128862 - How to Treat Non-Muslims

the question

What is the Islamic view of humanity? Does it encourage us to love and respect others as human beings, regardless of their religion or race?

Summary of answer

Here is how to treat non-Muslims:
1. Islam urges Muslims to show kindness to parents even if they are non-Muslims.
2. Islam advises Muslims to treat neighbors kindly even if they are not Muslim.
3. Islam encourages Muslims to ensure justice and show kindness to non-Muslims who are not fighting Muslims.
4. Islam prohibits killing non-Muslims living under Muslim rule.
5. Islam prohibits wronging a mu‘ahid, detracting from his rights, or burdening him with more work.
6. Islam prohibits committing transgression and commands justice.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Islamic view of humanity

The Islamic view of humanity is filled with mercy and compassion, and it cannot be otherwise, because the Islamic religion is the last of the religions that were prescribed by Allah, may He be exalted, and He commanded all of mankind to enter this religion. He revealed this religion and sent it down to the most compassionate of mankind, Muhammad (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). This is confirmed in the Book of Allah, where He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the ‘Alamin (mankind, jinns and all that exists).” [al-Anbiya 21:107].

How to treat non-Muslims

1- With regard to that, there are commands in the Quran and Sunnah to the Muslims, instructing them to call people to affirm the Oneness of Allah (Tawhid), and to offer their wealth, time and selves for that purpose.

This is only out of compassion and mercy towards all people, so as to save them from worshipping people and calling them to worship the Lord of all people; to save them from the constraints of this world and bring them to the abundance of this world and the Hereafter. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Let there be a group among you who call others to goodness, encourage what is good, and forbid what is evil—it is they who will be successful.” [Al `Imran 3:104]

2- Showing kindness to parents even if they are non-Muslims and even if they (parents) were to try hard to keep their children away from Islam and tell them to associate others with Allah and to disbelieve. Concerning that Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And We have enjoined on man (to be dutiful and good) to his parents. His mother bore him in weakness and hardship upon weakness and hardship, and his weaning is in two years; give thanks to Me and to your parents, unto Me is the final destination.

But if they (both) strive with you to make you join in worship with Me others that of which you have no knowledge, then obey them not, but behave with them in the world kindly, and follow the path of him who turns to Me in repentance and in obedience. Then to Me will be your return, and I shall tell you what you used to do.” [Luqman 31:14-15]

2- Islam advises us to treat neighbours kindly , even if they are not Muslim. Allah says

(interpretation of the meaning):

“Worship Allah alone and associate none with Him. And be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, near and distant neighbours, close friends, needy travellers, and those bondspeople in your possession. Surely Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful.” (An-Nisa' 4:36)

Al-Qurtubi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

I say: based on that, kind treatment of neighbours is enjoined and is recommended, whether they are Muslim or not. And this is the right thing to do. Kind treatment may be in the sense of helping or it may be in the sense of being kind, refraining from annoyance and standing by them. Al-Bukhari narrated from ‘Aishah that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Jibril kept urging me to treat neighbours kindly until I thought that he would make them heirs.” And it was narrated from Abu Shurayh that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “By Allah, he does not believe; by Allah, he does not believe; by Allah, he does not believe.” It was said: O Messenger of Allah, who is that? He said: “The one whose neighbour is not safe from his annoyance.” This is general in meaning and applies to all neighbours, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) affirmed that the neighbour should not be annoyed by swearing three times and stating that the one who annoys his neighbour is not a believer in the complete sense. So the believer should avoid annoying his neighbour and refrain from doing what Allah and His Messenger have forbidden; he should strive to do that which pleases Him and encourage others to do likewise.

4- Ensuring justice and showing kindness to non-Muslims who are not fighting Muslims.

Concerning that Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equity.” [al-Mumtahanah 60:8]

“In other words, Allah does not forbid you to be kind, uphold ties, return favours and be fair

towards the mushrikeen (polytheists), whether they are relatives and others, so long as they are not fighting you because of your religion or seeking to drive you out of your homes.

So there is nothing wrong with you upholding ties with them, because upholding ties with them in this case does not involve anything that may lead to negative consequences." (Tafsir al-Sa'di, p. 856)

5- Islam prohibits killing non-Muslims living under Muslim rule.

It was narrated from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amr (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever kills a mu'ahid (a non-Muslim living under Muslim rule) will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, although its fragrance may be detected from a distance of forty years." Narrated by al-Bukhari, 2995

"What is meant is one who has a deal with the Muslims, whether that is by paying jizyah or a peace treaty with the Muslim ruler or a guarantee of safety from a Muslim." (Fath al-Bari by Ibn Hajar, 12:259)

6- Islam prohibits wronging a mu'ahid, detracting from his rights, or burdening him with more work.

