

## THE ISLAMIC LEGISLATION AND NON-MUSLIMS

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In the Name of Allah, The Most Merciful, The Giver of Mercy

Islam, due to its mercy upon all people, preserves the rights of even those who are in opposition to it. It affords them the freedom of having their own beliefs and methods of worship; rather it provides security for them as well as their centers of worship. It preserves them, their wealth and their children; it prohibits transgression upon them entirely, except with just cause.

### Freedom of Belief or Creed

Islam's preservation of the freedom of creed is extremely clear in the saying of Allah the Exalted:

**“There is no compulsion in religion. Indeed, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path.”** [Al Baqarah: 256]

Ibn Katheer, the renowned interpreter of the Quran, states:

“Meaning: Do not compel anyone to embrace the religion of Islam, for indeed it is a clear and understandable religion that is supported by manifest evidences and proofs. One does not need to compel anyone to embrace it.”

It has been narrated that ‘Abdullah, son of ‘Abbas said:

“If a woman (during the pre-Islamic era) would continuously have children that would die, she would vow that if a child of hers were to survive, she would make

him Jewish (i.e. by sending him to be brought up by Jewish tribes). So when the Jewish tribe of Nadeer was expelled from Madeenah<sup>1</sup>, some of the Ansaar's children were amongst them, so the Ansaar declared: "We will not forsake our children (i.e. we will force our children into Islam and we will not allow them to leave with the Jews). So Allah revealed the verse":

**"There is no compulsion in religion. Indeed, the right path has become distinct from the wrong path."**

Ibn Ishaq also narrates on the authority of 'Abdullah, son of 'Abbas:

"This verse was revealed because of Al Husayni, a man from the Ansaar who was from the tribe of Salim, son of 'Awf. He had two Christian sons while he was a Muslim. He asked the Prophet, may the Salat and Salam be upon him:

'Should I compel them to be Muslims, because they refuse to have any religion other than Christianity?'

So this verse was revealed."<sup>2</sup>

This is equally clear from the saying of Allah, the Glorious:

**"So, will you (O Muhammad) then compel mankind to become believers?"**

[Yunus: 99]

As well as the saying of Allah, the Exalted:

**"So remind them (O Muhammad) – you are only one who reminds. You are not a compeller over them."** [Al Ghashiyah: 22]

The saying of Allah, the Elevated:

**"And you (O Muhammad) are not one to force them (into Belief)." [Qaf: 45]**

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<sup>1</sup> The Jews of Nadeer were expelled from Madeenah due to breaching the treaty between them and the Muslims by attempting to murder the Prophet, may the Prayers and Peace be upon him.

<sup>2</sup> Note: If Islam does not permit Muslims to force their own children into Islam, how can it be claimed that it condones forcing others into it.

Ibn Katheer states:

“Meaning: You are not one to force them into belief; you are only one to convey the message.”

It was also reported on the authority of ‘Abdullah, son of ‘Abbas:

“The Messenger of Allah – may the Prayers and Peace be upon him – made a treaty with the people of Najran (who were Arab Christians) entailing that they surrender two thousand silk robes, half to be delivered in the month of Safar and the other half in Rajab, that they lend the Muslims thirty breastplates, thirty horses, thirty camels and thirty pieces of every type of weaponry used for warfare if there happens to be a war in Yemen, the Muslims would guarantee the return of these items. In turn their centers of worship would not be destroyed, their priests would not be expelled and they would not be forced to forsake their religion so long as they do not engage in a great affair or engage in usury.”  
[Reported by Abu Dawood]