

non-Muslims plunged into academic and religious discourses with a degree of freedom hardly countenanced by some nations today.

Justice and freedom are two common principles whose necessity and virtue have been agreed upon as indispensable to the maintenance of a sound society. Islam implanted them in the conscience of men, and defended and protected them with its authority.

## الذنب فی القرآن

مغفرت ذنب کے مسئلہ کی شاندار تنقیح اور نسبت الذنوب الی الانبیاء  
پر بہترین تحقیق



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ملنے کا پتہ: ..... مکتبہ مہریہ گولڑا شریف

دارالعلوم مہریہ گلشن اقبال کراچی ..... مکتبہ رضویہ آرام باغ کراچی

پبلی کیشنز اردو بازار کراچی

championed their 'alid rivals'<sup>17</sup> without having his freedom curtailed or suffering any mishap.

Islam's protection of freedom was responsible for the success of the Muslims in their best days particularly in the period of Arab hegemony which followed closely on the **apprehension of the Message**. Because they upheld freedom, the Muslims succeeded in extending their rule in the East and the West, from China to Spain. Muslims have always been enjoined to battle to safeguard the freedom of belief and the sanctity of places of worship of those who differed in religion but were allied to them or entitled to their protection as subjects of their realm.

The hearts of the Muslims were filled to overflowing with meaning of freedom. They oppressed no man who delved into the mysteries of the universe and adopted for himself a theory or claimed a certain opinion. Freedom of learning was guaranteed to the Sabaeans<sup>18</sup> and the Magians,<sup>19</sup> the Christians and the Jews, who were permitted to express their beliefs unmolested. Muslims likewise enjoyed considerable freedom in this respect and were not restrained by their Shari'ah. From what is known, the only restrictions placed on freedom of opinion, belief, and expression in Islamic states were those aimed at eliminating disturbances, riots, and unrest endangering the safety of the state.

The princes and rulers of Islam, as a whole, did not make it their policy to investigate ideas, views, beliefs, and scholarly research except where these might have had a direct and immediate bearing on their rule. In the Middle Ages, Muslims and

<sup>17</sup> The 'Alids were partisans of 'Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet and fourth caliph of Islam (A.D. 656-661); they were the legitimists of Islam who sought to replace the 'Abbasid dynasty with a dynasty from among the descendants of 'Ali.

<sup>18</sup> The Sabaeans acquired *dhimmi* status under the Muslims.

<sup>19</sup> *Magians* or *Majus* refers to the Zoroastrians who, although not enjoying the status of people of the Book, nevertheless were granted *dhimmi* status and enjoyed the protection of the Muslims.

The Imam Ibn-al-Qayyim<sup>13</sup> said, "Allah (may He be praised and glorified) sent His messengers and revealed His books<sup>14</sup> that people may measure with the justice on which Heaven and earth have dwelt. Where the sings of justice appear and justice unveils its face in whatever manner, then the legislation and religion of Allah will be perfected." That is, religious laws or dogma must conform to justice. According to the Imam al-Shatibby, "The ordinances of the Shari'ah were decreed only for the welfare of people, wherever this welfare is to be found."

The imams of Islam agree that justice is the ultimate aim of the Shari'ah, for above all else, it binds decrees with the justice ordained by Allah.

Freedom in Islam is one of the most sacred rights; political freedom, freedom of thought, religious freedom, and civil freedom are all guaranteed by Islam and carried forward to a point in the distance that has left modern civilization behind.

History still relates examples of this in the audiences of caliphs and princes, even after the rule in Islam had become despotic. People in the days of "Umar (ra) ibn-Abd-al-'Aziz<sup>15</sup> raised questions in his very presence concerning his right and the right of his house to rule and possess the caliphate. The same has been related of he audiences of al-Ma'mun.<sup>16</sup> Di'bil ibn-'Ali al-Khuza'i, the poet, satirized a number of 'Abbasid cliphas one after another while they were at the apogee of their reign and

<sup>13</sup> A medieval authority on Muslim theology. *Imam* means a leader of any kind- a jurist, an intellectual leader, etc.

<sup>14</sup> By *books* is meant the ones revealed by Allah: the Bible, the Koran.

<sup>15</sup> An Umayyad caliph (A.D. 717-720) noted for his piety; not to be confused with 'Umar (ra) ibn-al-Khattab, his maternal grandfather.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Ma'mun, an 'Abbasid caliph (A.D. 813-833) at Baghdad headed a period of brilliant cultural development, patronizing men of letters and professions. The apex of 'Abbasid attainments were reached during his reign.

be present or absent, whether the law be in effect or not, for it is a right which he derives from his conscience by the judgment of his faith. Such justice eradicates communal prejudices and bigotry and places equality above every consideration, for the Muslim own what is his in every time and place.

