

[Home](#) > [The Voice of Human Justice \(Sautu'l 'Adalati'l Insaniyah\)](#) > [Human rights and Ali](#) > A Difficult Test

Human rights and Ali

A Difficult Test

By God! I admit the truth myself before any evidence is given against me.

Our matter is very difficult. Our words can be understood only by the honest hearts and the far-sighted intellects. (Imam Ali).

Ali formulated such firm rules and presented such solid views for the rights of the human beings and the welfare of the human society, that their roots penetrate into the depths of the earth and their branches extend upto the heavens. All the social sciences which are prevalent at present mostly confirm these views and principles. Although these modern social sciences may be given many names, and may be presented in various forms, their object is one and one only that the human being should be protected from oppression and there should be formed a society which should protect human rights in a better way – a society in which human dignity should be respected and the freedom of word and action should be safe to such an extent that none should be hurt.

The conditions and circumstances of time have a great effect on the creation of social sciences. It is these very conditions and circumstances which present social sciences in one shape at one time and in another shape at another time.

When we study history and come across various events we come to know that there has been a conflict between two different groups of human beings and two different views and ideas. One group has been keen to be despotic and to usurp the rights of the common man and to eliminate his freedom, whereas the other group has been desirous of justice, democracy, preservation of the rights of the people and their freedom.

During the past all useful movements were started by the oppressed and the reformers always rose from amongst them so that they might put an end to oppression and injustice and establish governments on the foundation of equity and justice which should accord with reason as well as the conditions and

circumstances of the society.

Ali enjoys a very high position in the history of human rights. His views were linked with the thinking of Islam. The central point of his views was that despotism should come to an end, and class discrimination should be eliminated from amongst the people. Whoever has recognized Ali and heard his remarks and understood his beliefs and views about human brotherhood knows that he was a sword drawn on the necks of the tyrants. His entire attention was directed towards the enforcement of the rules of equity and justice.

His thoughts and manners and his government and politics were all dedicated to the achievement of this purpose. Whenever any oppressor encroached upon the rights of the people or treated the weak in a humiliating manner or ignored their welfare and threw his own burden on their weak shoulders, Ali gave him a tough fight.

The mental upbringing of the Imam took place with this thinking that equity and justice should be enforced in such a way that equality should be established and one class should not enjoy any supremacy over another class and every person should receive that to which he is entitled. His voice remained loud continuously for the enforcement of justice, and his mace always remained active to achieve this end. He elevated man and always remained ready to protect him. His government was the best specimen of administration during that period. It was a government which was just and the protector of human rights, and one, which achieved its end by all possible means.

The Imam realized it clearly that the society of that time was based on fraud, deceit and harmful activities, and its reformation was necessary. He also knew well how that society could be reformed and how much time it would take to do so. Although he thought of the welfare of the people in all respects, the things to which he paid his attention most was their reformation. Nothing could stop him from making efforts in this behalf. What he desired most was to establish truth and destroy falsehood and none else could be more capable of making distinction between truth and falsehood.

Ali assessed things correctly and engaged himself in his task fearlessly according to his calculations. He never entertained any doubt with regard to anything related to public welfare. As and when any officer or governor oppressed the subjects Ali neither sat quiet nor connived at their actions. He never displayed slackness when he found that some persons had formed a group against the true government. At times his plans to achieve his ends were opposed not only to the wishes of his enemies but to those of his friends as well, but he did not mind this.

All this was done by him so that the right of every person to lead a peaceful life might be ensured, and the people should not be divided into two groups, one of whom should be very happy and the other should be very much grieved.

Ali had clearly understood that it will be very dangerous to divide the people into two classes and to prefer one of them to the other. This will retard the intellects, create malice in the spirits, and introduce

oppression and injustice in the judgments and transactions, and all sorts of mischiefs and corruptions will appear. The result will be that ambition for life will die and the people will become pessimistic and will entertain ill-will towards one another. Consequently the society will be ruined. So long as these two classes exist in a society a conflict between them is inevitable and it will involve the loss of many lives.

During the last days of the caliphate of Uthman the dignitaries of the state and especially the members of the Umayyad family, who were the kinsmen and relatives of the caliph had made it a practice that they openly opposed the Islamic rules and regulations. They humiliated the people, treated them like slaves and made them so much afraid of the ruler that they could not pick up courage to stand before him and mention their grievances. They played with their lives in the same manner in which they played with their property. They did not refrain from shedding the blood of the people for their personal benefit and none could dare take revenge. They were not afraid of taking bribes or looting the property of others.

