



# 40 Hadiths on Social Justice

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**SH. OMAR SULEIMAN**



## Lecture Notes

## Chapter 39: Without Justice, There Can Be No Peace

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Ibn 'Abbas told Shahr (ibn Hawshab), "While the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, was sitting in the courtyard of his house in Makka, 'Uthman ibn Maz'un passed by and smiled at the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace. The Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said to him, 'Why don't you sit down?' 'I will,' he said. So the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, sat facing him. While he was conversing with him, the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, stared at the sky and said, 'A messenger from Allah, 'Abdullah came to me just now when you sat sown?' He asked, 'What did he say to you?' He said, 'Allah commands justice and doing good and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong and tyranny. He warns you so that hopefully you will pay heed.' (16:90) 'Uthman said, 'That was when belief was established in my heart and I loved Muhammad.'"

[al-Adab al-Mufrad]

حَدَّثَنَا شَهْرٌ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ  
قَالَ: بَيْنَمَا النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ  
يَفْنَاءَ بَيْتِهِ بِمَكَّةَ جَالِسٌ، إِذْ مَرَّ بِهِ عُثْمَانُ  
بْنُ مَظْعُونٍ، فَكَشَرَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، فَقَالَ لَهُ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: أَلَا تَجْلِسُ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى،  
فَجَلَسَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ  
مُسْتَقْبِلَهُ، فَبَيْنَمَا هُوَ يُحَدِّثُهُ إِذْ شَخَصَ  
النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَصَرَهُ إِلَى  
السَّمَاءِ فَقَالَ: أَتَانِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَنْفَاءً، وَأَنْتَ جَالِسٌ، قَالَ:  
فَمَا قَالَ لَكَ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ  
وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَى وَيَنْهَى  
عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ  
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ قَالَ عُثْمَانُ: وَذَلِكَ حِينَ  
اسْتَقَرَّ الْإِيمَانُ فِي قَلْبِي وَأَحْبَبْتُ  
مُحَمَّدًا.

[الأدب المفرد]

### Introduction

- Issues that will be discussed in the remaining classes:
  - Justice and peace
  - How gradual should reform be?
  - Obeying unjust laws and unjust rulers?
  - Priorities in morality and dealing with justice.

- Often times, movements for justice are often shut down in the name of peace.
- Very famous slogan: No justice, no peace!
- In the chapter's Hadith, the prophet (saw) lost focus and looked up. This was strange because usually, the prophet (saw) would give people his complete attention. Jibreel had brought the prophet (saw) a versa at that moment. The Ayah was:
  - إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُم لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ - 16:90
  - Surah Nahl Ayah 90: Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded.
  - Ibn Masoud says that this is the most comprehensive verse revealed to the prophet (saw)
  - Umar ibn Abdul Aziz would recite this versa at the end of every Friday sermon.
  - فحشاء: forbidden things in public or in private
    - Ayah: إنما حرم ربي الفواحش ما ظهر منها وما بطن
  - منكر: when you boast about your sin.
  - بغى: tyranny; that you wrong the creation of Allah.
- Allah does not command you to do what He himself doesn't
  - For example, Allah (swt) commands you to be just and merciful and he is the most Just and most Merciful
  - Allah (swt) says I have forbade oppression on myself and have made it forbidden amongst you all.
- Ibn Qayyim said that the three components of one's natural disposition (fitra) are: monotheism, justice, and mercy.

### Justice with Allah

- The right of Allah on you are greater than the rights of anyone else on you.



- Justice is the minimum. Excellence/Ihsan is the maximum.
- Justice with Allah means that you are consistent in honoring his rights in private and public.
- Ihsan with Allah is that your private relationship with Allah is better than your public relationship with Allah.

### Justice and Peace

- Martin Luther King Jr.: "Peace is not the absence of tension but the presence of justice"
- Peace/سلام literally means freedom from chaos in Arabic
  - The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the Muslims are safe;
    - المسلم من سلم المسلمون من لسانه، ويده
    - Muslim comes from سلام.
  - The word سليم means free from harm or sickness.
  - Paradise is called دار السلام because it is free from any imperfection or anything that would disturb the peace.
  - Allah (swt) is as-Salaam because he is free from any defect or flaw.
  - Peace means the absence of harm in Islamic epistemology and Arabic.
- Can there truly be peace in the presence of injustice from an Islamic perspective?
  - No, that is why the prophet (saw) said that "A Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hands the Muslims are safe;

### Justice and Excellence

- The Ayah tells us you cannot have Ihsan (excellence) without Adl (justice).
- When people's rights are being taken away, you don't focus on embellishing privileges, you remove the oppression.



- Fudayl said that he prioritizes seeking forgiveness over words of glorification because if you have a garment that is dirty, you clean the stain before you embellish the garment.
- Ibn Abbas said that Adl is to remove ugliness from society and Ihsan is to promote virtue.
- You do not tell someone facing injustice to relinquish their right and show Ihsan. Rather, you place them in a position to show Ihsan.
  - In Islam, retribution (ex. eye for an eye) is a person's right. But when they have the choice of retribution, you want to encourage them to show benevolence and Ihsan. But they shouldn't be pressured into it.
  - Islam has Qisas (retribution) and Afw (forgiveness).
  - Ihsan is the standard you hold yourself to. It is not something you force on someone else.
  - Society should be the one who is wronged in a position where they can choose between justice and Ihsan.
  - This has implications in marriages, financial disputes, oppressed groups.
  - If you show Ihsan and benevolence then you can expect that from Allah.
- 42:39 - وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَهُمُ الْبَغْيُ هُمْ يَنْتَصِرُونَ
- "And those who, when tyranny strikes them, they defend themselves,"
- If you don't fight back against an oppressor than you may be enabling their oppression of others.
- Even in the case where you show benevolence, the oppressor should have the tools of oppression removed from them.
- Malcom X never used violence and never called to violence
  - But he found it wrong that the oppressed people should have to commit to non-violence as a principle while the oppressors are not committing to non-violence.

- But choosing to commit to non-violence as a strategy is different.
- 42:40 - وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا ۖ فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ
- “And the retribution for an evil act is an evil one like it, but whoever pardons and makes reconciliation - his reward is [due] from Allah . Indeed, He does not like wrongdoers.”
- 42:41 - وَلَئِنْ انتَصَرْتَ بَعْدَ ظُلْمِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مَا عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ سَبِيلٍ
- “And whoever avenges himself after having been wronged - those have not upon them any cause [for blame].”
- Emphasizes that you cannot fault the oppressed for choosing retribution and asking for their rights.
- 42:42 - إِنَّمَا السَّبِيلُ عَلَى الَّذِينَ يَظْلِمُونَ النَّاسَ وَيَبْغُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ
- “The cause is only against the ones who wrong the people and tyrannize upon the earth without right. Those will have a painful punishment.”
- Blame should be put on the oppressor. The oppressed is given a true option of justice and showing mercy. Then they can be encouraged to show mercy.
- Jesse Williams said, “If you don’t have an established critique of my oppression, you don’t have a right to an opinion on my resistance.

### Conclusion

- Imam Zaid Shakir writes,
- “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]"
- Distributive justice comes before restorative justice.
  - The duty of a person in power is first to make sure everyone is in a fair place. Then they can take things back to their original framework.
  - This is why it is unfair to talk about immigrants coming to the United States without talking about what the United States did to their countries of origin.
  - It is unfair to expect the crime rate to be at the same level for people in poverty and those who are rich. For some reason, we punish poor people for crimes more harshly than rich people.
  - After you restore justice, you promote virtue.