

ISLAM

God's mercy is unfathomable

By Maulana Wahiduddin Khan

The Prophet of Islam once said, "God has a hundred mercies, and one of them He has sent down amongst men and animals, thereby they are kind unto one another, and thereby the wild creature inclines to tenderness unto her offspring. And ninety-nine mercies has God reserved unto Himself, that therewith He may show mercy unto His servants on the Day of Resurrection."

The mercy of a mother manifests itself in multiple ways. Should her infant baby strike her on the face, the mother will not take offence. She will not react by striking her child back. She will hold her child close to her, turning his apparent act of aggression into an act of love, rewarding him for what was a punishable deed. Incidents of this nature provide us with a tiny glimpse of the mercy of God. Mothers are not the masters, or the makers, of their own mercy. It is a small fraction of God's own mercy, which He has bequeathed to them.

Human beings do not have knowledge of the unseen, so they have to suffer all sorts of setbacks in life. They lack willpower, so tend to give way to base impulses and commit grave mistakes. Rich and poor, powerful and weak, all human beings are a prey to such despair.

Can man hope for any improvement of his lot? Is it possible that our faults will be counted as good deeds, that — despite our digressions — we will safely reach our destination? The glimpse of God's mercy that we gain from a mother shows us that this can indeed come to pass.

God's mercy to us is many times more than that of a mother to her child; by His grace He will make up to us what we lack, but on one condition — that we make Him our everything, as a mother means everything to her child.