Islam outdistances all rules of modern justice in declaring:

Lo! Allah enjoineth justice kindness....<sup>7</sup>

O ye who believer! Be ye staunch in justice, witnesses for Allah, even though it be against yourselves or [your] parents or [your] kindred....<sup>8</sup>

. . . And let not hatred of nay people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to your duty.<sup>9</sup> Islam ordains, “. . . if ye judge between mankind . . . judge justly.”<sup>10</sup> “And if ye give your word, do justice thereunto, even though it be [against] a kinsman . . .”<sup>11</sup>

Islam has made justice the foundation of the entire world order in the words, “And the sky He hath uplifted; and He hath set the measure, that ye exceed not the measure, but observe the measure strictly, nor fall short thereof.”<sup>12</sup>

Islam has placed justice above everything, weighing in an equitable balance between the infidel and the Muslim, the enemy, associate (*maula*), and ally; for in Islam's sight they are all the same and equal before justice: “. . . and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to your duty.”

In this regard, the Islamic Shari'ah deserves attentive consideration, for in many respects it is still ahead of modern civilization in terms of progress achieved.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 16:90.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 4:135.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 5:8.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 4:58.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 6:153.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 55:7-9.

with him; for they are all servants of Allah both in this world and in the next, the noblest being the best in conduct. This justice is what makes almsgiving to the needy a duty of those capable of providing for them, not a favour.

Justice and equality were apparent during the first Muslim era, when belief prevailed and ruled man's heart. With such understanding did Abu-Bakr (ra), immediately following his election to the caliphate, proceed into the market as an ordinary person seeking to earn a living for himself and his family. When this became a topic of discussion, Muslims consulted each other over the matter, and decided to consider him a hired employee of the community. They prevented him from working and arranged a salary based on his needs, which did not distinguish him in his appearance and livelihood from the rest of his people.

'Umar (ra) succeeded Abu-Bakr (ra) in the great days of Islamic belief. He strengthened Islam's authority, as he was a caliph selected from the people. It was he who defeated the Persians and Byzantines, and yet he patched his garb with his own hands and sewed soles onto his footwear. It never entered his mind or the minds of the Muslims that aside from the authority vested in the office, and caliphate should distinguish between the caliph and members of the Islamic community. He was entitled to their allegiance and obedience only as holder of the office and guardian of the law.

Justice and equality constituted a deep-rooted belief which people accepted willingly and observed by the most stringent law; they were a spiritual reality working both overtly and covertly for the establishment of a righteous and stable society.

The Shari'ah treats believers as brethren, wherever their domicile may be; they are deserving of rights which cannot be denied. Therefore, the believer is entitled to beneficence, help, protection, inheritance, loyalty, and counsel by the decrees of Allah and the Sahri'ah. He is entitled to justice, whether the ruler

“O mankind! Lo! We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct.”<sup>4</sup>

And such was the world when ‘Umar (ra), Muhammmad’s (PBUH) disciple who conquered the dominions of the caesars and the Khosraus, rebuked his governeor, whose son had acted arbitrarily toward a Christain copt: “O ‘Amr,’ would you enslave a human being born to be free!”

The appeal of Message of Muhammad (PBUH) for justice, equality, and freedom was new to that world. Islāmic law became the font of freedom and truth, defining the rights and obligations of individuals and groups. The weak lifted their heads and were mocked by their former oppressors, who repeated what their predecessors had asserted: “Thou [Muhammad (PBUH)] art followed only by the contemptible and degraded people who do not think.”<sup>5</sup> They did not realize that Allah willed the destruction of the world of greed, egotism, tyranny, and oppression, and that He demanded that the standard of truth be raised and that there be an end to falsehood. The religious law of Islam comprises clear and noble principles governing human conduct, as revealed by the Omniscient to one of the most virtuous men known in the lengthy annals of mankind, Muhammad (PBUH); these principles affirm that justice and freedom in the conscience of the believers are an integral part of their beliefs and of their innermost selves.

Islam made these principles an inseparable part of belief, their by affirming, immortalizing, and safeguarding them against the whims of deceit, treachery, pretentiousness, and distorted and abominable preachings.

The Muslim would not be a Muslim if he doubted that poorest and most incapacitated of his brethren shared equal rights

<sup>4</sup> Koran, 49:13.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Amr ibn-al-‘As; a renowned companion of Holy Prophet.

<sup>6</sup> Koran, 11:27.

not on the principles of justice, freedom, equality, and brotherhood.

