

[Home](#) > [The Ahlul-Bayt; Ethical Role-Models](#) > [Section One: General Ethics](#) > [Justice](#) > Advantages of Justice

Justice

Justice is the master of virtues and the course to peace. Islam has glorified justice and encouraged it through numerous texts of the Quran and the Sunna:

“Allah commands (people) to maintain justice, kindness, and proper relations with their relatives. (16:90)”

“Be just in your words, even if the party involved is one of your relatives. (6: 152)”

“Allah commands you to return that which had been entrusted to you to the rightful owners. Be just when passing judgment among people. (4:58)”

As he was asked about the codes of the religion completely, Imam as-Sajjad (a) said: “They are to say the right, judge with justice, and fulfill the pledge¹.”

Imam as-Sadiq (a) said: “Justice is more delicious than honey, softer than butter, and more sweet-smelling than musk².”

Imam ar-Rida (a) said: “The application of justice and charity is sign of the continuance of graces³.”

Forms of Justice

(1) Man's justice towards God

This is the brightest form, the highest concept, and the title of credibility of justice. How is it possible for anyone to fulfill the obligations of God so justly since God is the All-benefactor whose graces are innumerable and favors are incalculable? It is impossible to achieve justice towards the Lord who is absolutely Self-Sufficient except through confessing of shortcoming.

Justice towards God stands for the believing in Him, being sincere with Him, believing in His messengers and representatives, and responding to the necessities, such as the love for Him, having

the honor of worshipping Him, persisting on the obedience to Him, and being away from the acts of disobedience to Him.

(2) Man's justice towards the society

This form of justice can be achieved by observing the individuals' rights, refraining from maltreating them, dealing with them through noble traits, and courtesy, and sympathizing the poor as well as the other matters of social justice.

In the holy Quran, God summarizes the factuality of the public justice by saying:

“Allah commands (people) to maintain justice, kindness, and proper relations with their relatives. He forbids them to commit indecency, sin, and rebellion. Allah gives you advice so that perhaps you will take heed. (16:90)”

Amirul-Mu'minin (a) depicted the course of the social justice so briefly and eloquently:

“My son, make yourself the measure for dealings between you and others. Thus, you should desire for others what you desire for yourself and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do not oppress as you do not like to be oppressed. Do good to others, as you would like good to be done to you. Regard bad for yourself whatever you regard bad for others. Accept that (treatment) from others, which you would like others to accept from you. Do not talk about what you do not know even though what you know be very little. Do not say to others what you do not like to be said to you.”

(3) Justice towards the dead

The alive should be just towards the dead who departed this life leaving fortunes and gaining nothing in their everlasting journey except a few yards of clothes and narrow spans of the inside of the earth.

It is just for the alive to feel sympathetic to the dead and reward them equitably by implementing their wills, defraying their debts, doing charitable and righteous deeds for their sake, and seeking God's forgiveness to them.

Imam as-Sadiq (a) said: “The dead feels happy for seeking Allah's mercy and forgiveness for him in the same way as the alive feels happy for the presents gifted to him.”

“As for Muslims who do a charitable deed for the sake of a dead, Allah will double their rewards and will reward the dead for that deed, too⁴.”

(4) Justice of the rulers

Because of their being the leaders of people and the guardians of nation, the rulers are the worthiest of being characterized by justice. On that account, the rulers' justice represents the highest concept of

justice and the most influential. Through the rulers' justice, security is achieved, peace predominates, luxury prevails, and the subjects become happy.

Advantages of Justice

The sound souls are created on the nature of the love for justice and hate for wronging. Over the existence on this earth, all human beings agreed unanimously, despite their different trends and courses, on glorifying justice. Furthermore, they have gone on praising its virtues and dedicating themselves to the doing of justice. It is then the secret of the existence of nations and the symbol of virtues. Only was it because the loss of justice, the great powers collapsed and the glorious civilizations reduced to rubble.

The Ahlul-Bayt (a) were high examples of justice. Their deeds and words were immortal lessons that light for humanity the courses of justice, right, and guidance:

In his final disease, the Prophet (S) asked people to retaliate upon him if he had made mistake with any of them intentionally or unintentionally. Suwada Ibn Qays said: "O God's Messenger, once, you were riding your she-camel and having a cane in the hand when I received you after you had been in Ta'if. As you were trying to beat your riding animal with your cane, you hit my belly." The Prophet (S) ordered him to retaliate. "Show me your belly," asked Suwada, and the Prophet did. "May I put my mouth on your belly, God's Messenger?" asked Suwada. The Prophet permitted, and Suwada said: "I seek the guard of the Prophet's place of retaliation against fire of Hell."

