

THE RIGHTS OF NON-MUSLIMS IN ISLAM (PART 10 OF 13): SECURITY OF LIFE, PROPERTY, AND HONOR

Rating: 3.9

Description: Protection of life, property, and honor of non-Muslims under Islamic Law.

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Islamic Law protects basic human rights like the preservation of life, property, and honor for Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Whether the non-Muslims are residents or visitors, they are guaranteed these rights. These rights cannot be taken away except in a justified case permitted by law. For instance, a non-Muslim may not be killed unless he is guilty of killing. God says:

"Say, 'Come, I will recite what your Lord has prohibited to you. (He commands) that you not associate anything with Him, and to parents, good treatment, and do not kill your children out of poverty; We will provide for you and them. And do not approach immoralities – what is apparent of them and what is concealed. And do not kill the soul which God has forbidden [to be killed] except by [legal] right. This has He instructed you that you may use reason.'" (Quran 6:151)

The Prophet of Islam declared that the life of non-Muslims residents or visitor as inviolable when he said:

"Whoever kills a person with whom we have a treaty, will not come close enough to Paradise to smell its scent, and its scent can be found as far away as forty years of travel." (Saheeh Al-Bukhari)

Islam does not allow assaulting a non-Muslim, violating his honor or property, or hurting him. If someone steals from a dhimmi, he must be punished. If anyone borrows from a dhimmi, the property must be returned. The Prophet of Islam said:

"You must know that it is not lawful for you to take the property of the People of the Covenant unless it is (in payment) for something."[\[1\]](#)

He also said:

"Indeed God, Mighty and Majestic, has not allowed you to enter the homes of the People of the Book except by their permission, nor has He allowed you to hit their

women, nor eat their fruit if they give you what is obligatory upon them [from the jizyah]." (Abu Dawood)

There is an interesting story from the era of Ahmad ibn Tulun of Egypt. One day a Christian monk came to Tulun's palace to complain about his governor. Upon noticing him, a guard inquired about the problem. On finding out that the governor had taken 300 dinars from the monk, the guard offered to pay the monk on the condition that he does not complain, and the monk accepted his offer.

The incident reached Tulun who ordered the monk, guard, and the governor to come to his court. Tulun said to the governor, 'Are not all your needs met with a sufficient income? Do you have needs that justify taking from others?'

The governor conceded to the force of his argument, yet still Tulun kept on questioning him, eventually removing him from his post. Tulun then asked the monk how much the governor had taken from him, and the monk told him it was 300 dinars. Tulun said, 'It is too bad you did not say 3000, as he needs a larger punishment, but I can only base it on your statement,' and took the money from the governor and returned it to the monk. [\[2\]](#)

Non-Muslims have the right that their honor be protected. This right is extended not only to non-Muslim residents, but also to visitors. They all have the right to be secure and protected. God says:

"And if any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of God (the Quran). Then deliver him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know." (Quran 9:6)

The right to asylum makes it a duty on every Muslim to respect and uphold the asylum granted by another Muslim according to the Prophet's statement:

"The obligation imposed by the covenant is communal, and the nearest Muslim must try hard to fulfill it. Anyone who violates the protection granted by a Muslim will be under the curse of God, the angels, and all people, and on Judgment Day no intercession will be accepted on his behalf." [\[3\]](#)

One of the female companions, Umm Hani, said to the Prophet:

"Messenger of God, my brother Ali claims that he is at war with a man whom I have granted asylum, a man with the name of Ibn Hubayra."

The Prophet answered her:

"Anyone you have given asylum to is under the protection of all of us, O Umm Hani." [\[4\]](#)

The right to asylum and protection requires a Muslim to give asylum and grant security to a non-Muslim who seeks it and warns of severe punishment for anyone who violates it. Asylum guarantees protection from aggression, or attack for anyone who has been given security, a right that is not explicitly granted in any other religion.

Footnotes:

[1] *Musnad Ahmad*

[2] Ibn Hamdun, '*at-Tazkira al-Hamduniyya*,' vol. 3, p. 200-201

[3] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Ibn Majah*

[4] *Saheeh Al-Bukhari*

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