

AL-ADL

(JUSTICE)

Definition:

To be just means:

- Being straight and upright in our behavior following the Qur'an and Sunnah.
- To say the truth and follow it, not our vain desires.
- Not wronging anyone.
- Justice, therefore is both words and deeds that reflect our belief in being accountable to Allah. It is a conscious effort to treat everyone in the right way with fairness and not wronging him but giving him his due rights.

We will discuss the following concepts regarding justice:

- To be just with ourselves
- To be just with others
- To judge with justice and equity
- To avoid following our desires, likes and dislikes
- To establish a sense of justice in the community where everyone feels safe and his rights are safeguarded
- The reward of justice is great
- Allah's justice is perfect
- What to do when we are subjected to injustice
- The benefits of being just

We should be just with ourselves

A Muslim should be just with others, as well as with himself. He

should discharge his obligations toward Allah. Justice with ourselves involves.

Obedying the orders of Allah and His Messenger (PBUH), for they call on us to do what is good and that which will benefit our souls.

﴿يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اسْتَجِيبُوا لِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ إِذَا دَعَاكُمْ لِمَا يُحْيِيكُمْ﴾ [الأَنْفَال: ٢٤]

"O ye who believe! give your response to Allah and His Messenger, when He calls you to that which will give you life"

(Al-Anfal 8 : 24)

To follow the truth and not our vain desires

To be moderate in spending

To avoid wronging others or committing sin

WE SHOULD BE JUST TOWARDS OTHERS

- **Those below us:** There is a tendency for people to abuse their power and to treat those under their influence wrongly. Alternately, someone who believes and understands his accountability to Allah is kind, forgiving and merciful. He makes things as easy as possible and not difficult and he is not arrogant or oppressive. He tries his best to follow the truth and to do what is right
- **Those equal to us:** We should be caring, honest and truthful. We should try to avoid arrogance or the harming of others in word and deed.
- **Those above us:** We should strive to obey orders as long as our superiors do not ask us to disobey Allah and His Messenger (PBUH). It is also our duty to give sincere and sound advice. We should never be afraid to stand up and say the word of truth even in front of a tyrant.

The Qur'an is very clear that Muslims must be trustworthy and just in their dealings and judgment:

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا﴾ [النساء: ٥٨]

"Allah does command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: verily how excellent is the teaching which He gives you! for Allah is He Who hears and sees all things"

(An-Nesa'a 4 : 58)

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) explained the rights of Muslims over each other. He emphasized not wronging others, failing to help them or ridiculing them.

Abou Horaira related that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said, "Do not envy each other; do not fight among yourselves; do not dislike or hate one another; and do not turn your backs on each other. Do not sell or buy when your brother is conducting his business. Be O servants of Allah brothers to each other. A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim, he does not wrong him, nor does he leave him but helps him; he does not humiliate him. **Taqwa** (Righteousness) is here (pointing to his chest three times). A person will incur on himself a lot of sin and evil if he humiliates his Muslim brother. Everything that a Muslim holds dear is sacred and must be respected by other Muslims, his life, his possessions and his family."

Narrated by Muslim

DO NOT WRONG OTHERS

To judge between people with justice, not wronging anyone requires honesty, integrity and a fear of Allah; we should not follow our likes and dislikes or our vain desires.

In the Qur'an, the order came to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that he should be upright and straight when inviting others and that he was to be just in all his dealings not following vain desires.

﴿ فَلِذَلِكَ فَادْعُ ۖ وَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ ۖ وَقُلْ ءَامَنْتُ بِمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَأُمِرْتُ لِأَعْدِلَ بَيْنَكُمْ ۖ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَرَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَنَا أَعْمَلُنَا وَلَكُمْ أَعْمَلُكُمْ ۖ لَا حُجَّةَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ ۖ اللَّهُ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَنَا وَإِلَيْهِ الْمَصِيرُ ﴾ [الشورى: ١٥]

"Now then, for that (reason), call (them to the Faith), and stand steadfast as thou art commanded, nor follow thou their vain desires; but say: "I believe in the Book which Allah has sent down; and I am commanded to judge justly between you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord: for us (is the responsibility for) our deeds, and for you for your deeds, there is no contention between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is (our) final goal"
(Ash-Shura' 42 : 15)

To be just is to obey Allah's order.

﴿ قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ ﴾ [الأعراف: ٢٩]

"Say: My Lord has commanded justice" (Al-Ara'f 7 : 29)

FOLLOWING OUR VAIN DESIRES LEADS TO INJUSTICE

We are ordered to be just and fair in all our dealings. Our likes or dislikes should not influence our decision or color our judgment.

