



# YOUTH VOICE

Issue I: Quarter I

## Justice In Islam

Characteristics of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) Series

by: Brother Faisal Azad (pg 4)

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# Categories of Justice

**Imam Zaid Shakir**

An excerpt from islamcity.com

Our lexicographers define justice, variously, as "to rule based on that contained in the Book of God and the tradition (Sunna) of His Messenger and refraining from ruling based on empty opinion." It is also defined as "extending inherent rights [to their possessors] equitably." This latter definition emphasizes the importance of equity as an essential aspect of distributive justice.

The concept of justice is one of the essential pillars in the maintenance of both the natural and social orders. God, be He Exalted, has said, *He has established the scale, therefore, do not transgress in the scale [of justice]. Undertake the measuring with justice and do not cheat concerning the scale.* [55:7-8] Justice, as many of our scholars point out, is one of the underpinnings of the order that has been established by God. This reality is also a foundation of a healthy social order. God says in that regard, *O, You who believe! Be upright for God, witnesses to justice; and do not let your hatred of a people move you to a position where you are unjust. Be just, that is closer to piety. Be*

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىَٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلَوْا أَوْ تُعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٣٥﴾

Surah Nisa'a: Verse 135

*mindful of God! Verily God is well informed concerning all that you do.*

[Quran 4:135]

This social aspect of justice has been beautifully summarized by Imam al-Qurtubi. He says, discussing the relationship between two words that are usually translated as justice (al-'Adl), and distributive justice (al-Qist), "Justice is the basis of all human relations and a foundation of Islamic rule." This saying is illustrative of the meaning conveyed by the saying of God, *Verily, we have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and we have revealed unto them the Scripture and the Balance in order that they lead people with justice...* [Quran 57:25]

Imam al-Mawardi has summarized the social implications of distributive justice in the following way:

One of the things that reforms worldly affairs is the principle of distributive justice. It facilitates amicable relations between people, engenders obedience to the Divine Law, and brings about the prosperity of countries. It is the basis of a thriving economy, strong families, and stable government. Nothing devastates the land nor corrupts the mind as quickly as tyranny. That is because there are no acceptable limits [to regulate tyranny].

For this reason, Ibn Taymiyya sees the responsibilities of Islamic government emanating from a single verse in the Qur'an, *God enjoins that*

*you deliver the Trusts to their rightful possessors. And when you rule over [or judge between] people, that you do so with justice...* [Quran 4:58] The Noble Prophet has said in this context, "Surely the most beloved of people with God and the closest to Him on the Day of Resurrection will be a just leader. And the most hated of people and the furthest removed from Him will be a tyrannical

## "Surely the most beloved of people with God and the closest to Him on the Day of Resurrection will be a just leader."



leader."

Clearing himself from even an inadvertent association with oppressive, unjust acts, our beloved Prophet is reported to have said:

You bring your disputes to me for adjudication; perhaps one of you is less eloquent than another, and I rule against the wronged party on the basis of what I have heard. Therefore, if I inadvertently grant one of you something owed to his brother do not take it, for I am granting him something that constitutes a piece of Hellfire.

Our impeccably just Khalifa 'Umar b. al-Khattab uttered the following penetrating words:

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# Justice of The Prophet(pbuh)

Dr. Muhammad Ratib An-Nabulsi

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was an intelligent individual who responded positively to those around him while encouraging them to respect God and follow His ways. He exchanged correspondence with kings and emperors of the world, and with God's guidance and direction, urged them to leave their arrogance behind and rule their people with justice. Yet, despite mingling with the mighty leaders of his time, he was also a modest man, who, it is said, responded graciously to the request of a barefoot bedouin who once spoke to him with disrespect, "Muhammad be just and give me money. It's not your money, nor your father's." In response, the Prophet smiled at the bedouin's face and ordered to be given the amount of money he requested.

He was a devout and religious man, whose happiest moments were experienced while praying and communicating with God. It is said that once, while praying at length

with his companions, he heard a baby crying. The baby's mother was praying behind the Prophet. In response to the baby's cry, the Prophet mercifully ended the prayer instantly, enabling the mother to respond to the child's needs.

We see a man who recognized the power of forgiveness. We see this when he entered the town of Makkah

with his huge army without a fight. The Quraysh people had previously tortured him and his companions, exiled him and brutally killed his dearest relatives. As he entered, the Quraysh people stood before him expecting him to take his revenge, instead, he told them they were all forgiven and free from any grudge or revenge. We see in him a caring and humble individual. He once gathered wood to light a fire and prepared food for his companions.

