim, because the one

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who loves a thing loves those who love it too.

Nevertheless, the fact that the level of the love that one Muslim has for another may vary is nothing strange, and there is nothing wrong with it according to the laws of both sharee'ah and nature, for two main reasons:

The first reason is that the Muslims vary in righteousness and piety, and they are of varying degrees of attitude, etiquette and chivalry. Because love basically stems from a Muslim's commitment to the commands of Allaah, this love varies according to the differences in righteousness from one Muslim to another.

This is something that is well known. Do you not see that the Muslim is obliged to love all the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allaah be upon him), yet at the same time he has to single out the ten who were given the glad tidings of Paradise for extra love and respect, and that is only because of the differences in their status before Allaah.

The second reason is the presence of other causes of love in some Muslims and not others. Love is not restricted to one reason only, which is adherence to obedience to Allaah; rather it has many other causes, including compatibility between the hearts of those who love one another and spiritual harmony between them. Kindness and favours are among the most important causes of creating love, and good character and appearance are also important motives of love.

If all of these causes or some of them are combined in one person, he will be loved greatly, and he will be closer to people's hearts than anyone else.

We will quote here some useful words by the great scholar Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (may Allaah have mercy on him) in which he explains the motives and causes of love, and how these vary among people. He (may Allaah have mercy on him) says:

Compatibility between souls is one of the strongest causes of love. Every person is attracted

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towards that which is compatible with him, and this compatibility is of two types: original compatibility which is ingrained in the essence and that which comes later because of because of living together or having something in common.

If your aims match his aims, there will be harmony between your soul and his, but if the aims are different, then harmony will no longer exist.

As for original compatibility, it is a kind of similarity in attitude and similarity of souls. Each soul longs for other souls that are similar to it, because what is similar to something is naturally attracted to it, so the two souls may be similar in original creation, thus there will be a natural attraction to one another.

This is what made some people say that love is not only caused by physical beauty, and the lack of physical beauty does not mean that there can be no love; rather it is similarity between souls and similarity in their characteristics which are created in them that matter.

The reality of love is that it is like a mirror in which the lover sees his characteristics and kindness in the image of the one he loves, so in reality he loves nothing but himself and his characteristics and the one who has similar characteristics.

Hence noble, pure and sublime souls love the characteristics of perfection in particular, so the dearest things to them are knowledge, bravery, dignity, generosity, kindness, patience and steadfastness, because these characteristics are compatible with the essence of these souls, unlike base and mean souls, which are far away from loving these characteristics. Many people are motivated to be generous and kind because of their extreme love for these characteristics and the pleasure they find in doing these things, to such an extent that al-Ma'moon said: Forgiveness was made so dear to me that I am afraid that I will not be rewarded for it. And it was said to Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allaah have mercy on him): Did you acquire this knowledge for the sake of Allaah? He said: To do something for the sake of Allaah is very rare, but it was something made

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dear to me, so I did it. Someone else said: I rejoice in giving and enjoy it far more than the one who takes from me rejoices in what he takes.

With regard to the lovers of knowledge, their love for knowledge is greater than the love of anyone else or anything else. Many of them will not be distracted from it by the most beautiful of human images.

Our Shaykh – meaning Ibn Taymiyah – told me: I felt sick and the doctor said to me: Your reading and discussing issues of knowledge is making your sickness worse. I said to him: I cannot stay away from that, and I shall discuss the issue on the basis of your (medical) knowledge. Is it not the case that when the soul feels joy, this gives strength to the body and wards off disease? He said yes. I said: Then my soul feels happy with knowledge and thus my body becomes stronger and this helps me to recover. He said: This is not part of our treatment, or words to that effect

If the love relationship is based on similarity and harmony, then it will be reinforced and become stronger, and nothing could remove it except something stronger than the cause of it, and if it is not based on similarity and harmony, then it is no more than love for a reason, which will disappear when the reason disappears.

Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allaah have mercy on him) narrated in his Musnad the hadeeth of 'Aa'ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her): A woman used to go to Quraysh and make them laugh. She came to Madeenah and stayed with a woman who also made people laugh. The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allaah be upon him) said: With whom is So and so staying? She said: With So and so, who makes people laugh. He said: "Souls are like conscripted soldiers; those whom they recognize, they get along with, and those whom they do not recognize, they will not get along with." The original version of this hadeeth is in al-Saheeh.

If you look at creation, you will hardly find any two people who love one another except that there is some similarity between them or they have something in common with regard to deeds,

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characteristics or goals. If the goals, characteristics, deeds or ways differ, there can only be aversion and distance between their hearts. It is sufficient to note the saheeh hadeeth from the Messenger of Allaah (blessings and peace of Allaah be upon him): ““The believers, in their mutual mercy, love and compassion, are like a (single) body; if one part of it feels pain, the rest of the body will join it in staying awake and suffering fever.”

End quote.

Rawdat al-Muhibbeen, 66-74

And Allaah knows best.