﴿ يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلّٰهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰٓ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللّٰهُ أَوْلَىٰٓ بِهِمَا ۗ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰٓ أَن تَعْدِلُوا
وَإِن تَلَوْنَا أَوْ تَعْرَضُوا ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴾ [النساء: ١٣٥]

"O ye who believe! stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be (against) rich or poor: for Allah can best protect both. Follow not the lusts (of your hearts), lest ye swerve, and if ye distort (justice) or decline to do justice, verily Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do" (An-Nesa'a 4 : 135)

We are warned against following our desires for it can lead us to be unjust in several ways:

- We may be partial to our parents or family
- We allow our dislikes for others to cloud our judgment

- We may not give truthful testimony or even lie if we feel our interests are in jeopardy
- We may decide to be silent and not stand up and speak the truth for fear of harm or lack of gain
- We may even twist the truth to get an advantage
- We should always remember that Allah is watching and knows well all that we do or try to hide

Sometimes we may have reasons to hate someone else, or he may have wronged us in the past; however, this is no excuse to be unjust to him if we are in position of authority.

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَتَآنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ ءَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۖ أَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ [المائدة: ٨]

"O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to Piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do"

(Al-Maeda 5 : 8)

ESTABLISH JUSTICE IN THE COMMUNITY

The reason that some people abuse others and deny them their due rights is their selfish nature and not being afraid of reprisals. The more power they have, the meaner they get especially if there is no resistance against their tyranny. They feel superior and look down at other people. The result is a society that lives in fear. People are afraid of speaking up for they may be harmed and put in prison or subjected to further injustice. The Qur'an explains that following our vain desires will surely result in chaos and corruption:

﴿ وَلَوْ أَتَبَعَ الْحَقُّ أَهْوَاءَهُمْ لَفَسَدَتِ السَّمَوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ ۚ بَلْ أَتَيْنَهُمْ بِذِكْرِهِمْ فَهُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِهِمْ مُعْرِضُونَ ﴾ [المؤمنون: ٧١]

"If the Truth had been in accord with their desires, truly the heavens and the earth, and all beings therein would have been in confusion and corruption! Nay, We have sent them their admonition, but they turn away from their admonition" (Al-Mumenoun 23 : 71)

Alternatively, Islam teaches us to respect the rights of others and to safeguard their basic human liberties, their life, possessions, freedom and human dignity. There is no advantage for a white person over a black person or for a man over a woman. Everyone is created equal in his or her human dignity, and each person is responsible for his behavior and accountable to Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized this concept when he said:
"Allah does not look at your faces or possessions, He looks at your hearts and your deeds."

Narrated by Muslim after Abou Horaira

The Qur'an explains that the most honored in the sight of God is the person who is most righteous and who serves others:

﴿يَأْتِيهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَمُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ﴾ [الحجرات: ١٣]

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full Knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things)" (Al-Hujerat 49 : 13)

Some Arabs may feel somehow superior because they know Arabic, the language of the Qur'an. If they exhibit a certain degree of arrogance, they should be reminded that knowing Arabic does not make them better than non-Arabs, it only makes it easier for them to recite and possibly understand the Qur'an. Unless they follow the guidelines of the Qur'an in their character and behavior, they have not really benefited from their knowledge of Arabic. We should all remember the words of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

“There is no distinction for an Arab over a non-Arab except for Taqwa (God-consciousness).”

Justice begins at home. How a man treats his wife and children reflects his understanding of his religion. If he treats his wife with respect and dignity and values her opinion, then he truly understood that the bond between husband and wife is a sign and mercy of Allah. He put love, kindness and mercy between their hearts. The wife and mother will feel good about herself and her role and contribution to her family. She will love her husband, supports him and provide for him a home of peace and happiness. Contrast this with another wife whose husband looks down at her and treats her with contempt, as if she is something he owns. She has no voice and gets no respect. Such a wife will feel rejected and being treated unjustly and will harbor ill feelings and resentment. The children observe how their father and mother are treating each other and can sense the presence of love and mercy or lack thereof. This surely affects their psychological make up and well-being.

THE REWARDS OF JUSTICE

We are promised a great reward both in this life and the Hereafter

﴿ مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً ۖ وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴾ [النحل: ٩٧]

"Whoever works righteousness, man or woman, and has Faith, verily, to him will We give a new Life, a life that is good and pure, and We will bestow on such their reward according to the best of their actions" (An-Nahl 16 : 97).

Doing good implies being just and God-conscious. Belief means sincerity and honesty.

We gain the pleasure of Allah when we are just.

﴿ وَإِن طَآئِفَتَانِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ اقْتَتَلُوا فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا ۚ فَإِن بَغْت إِحْدَاهُمَا عَلَى الْآخَرَىٰ فَقْتَلُوا الَّتِي تَبَغَىٰ حَتَّىٰ تَفِيءَ إِلَىٰ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِن فَاءَتْ فَأَصْلِحُوا بَيْنَهُمَا بِالْعَدْلِ وَأَقْسِطُوا ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ ﴾ [الحجرات: ٩]

"If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make ye peace between them: but if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye (all) against the one that transgresses until it complies with the Command of Allah; but if it complies, then make peace between them with justice, and be fair: for Allah loves those who are fair (and just)" (Al-Hujerat 49 : 9).