He refused to watch others work while he did nothing and he told them God does not favor those who try to look distinguished among their companions. We see in him a kind and tender man with a merciful heart, who trembled with sorrow when witnessing a horse or a camel struggling with a heavy load on its back. It is said that he encouraged his followers to show mercy to all of God's creatures and he told them that God says those who are merciful to God's creatures shall receive God's mercy:

**"Have mercy on those who are on the planet earth and you shall have the mercy of He who is in heaven." (At-Tirmidhi)**

... the Prophet told them that God is more merciful with people than this mother with her baby. As for his mercy, to support those in need, who borrowed money, he told the lenders that if they extended the settlement time, or cancelled the dues of the debtor, he would ask that they be pardoned by God on Judgment Day.

Once, to help his companions understand the depth of God's mercy, he pointed to a mother tenderly kissing and holding her baby tightly. He asked his companions whether they thought the mother could ever throw her baby into the fire. They confirmed, she could never do such a thing and the Prophet told them that God is more merciful with people than this mother with her baby.

The Prophet's superiority qualified him to be above those around him, but he preferred to live among them, adopting a simple life among ordinary people, sharing everything with them. He was also a just man. He once said that the destruction of the entire

universe would be easier on God than bloodshed without a right. He also said that the destruction of previous nations and civilizations was caused by an unjust system that freed thieves who

**"I swear by God that you shall not enter paradise until you believe. And you shall not believe until you love each other"**

were among the nobility and focused on capturing and punishing the weak thieves of the lower classes. The Prophet told his followers: "I swear by God that if my own daughter Fatima stole anything I would cut her hand myself." (Al-Bukhari)

He was a humble man, who admitted that he was not infallible, and was subject to some faults of humanity all men share. He explained that he was human and though he was asked to judge among his people, he could make errors. He knew that it was possible some were more clever in presenting their case than others and he could make a mistake by giving one the rights of another. He urged that those who were in the wrong not take anything that was not their just right, even if he had mistakenly made judgment in their favor. He believed in the power of love. He urged people to love each other and said that love must prevail among all people. He once said...

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# Justice In Islam

by Faisal Azad

Justice -as Allah puts it- commands the believers to be fair in dealings, protect the rights of others, help the needy and oppressed, and place the trusts where they belong. Justice cannot be construed by hatred, love, or sympathy for any individual or group, whether they be rich or poor, male or female, Muslim or Non-Muslim. Allah obligates us to be just because that is closer to righteousness; and that is what will lead us closer to paradise. In the Islamic tradition, Justice does not merely exist in the courtrooms or only carried out by judges, law enforcement officials, or elected representatives. For the most part, every individual can carry out justice. The Prophet (peace be upon him) informed us that we must respond to evil; either through our hands or our tongue or our hearts. Islam provides a

very comprehensive definition of Justice and to clearly understand the concept, we must understand its opposite: oppression (dhulm in Arabic). Oppression is manifested through depriving people of their rights, disregarding the plight of the weak,

cheating in dealings, and misappropriating the trusts. Any type of deprivation of people's rights or practice of wrongdoing is so abhorrent in the sight of Allah that in a famous hadith Qudsi, He SWT forbade it for Himself first and then forbade it for the believers. Allah says in the Qur'aan that oppression is worse than wrongful murder. In order to promote justice, the Prophet SA encouraged the believers to help both the oppressed and the oppressor (prevent him from oppressing others), as a method to mitigate further acts of oppression. When we, or those we love, are the victims of abhorrent, deplorable conduct, it is extremely easy and convenient to demand justice. But what if we are at fault? What if our best friends and closest relatives are the perpetrators of blatant wrongdoing and transgression? Imagine for a moment that your friendly neighbor's house has been robbed and vandalized by a couple of rabble-rousers. The windows were smashed. Thousands of dollars worth of property were stolen. The thieves get away and the police failed to respond on time. You would want their property to be restored and the thieves to be punished. But what if the thieves were your cousins and your close friends? Allah tells us in the Qur'aan to stand

**"All people instinctively crave justice for themselves and despise being oppressed"**

firmly upon justice, even if it be against our own selves or our parents, or our kin, etc. Allah says in the Quran in **Chapter 4: verse 135**,  
**"You who believe! be upholders of justice, bearing witness for Allah alone, even against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether they are rich or poor, Allah is well able to look after them. Do not follow your own desires and deviate from the truth. If you twist or turn away, Allah is aware of what you do."**

And again in **Chapter 5: verse 8**,

**"...Do not let hatred for a people incite you into not being just. Be just. That is closer to taqwa..."**

In short, we cannot display an advantageous value system where we seek justice only when it is to our advantage. In addition, all people instinctively crave justice for themselves and

despise being oppressed.