Byzantium thrived in the same way for over a thousand years, and its mentality was not different from that of Ctesiphon.<sup>1</sup> The Caesars were emperors of the West and, according to their allegations, of the whole world. The Khosraus were their rivals in the East. Zoroastriannism appeared to have left as much of an imprint on the character of the Persian Empire as Christianity on Byzantium. The Christianity of Byzantium did no honor to its Christians, who in no way practiced the brotherhood, peace, and mercy preached by our master Jesus. So narrow was the vision of the Byzantine rulers that they did not acknowledge the right of any state to independent existence; in their eyes their order was universal. People either had to acknowledge this or be considered ignorant of the fact that they were within the sphere of this order.

In the ninth century, an envoy of Charlemagne informed the Byzantine emperor that his master was preoccupied in a war with the Saxons, and that these Saxons were barbarians and a perpetual menace. The emperor interrupted him, asking, "Who are those barbarians of whom I have not heard and who, therefore, can be of no consequential importance to cause your master all this trouble? I give them to you and consider your master relieved of them." When the envoy returned to Charlemagne, he informed his master of what the emperor had granted him, upon which Charlemagne declared, "Had he given you a pair of boots instead of the Saxons, he would have been of more help to you on your long and arduous journey!"

Such was the world in the eyes of the Caesars, Khosraue, and the Arabs tribes when Muhammad (PBUH) appeared, reminding man that he is only of Adam and that Adam is of dust:

<sup>1</sup> Ctesiphon was the capital of the Sassanidac before its conquest by the Arabs in June, A.D. 637, under the leadership of Sa'd ibn-abi-Waqqas, the Arabs general. The Arabs call the city Madla'in.

Persians, and Ethiopians. Each country had its individual conditions and system, depending on the circumstances, and the rules governing these lands were not based on universal or firm human principles to insure their existence.

In Arab lands, the rule of force prevailed; selfishness and egotism were exalted; people gloried in killing and plundering, and many prided themselves on trampling upon the rights of others and gaining control over their possessions. People rejected human, national, and racial brotherhood, denying equality to those outside the tribe, to associates (*mawali*)<sup>1</sup>, and to other Arabs. They mocked any justice not based on the dictates of force, and they cherished absolute freedom, dying willingly that they might preserve it; it was their own freedom, and they shared it with no one.

The Persians, Romans, and later the Byzantines, the Arabs' neighbours, despised the Arabs and would not acknowledge any right of equality for them or honor their concept of justice. The power of the Persians was centered on their king-Khosrau II (A.D. 590-628) in the time of the Prophet (PBUH) to whom belonged all rights, and an entourage which possessed only those rights that Khosrau granted or withheld. The development of the resources of the land was subordinate to his efforts to become king over all people. He was surrounded by aides, princes, and armies. They bolstered his throne and shared some of his power, but they were not altogether safe from being called upon at any moment to sacrifice their lives, possessions, and sons for Khosrau. Indeed, the Persian Empire was firmly established and seemingly perpetual, as the Sassanidae<sup>2</sup> had ruled for four centuries. But the empire rested on militarism and arbitrary rule,

<sup>1</sup> The term *mawali* (singular: *mawla*) meant non-Arabs who sought and received protection from an Arab tribe individually.

<sup>2</sup> The Sassanidae were the ruling dynasty of Persia which the Arabs overthrew under the leadership of the Caliph 'Umar (ra) about A.D. 637.



## 6. Justice and Freedom Cherished and Practiced by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

Abd ur Rahman Hasan Azzam

Abd ur Rahman Azzam (1893–1976) was an Egyptian diplomat. He served as the first Secretary General of the Arab League from 1945 to 1952.

Azzam also had a long career as an ambassador and parliamentarian. He was an Egyptian nationalist and one of the foremost proponents of pan-Arab idealism – viewpoints, he did not see as contradictory - and was passionately opposed to the partition of Palestine. Azzam is the Great Grand Uncle of a prominent Al-Qaeda leader, Ayman Al-Zawahiri.

The following is an excerpt taken from Azzam's book entitled "published by..... P....it talks about the justice and freedom shown by Islam as a religion. It was a rampant thinking at the advent of Islam that religion always suppresses those who don't believe in, and persecutes religious minorities. Islam eradicated this prevalent misconception and showed an unparalleled example of justice and freedom. In this article, it has been proved by author that prophet (PBUH) of Islam was an ideal in this regard through bringing various examples from different angles.

We shall discuss in this chapter the two fundamental principles which are indispensable to fortifying society and directing life along the path leading to the general welfare: Freedom and Justice.

Before the advent of Islam, people lived either according to tribal rule, as was the case in the land of the Arabs, or as subjects of states or princes, as was the situation along the periphery of the Arab peninsula in the dominions of the Romans,