Their continuous activities, conditions and circumstances showed what their intentions were. It was clear that they were going to besmear their hands with the blood of the people, to trample upon their rights and to change the caliphate into kingship and the Islamic democracy into despotism and dictatorship of an individual. The position of the members of this party, between the very just conduct of Ali and their personal avarice, was that of gamblers.

On the one hand Ali was determined to enforce equity and justice with all his might, and on the other hand these persons were keen to have the reins of government in their own hands and to possess as much wealth and property as possible. Between these two conditions they acted like gamblers, hoping to seize an opportunity to bring about a revolution and consequently to appropriate all benefits themselves, entertaining the worst passions and desires in their minds.

There is no doubt about the fact that the responsibility assumed by Ali was very difficult and onerous. Various reasons and intricate circumstances had made Ali face many difficulties which could not be overcome easily. The world of that time was topsy turvy, the conditions were revolutionary and the events were frightening and the responsibilities of Ali were so great and burdensome that the caliphate and the religion of Islam depended on them. By solving these problems and overcoming these difficulties Ali performed a task which made his qualities known to the world. The world came to know how mindful he was of public rights, how determined he was to promote individual and collective virtues, and with what patience and perseverance he achieved his objects.

Ali's difficulties were just like the difficulties experienced by the Prophet when he made known to Quraysh that he had been appointed to the Prophetic mission and they had turned against him. On the one side there was truth and justice and equity and equality, and on the other side there was treachery, profiteering and egotism. The Prophet wanted to introduce truth, justice, equity and equality whereas the Quraysh were bent upon practising treachery, profiteering and egotism.

Ali had also to face a similar difficulty. However, it was viewed to be a difficulty by others. So far as Ali

was concerned even the greatest difficulty could not make him deviate from his object. If another person possesses the strength and perseverance which Almighty God had given to Ali every difficulty will become easy for him as well. What was intolerable for Ali was that he should sit in seclusion and not enforce equity and justice – that he should crush the spirit of freedom and not sow the seeds of virtue.

The Prophet blew a voice in the ears of Abu Sufyan, Abu Lahab, Umm Jamil, Hind – the liver-eater, and the Quraysh tradesmen, on account of which the foundations of their plans were demolished, their structure was broken and their roofs came down on the ground. However, this very voice was a good tidings and a message of happiness for the Muslims and the helpless people. He said to Abu Talib: “Dear Uncle! Even if these people place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left hand so that I may abandon the invitation to Islam I shall not do so till Almighty God makes this religion victorious or I lay down my life”.

One day the elders of Quraysh said to Muhammad: “If you have introduced this new religion in order to accumulate wealth we shall place so much wealth at your disposal that you will become the richest person amongst us. If your object is to acquire high position, we are prepared to acknowledge you to be our chief. And if you want to become a king we are ready to accept you as our king”.

He said in reply: “My object in inviting people to Islam is not to acquire wealth or position, nor am I desirous of becoming your king. I extend this invitation because God has sent me to you in the capacity of a Prophet and has revealed the Book to me. He has ordered me to warn you of His torture and to give you good tidings of Paradise. I have conveyed God's message to you. If you accept it you will be prosperous in this world as well as in the Hereafter, and if you reject it I shall remain patient till God gives His judgment about you and myself”.

What did Ali do? What was his attitude towards the son of Abu Sufyan and Hind, the liver-eater, and towards the traders, who bought and sold positions and offices, and towards the soldiery, who blindly sacrificed their lives for the benefit of others, and towards those, who had sold their religion and beliefs at the hands of falsehood? Ali also blew a voice in their ears which demolished the foundations of their designs, and made their structures and roofs collapse. And this very voice became the good news of happiness and message of comfort for the righteous and pious persons. He said: “Your powerful are weak and your weak are powerful. So long as the stars revolve in the sky I shall not at all give a judgment opposed to justice. By God I shall do justice so far as the oppressor and the oppressed persons are concerned. I shall put a cavesson in the nose of the oppressor and pull him towards truth even if he may dislike it most. I swear by God that I admit the truth before any evidence is given against me. I do not care whether I myself am walking –towards death or death is coming towards me”.

One day some persons said to Ali “We are respectable members of the community”. He said to them: “An abject person is respectable in my eyes till I recover his right and the respectable person is weak in my eyes till I recover the right (of the weak person) from him”.

We shall now examine how far Ali put these words of his into practice and how he dealt with the people.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/voice-human-justice-sautul-adalatil-insaniyah-george-jordac/human-rights-and-ali#comment-0>