In spite of this, far too many people treat other people unjustly. They despise being abused by the speech of others, but abuses others without hesitation and contemplation. They will cut in front of people in a long line, but consider it unacceptable when other

people do the same. They will make a mockery of other people as a 'joke' but refuses to laugh when the jokes are on them.

Because justice is fairness in treatment of others; treating them the way we want to be treated. Although it sounds rudimentary, it is extremely difficult to implement.

Justice is so crucial in Islam that even if a Muslim transgresses against a Non-Muslim, there should be a prescribed atonement... providing that the Non-Muslim is not in war. For example, When Ali RA, the leader of the Muslims, saw his stolen shield in the hands of a Jewish man, he brought the case to court. The Judge, who was a Muslim, ruled in favor of the Jewish man because Ali RA could not produce the necessary witnesses. Seeing this Justice, the Jewish man announced his Islam. Furthermore, even to young children, we are commanded to be just and fair because it prevents animosity

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# The Muslim Legal Fund of America

An Interview with Abdullah Al Mamun



What happens when a Muslim is dealt with unjustly by the legal system of the United States? You give a call to the MLFA, the Muslim Legal Fund of America. MLFA was started in 2012 in Dallas, Texas and became a key proponent of justice in America.

Legal battles are costly, especially cases involving wrongly accused Muslims taken to Federal court on terrorism charges. This is where the MLFA comes in. Backed by donations and vigorous fundraising, it specializes in funding important, legal battles involving Muslims who were unjustly treated by the legal system. I sat down with Abdullah Al Mamun, the New York regional director of the MLFA to learn more about what he and the organization had done in this regard.

"If you've committed a legitimate crime, and you happen to be Muslim, don't bother giving us a call," he said. "But if you are a Muslim who have been wrongly accused of a crime and have faced injustice, this is where the MLFA will come in."

The MLFA's central goal is not just about helping Muslims caged by nonsensical accusations but also creating a just America. Mr. Mamun talked to me at length about several of the high profile cases that the MLFA has funded. Perhaps the

**Abdullah Al-Mamun** is the regional director for MLFA New York and former MUNA Youth Assistant Youth Director. He has founded several projects such as MuslimCal and Khair Media with the aim of empowering the American Muslim.



most recognizable is the case of the Irvine 11 where 11 students were arrested and sentenced for protesting the speech of Israel's ambassador Michel Oren on their campus.

This case has shaken California and has called into question the constitutional rights of free speech and protest. Mr. Mamun explained to me in great detail that had this been any other speaker being heckled by any other person, the individual would probably have been disciplined by University officials. In this case, these 11 Muslims were arrested and charged criminally, yes, criminally, for speaking out!

One would hope that these events are just anomalies in America that happen rarely. But unfortunately, Muslims being unjustly accused is a reality that the MLFA is dealing with on a daily basis.

Some accusations are so laughable that they are truly shocking. Consider the case of an active Imam - Mr. Hafiz Khan - in Texas. He was charged with aiding terrorists because he would inquire about his "Taliban"- the Arabic word for 2 or more students back home during phone calls!

It is not so far from home as we may think. I was taken aback when Mr. Mamun told me that close to 30,000 Muslims are being held in CMUs (Communications Management Units) - secretive and isolated federal prisons - all across the country and some because of faintest suspicion of a crime. Some Muslim activists (such as sister Afia Siddiqui) are judged by the Government based on petty evidence and hope for justice is dim as very few are willing to fund and/or take on such a case. These are just a few of the cases the MLFA has been directly involved with. Others include the fight to acquit the members of the now dismantled Holy Land Foundation, the biggest Muslim Charity Organization of its kind in their time.

Mr. Mamun constantly stressed one point, that the MLFA is essentially providing a crucial service by fighting for the rights of Muslims in America and accomplishing this requires tremendous amounts of financial power. "You are not helping me by giving MLFA a check for \$5 or \$5000, you are helping yourself!" he emphasized. "This Organization is giving you an opportunity to help your Muslim brothers and sisters and at the same time demand the rights that America provides to everyone."

My interview with Abdullah Al Mamun was, in many ways, a reality check on the challenges that minorities - especially Muslims - face in America. It is also reminder of our critical need to organize and assist one another so that no Muslim can ever be charged or discriminated against because of his/her religion.