We gain Allah's paradise.

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) told us of the great reward awaiting those who lived their life with justice.

"Those who are just sit on thrones made of light on the right hand side of Allah most gracious, and both His hands are right; those who are just in their conduct and judgment and are just in their dealings with their families and their subordinates."

Narrated by Muslim and Nesa'ee

Our prayers to Allah are responded to by Allah:

Abou Horaira related that Allah's Messenger (PBUH) said,

"Three people whose Du'aa (prayers) to Allah are never turned down: A just ruler; the person fasting until he breaks his fast; and the person wronged. Allah elevates his prayer above the clouds on the Day of Judgment and the Gates of Heaven are opened to it and Allah says, 'By My might, I will come to your aid, if not now, then after a while.'"

Narrated by Termedhi and Ahmad

We are protected in Allah's shade on the Day of Accountability:

Among the seven types of people who are protected by Allah's shade on the Day of Accountability are:

Abou Horaira related that Allah's messenger (PBUH) said,

"Seven people will be protected and shielded by Allah's shade on the Day when there is no shade except the shade provided by Allah:

- *A just ruler*
- *A young man who was raised worshipping Allah and serving Him*
- *A man whose heart is preoccupied with the mosques*
- *Two men who love one another for the sake of Allah and who separate because of Allah*

- A man who was seduced by a woman of prominence and beauty but he declined saying, "I fear Allah!"
- A man who gave charity and hid it in such a way that his left hand did not know what his right hand was doing
- A man who mentioned Allah while he was all alone and he wept.

Narrated by Bokhari and Muslim

ALLAH'S JUSTICE IS PERFECT

Many times we feel that we have been treated wrongly or unjustly. The powerful tend to rule over the weak, and the rich enslave the poor. The rulers may be ruthless, unjust and they may kill or torture their enemies. Powerful countries dictate their will against weak and poor countries. This is the state of our worldly life.

If we experience injustice in this world, we should understand that Allah knows what we are experiencing and that nothing occurs without His will and permission. We may not be able to understand the wisdom of certain events, but our ignorance should not lead us to question Allah's judgment and plan.

What we are assured of is that everything that we experience, our patience and struggle is well recorded. We will receive our just treatment on the Day of Judgment. Whatever good or evil that we have done in our lives will be brought to account.

﴿ وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ حَرْدَلٍ آتَيْنَا بِهَا وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ ﴾ [الأنبياء: ٤٧]

"We shall set up scales of justice for the Day of Judgment, so that not a soul will be dealt with unjustly in the least. And if there be (no more than) the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it (to account): and enough are We to take account" (Al-Anbia'a 21: 47)

And:

﴿ فَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَرَهُ ﴾ [الزلزلة: ٧]

"Then shall anyone who has done an atom's weight of good, see it!"
(Az-Zalzala 99 : 7)

﴿ وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ ﴾ [الزلزلة: ٨]

"And anyone who has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it"
(Az-Zalzala 99 : 8)

Although we may have forgotten our deeds, Allah has kept a perfect record and we will see all our deeds during our accountability.

﴿ يَوْمَ يَبْعَثُهُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا فَيُنَبِّئُهُم بِمَا عَمِلُوا أَحْصَاهُ اللَّهُ وَنَسُوهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴾ [المجادلة: ٦]

"On the Day that Allah will raise them all up (again) and show them the truth (and meaning) of their conduct. Allah has reckoned its (value), though they may have forgotten it, for Allah is Witness to all things" (Al-Mujadela 58 : 6).

WHAT TO DO WHEN SUBJECTED TO INJUSTICE

- We should understand that Allah knows well what adversity we are experiencing and the injustice to which we are being subjected. We should not question His judgment or reject faith.
- We should try to correct the wrong and injustice that we incur.
- We should be patient and persevere. Such injustice is a test from Allah and a trial.
- Even if we are unable to correct the wrongs and injustice, we still receive our reward for being patient and for our effort and faith.
- We should avoid returning an injustice by being wrongdoers ourselves. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) explained that if we wronged someone, it would be better to make amends and correct our wrong behavior seeking his forgiveness now; otherwise, on the Day of Accountability, we will have to give the person whom we wronged some of our good deeds. If we do not have good deeds to give, then we must shoulder some of his bad deeds. (Narrated by Muslim).

BENEFITS OF JUSTICE

- A just person is trusted by others and his judgment is accepted.
- We gain Allah's pleasure and His Paradise.
- When justice prevails in a community, everyone feels safe and confident that his rights and liberties are safeguarded.
- Justice ensures human dignity and prevents the powerful and rich from ruling or enslaving the weak and poor.
- Justice is a noble character that endears us to Allah.