There is a hadith that speaks of that. The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "If anyone wrongs a mu'ahid, detracts from his rights, burdens him with more work than he is able to do or takes something from him without his consent, I will plead for him (the mu'ahid) on the Day of Resurrection." Narrated by Abu Dawud, 3052; classed as sahih by al-Albani in Saheeh Abi Dawud.

"If any non-Muslim come to our country for work or business, and has permission (from the authorities), he is either a mu'ahid (one who has a treaty with the Muslims) or a mustamin (one who has been granted security by the Muslims). So it is not permissible to transgress against him. It is proven that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: "Whoever kills a mu'ahid will not smell the fragrance of Paradise." We are Muslims who submit to the command of

Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, and we respect those whom Islam instructs us to respect of those who have treaties and guarantees of security. Whoever transgresses against them has misrepresented Islam and has given Islam an image of terrorism, treachery and betrayal. The one who adheres to the rulings of Islam and respects treaties and covenants is one for whom it is hoped that he will do well and succeed." (Fatawa Ibn Uthaymin, 15:493)

7- Islam prohibits committing transgression and commands justice.

Concerning that Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

"and let not the hatred of some people in (once) stopping you from Al-Masjid al-Haram (at Makkah) lead you to transgression (and hostility on your part)." [al-Maidah 5:2]

"and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to piety." [al-Maidah 5:8].

"Look at what these verses contain of noble characteristics and the command to respond to the one who disobeys Allah concerning you by obeying Allah concerning him." (Adwa al-Bayan by Al-Shinqiti 3:50)

Facts about Islam

However, in addition to what has been stated above, it is essential to confirm some important points:

1- There is no comparison whatsoever between what this world has seen the "non-Muslims" do and what the Muslims have done. The two World Wars in which 70 million people were killed were "Christian" wars.

2- Then there is the occupation of Muslim lands and the exploitation of their resources, which was and still is happening at the hands of "non-Muslims" of all religions. This should be borne in mind when speaking of the Islamic view of humanity and of love and compassion. Fair-minded historians should compare the Islamic conquests of other lands with the Crusades, for example, and what

happened in each case. They will see a clear difference between compassion and cruelty, love and hatred, life and death.

3- What was mentioned above about Islam and how it regards non-Muslims, and what was mentioned about rulings is the highest level of love, compassion and mercy. However, that does not mean that we should neglect some rulings that some ignorant people want us to neglect.

For example:

1- In Islam it is forbidden to love non-Muslims and take them as close (intimate) friends. Anyone who has common sense can distinguish between kindness, fairness, compassion and mercy, on the one hand, which we have been enjoined to show towards a non-Muslim who is not in a state of war with us, and love on the other hand, which we are not allowed to feel towards disbelievers because of their disbelief in Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and because of their not being Muslims.

2- It is not permissible for us to give our daughters, sisters and other womenfolk in marriage to any non-Muslim, no matter what his religion is, whereas it is permissible for us (Muslim men) to marry only women from the People of the Book, Jews and Christians, who are chaste. Undoubtedly ‘aqidah (belief) and tawhid (affirming the Oneness of Allah) play a major role in this ruling, because it is very likely and possible that a kitabi (Jewish or Christian) woman who is married to a Muslim may become Muslim, whereas it is very possible and likely that a Muslim woman may be tempted away from her religion by marrying a non-Muslim. This ruling is entirely in accordance with the compassion and mercy of the rulings of this great religion: it represents compassion towards the Jewish or Christian woman in the hope that she might become Muslim and towards the Muslim woman lest she leave her religion.

3- It is not part of Islam to force the non-Muslim to enter this religion , because sincerity is one of the conditions of accepting Islam. And Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

“There is no compulsion in religion.” [al-Baqarah 2:256]

4- Islam prescribes stoning for the married adulterer, cutting off the hand for the thief, and flogging for the one who slanders the honour of a woman who is chaste (all following due process, of course). We do not feel ashamed of these laws; rather we firmly believe that the whole world is in need of application of these laws. If they do that, they will live in an atmosphere of safety with regard to their honour, their wealth and their lives, safe from transgressions against them.

Any wise person who ponders these rulings will realise that they were prescribed, first of all, so that no one will dare to do these things. Anyone who looks at the state of other nations, and sees how widespread the crimes of rape, theft and murder are, will realise that there is an urgent need to put a stop to that, and that the rulings of Islam are based on wisdom, mercy, justice and care.

And Allah knows best.