The United States is unique in that it provides us with a clear system for this, enumerating the rights of every citizen. Thus, the MLFA is unyielding in defending the constitution and the right of every Muslim citizen in the United States. It is dually committed towards the Muslims and to America, and so should we.

*An interview by the editors*

## Editors Pick

# The Red Cloth

A Story from Gems and Jewels by Abdul-Malik Mujahid

It is related that a woman went to the Prophet Dawud (peace be upon him) and said, "O Prophet of Allah, is your Lord an oppressor or is He just?" The Prophet replied, "Woe unto you, O women, He is the All-Just, Who never oppresses. What is your story?"

She explained that she was a widow with three daughters and that she provided for them by what she would spin with her hands. She explained, "Yesterday, I tied what I had spun (a large quantity of yarn) into a red cloth to sell in the marketplace so as to provide for my children. As I was walking, a large bird came and snatched the cloth from me and flew away, leaving me with nothing to sell for the provision of my children." As the woman was speaking to Dawud, someone came knocking on the door. He gave permission for them to enter and learned that they were ten businessmen bringing with them one hundred gold coins each. They said, "O Prophet of Allah, give this wealth to the one that is deserving." Dawud asked them what had brought them to him with their wealth.

They explained, "O Prophet of Allah, we were on a boat, the wind was very violent, and we were about to drown when a bird came and dropped a red cloth upon us. In this sack we found yarn and with this we were able to block a hole in the ship until the winds subsided and we vowed that each one of us would give one hundred gold coins in charity. So give that amount to whomever you please." Dawud turned to the women and said, "Your Lord does business for you in the land and in the sea, yet you ask whether he oppresses!" He gave her the gold coins and said, "Spend this on your children."

Each of us encounter a period in our lives where we start to question our situations and doubt Allah's Justice. The central message of this story is that if we



have faith in Allah, he will reward that faith in some way. The phrase "God works in mysterious ways" comes to mind when thinking about this particular story. The woman thought that Allah had forsaken her when in reality, his justice had provided for her albeit in an unexpected fashion. Allah is just even when it does not seem like it because we do not see nor can we truly comprehend the way His justice works. It might seem ironic - considering our modern world - to claim Allah is just to his creation. But we must be patient and remain calm to seek Allah's justice. If it is not evident in this world, then surely it will be on the day of Judgement.

*From the editors*

## Justice In Islam *continued*

by Faisal Azad

and jealousy between siblings. Upon one occasion, the Messenger of Allah SA was told that a man gave a gift (of a servant) to one of his sons, but did not give to the others. Considering that fact, the Prophet SA ordered the man to take back the gift unless he can provide the same gift to all his children. In the beautiful story of Yusuf AS, the brothers of Yusuf AS became jealous of Yusuf because their father, Yaqub AS, loved him more than them. This created bitter feelings within the brothers to such an extent that all the brothers agreed in a plot to kill him.

As Muslims, we must be the bearers of Justice. We cannot neglect our responsibilities towards Allah and towards people. Our duties toward the people is to protect their rights. Every one of us is a shepherd, and we are responsible for our flocks. To reiterate the point, justice is not something that exists only in the courtroom.

**Faisal Azad** is a Youth Member of MUNA Youth and director of the South Jersey Chapter. He is studying biology at Rutgers University



# Justice of The Prophet(pbuh)

Dr. Muhammad Ratib An-Nabulsi

"I swear by God that you shall not enter paradise until you believe. And you shall not believe until you love each other." (Al-Bukhari)

He said that one way to demonstrate love for one another is to exchange greetings and gifts. He also encouraged people to respect one another. He cautioned that if three were sitting together, two of them were not to whisper words to each other, as this would cause sadness and curiosity to the third person. He spoke of the value of friendship and told that if a person abandoned his friend for more than a year it would be as if he had shed his blood.

He promoted the virtue of forgiveness and said that the worst people were those who did not accept the apologies of their friends and did not forgive them when they made mistakes. The Prophet believed one could not underestimate the value and importance of friendship and he claimed that supporting a friend in difficult times was better than dedicating an entire month for God's worshipping inside the Prophet's Mosque.

The Prophet was a wise man who offered words to live by and through his actions demonstrated how to live. When asked who were God's most beloved people, the Prophet said God's most beloved people are those who are most useful to God's creatures. We are all God's creatures and we must serve one another. The positive effects of love on a human's health have been scientifically proven. The human body's immune system is weakened by depression, grief, anxiety and nervousness while sentiments of love, hope, calmness and optimism support its health.