The Prophet then asked him to retaliate or forgive. "I will certainly forgive, God's Messenger," said Suwada. The Prophet prayed: "Allah, forgive Suwada Ibn Qays, for he forgave You Prophet Muhammad⁵."

Abu Saeed al-Khidri narrated the following:

A Bedouin asked the Prophet (S) importunately to defray the debt that he owed him. The companions interfered and reproached the Bedouin, saying, "Woe is you. Do you know to whom are you addressing?" "I am only demanding with my right," said the Bedouin. The Prophet (S) said to his companions: "You should have been with the right party."

He then summoned Khawla bint Qays and asked her to loan him some dates and promised he would repay her when his share would come to his hand. She did, and the Prophet (S) gave the Bedouin his due in full after he had invited him to a meal. The Bedouin said: "You have given the due in full. God may give you your due in full." The Prophet commented: "Those who give the due in full are the best of people. Woe to the nation whose individuals do not give the weak his due in full."

It is said that the Bedouin embraced Islam after he had seen the high morality of the Prophet, and said: "God's Messenger, I have never seen such a fair individual⁶."

Thus was Amirul-Mu'minin Ali (a). Imam as-Sadiq (a) narrated the following.

When he hold the position of caliphate, Ali (a) scaled the mimbar and said: "All praise and thanks be to Allah. I will not seize a single dirham from your shares so long as a single bunch of my dates in Yathrib is available. Be sure. Do you think I will prefer you to myself?" Aqil⁷ stood up and said: "This means that you will put me and the black ones of Medina on the same level, does it not?" The Imam (a) asked him to sit down, and said, "You have no preference to the black ones of Medina except by means of a virtue in Islam or piety⁸."

The following narration is recorded by Ibn Hagar in his book titled 'As-Sawaa'iq ul-Muhriqa' page 79:

(Ibn Asakir narrated that) Aqil asked Amirul-Mu'minin (a) to give him some money because he was poor. The Imam told him to wait until his share of the public treasury would come out. As Aqil insisted, the Imam asked a man to take Aqil to the market and lead him to the locks of the stores so that he would unlock and take from them. "Do you want me to be thief?" asked Aqil. The Imam (a) said: "And do you want me to be thief as you ask me to give you the shares of Muslims?" Aqil then threatened he would join Muawiya.

As soon as Aqil asked him, Muawiya gave him one hundred thousand dirhams and asked him to take the mimbar and tell people his story with his brother.

Aqil ascended the mimbar and said: "People, when I tried to make Ali give up his religion, he refused and preferred his religion to me. But when I asked Muawiya to prefer me to his religion, he did⁹."

Ibn Abbas narrated the following:

I, once, visited Amirul-Mu'minin (a) and found him repairing one of his old slippers. As he finished, he added it to the other and asked me to evaluate. "It is valueless," I answered. As he insisted, I said: "They may be half a dirham." He (a) commented: "By Allah I swear, these slippers are favorable for me to my leadership to you unless I constitute the right or reject the wrong¹⁰."

On another occasion, Imam Ali (a) said: "By Allah, I would rather pass a night in wakefulness on the thorns of as-Sadan (a plant having sharp prickles) or be driven in chains as a prisoner than meet Allah and His Messenger on the Day of Judgment as an oppressor over any person or a usurper of anything out of worldly wealth. And how can I oppress any one for (the sake of a life) that is fast moving towards destruction and is to remain under the earth for a long time¹¹."

¹. Quoted from Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 16 (as quoted from Kitab ul-Ahsara; page 116 and as-Saduq's al-Khissal).

². Quoted from al-Wafi; part 3 page 89 (as quoted from al-Kafi).

³. Quoted from Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 16 (as quoted from Kitab ul-Ahsara; page 116 and Uyounu Akhbar ir-Ridha).

⁴. These two narratives are quoted from Sheikh as-Saduq's Men La Yahdhuruh ul-Faqih.

⁵. Quoted from Safinat ul-Bihar; part 1 page 671.

⁶. Quoted from Fadha'il ul-Khamsa Mines Sihah is-Sitteh, part 1 page 122 (as quoted from Ibn Madgeh's Sahih).

⁷. Aqil ibn Abi Talib is the brother of Imam Ali, peace be upon him.

- [8.](#) Quoted from Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 9 page 539 (as quoted from al-Kafi).
- [9.](#) Quoted from Fadhaail ul-Khamsa Mines Sihah is-Sitteh, part 3 page 15.
- [10.](#) Quoted from Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 2 page 570.
- [11.](#) Quoted from Bihar ul-Anwar; vol. 2 page 606.

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