It seems only natural that the body's spirit is strengthened and unified by love and when we live in love and friendship we are following the Prophet's way, which is good. In the Quran God said that to avoid suffering and pain is to believe that there is only one God and that God is Allah: {Save those who believe and perform righteous deeds and remember God frequently and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged} (Ash-Shuara' 26: 227) Belief in God strengthens you, while disbelief weakens you.

The Prophet believed in God, his belief was so strong that he devoted his life to God - yet he was also an ordinary man. While his extraordinary commitment to God may seem to set him apart from us, it also offers us a route to follow, a life to model that can bring us closer to God and ensure the entire mankind happiness.

**Dr. Muhammad Ratib An-Nabulsi** is a Muslim Syrian preacher and writer. He has written a number of Islamic book. He delivers a number of lessons, orations, symposiums and chat programs broadcasted on the Syrian, Arab, and Islamic radios and Televisions.

# Categories of Justice

Imam Zaid Shakir

continued...

An excerpt from islamcity.com

*Verily, God sets forth parables for you, and He directs admonition towards you in order that hearts will be quickened.* Surely, the hearts are dead until God quickens them. Justice has signs and portents. As for its signs, they are shyness, generosity, humility, and gentleness. As for its portents, they are embodied in mercy. He has [likewise] made for every affair a gate, and He has made that gate accessible by providing a key. The gate of justice is a deep consideration of consequences, and its key is otherworldliness. Consideration of consequences ultimately involves remembering death and preparing for it by freely parting from one's wealth. Otherworldliness involves dealing justly with everyone and being satisfied with what suffices. If one is not satisfied with what suffices him, no abundance will ever enrich him.

Much of this discussion has focused on distributive justice. However, the Qur'an also places great emphasis on commutative justice. God commands us, *Do not be moved by partiality to discriminate in meting out divinely legislated punishments.* [Quran 24:2] The Prophet Muhammad mentioned that one of the reasons behind the ruination of a nation is a lack of commutative justice. In this context, he mentioned that if his very daughter were to steal, he would not hesitate to punish her to the full extent of the law.

In summary, this brief discussion should make it clear to any Muslim that peace and justice are comprehensive concepts with deep implications and we have to be people committed to peace and justice. We must clearly illustrate to the world that our religion is indeed the religion of peace. However, our striving for peace must never allow us to be unjust, nor should it allow us to passively accept injustices. We must take a stand for justice, as we are ordered in the Qur'an, *Be you upright supporters of justice...* [4:135] However, that stand must go far beyond slogans, such as the one mentioned at the beginning of this article, and move into the realm of positive action; action inspired by the Qur'an and the words and deeds of our illustrious Prophet.

**Imam Zaid Shakir** is an American Islamic scholar and writer who is a co-founder with Hamza Yusuf and Hatem Bazian, chairman of the board, and a senior faculty member of Zaytuna College in Berkeley, California.

## WEEKLY PLAN

### FEBRUARY:

WEEK 1: DA'WAH MEETING - STRENGTHEN OUR IMAAN: A NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

WEEK 2: GENERAL STUDY - QUR'AN TA'LEEM WITH CORRECT PRONUNCIATION

WEEK 3: ASSOC. MEMBER STUDY SESSION - IMAAN AND OBEDIENCE

WEEK 4: ASSOC. MEMBER MEETING - BUILDING EFFECTIVE WORKERS IN AN ISLAMIC ORGANIZATION; MONTHLY ACTIVITY EVALUATION

### MARCH:

WEEK 1: DA'WAH MEETING - DARS: AKIRAH; DISCUSSION: SALAH

WEEK 2: GENERAL STUDY - QUR'AN TA'LEEM WITH CORRECT PRONUNCIATION

WEEK 3: ASSOC. MEMBER STUDY SESSION - LESSONS FROM THE LIVES OF ABDUR RAHMAN IBN AWF (R) AND ABU UBAYDA IBN JARRAH (R)

WEEK 4: ASSOC. MEMBER MEETING - DARS-UL HADITH; MONTHLY ACTIVITY EVALUATION

NOTE: THESE GUIDELINES ARE SUMMARIZED. PLEASE REFER TO THE DETAILED WEEKLY SYLLABUS PROVIDED TO EACH SUB-CHAPTER FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.



East Zone brothers posing at their retreat



MUNA brothers having a little too much fun

### Edited and Designed by:

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Break time at New York City retreat

MUNA Youth is a Muslim Youth group dedicated to the understanding and proper implementation of Islam as well as empowering youth to become active members of the community.

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