

ISLAMIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

SADR-UD-DIN

**AHMADIYYA ANJUMAN ISHAAT ISLAM,
LAHORE**

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THE HOLY PROPHET : AS THE MERCY FOR THE PEOPLES

Conferred Social Respectability on the Poor

Socialism Pales into insignificance before
Islamic Social Justice

FRIDAY SERMON BY HAZRAT MAULANA SADR-UD-DIN
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Hazrat Maulana recited the following
verses : (18 : 27-28).

واتل ما اوحى اليك من كتاب ربك لا مبدل لكلماته ولن تجد من
دونه ملتحدا واصبر نفسك مع الذين يدعون ربهم بالغدوة والعشى يريدون
وجهه ولا تعد عينيک عنهم تريد زينة الحياة الدنيا ولا تطع من اغفلنا قلبه عن
ذكرنا واتبع هوائه وكان امره فرطا -

“And recite what has been revealed to thee of the Book of thy Lord. There is none who can change His words, and thou will find no refuge beside Him. And keep thyself attached to those who call on their Lord morning and evening seeking His pleasure ; and let not thy eyes pass beyond them, seeking the adornment of the life of world ; and obey not him whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance and who follows his evil inclinations, and his case exceeds all bounds.” (18 : 28-29).

Guidance for Mankind

Hazrat Maulana said :

These Quranic verses draw a pointed attention to the divine guidance for the whole humanity and not for the Mussalmans only. The guidance referred

to therein encompasses all races and all nation. It is for the low and the high, for the "Have-nots" and for the "Have got's", for men and for women and for the slaves and for the masters. In short, the guidance is universal. It aims at creating cosmos out of chaos.

Teaching for Here and Hereafter

There is glad tidings in the verse : *اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم واتممت عليكم نعتي* (This day have I perfected your *Deen* for you and have completed My blessing) This means that the divine guidance in the shape of Islam suffices for all spheres of human life for ever. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was not sent to vouchsafe a few guidelines. He came to bestow on us his heavenly guidance for this life and the life after death.

His Indomitable Stand Against Odds

For his high, noble and everlasting Mission, he suffered persecution of all hues and colours at the hands of the sworn enemies for thirteen years. His devout followers were also the targets of all sorts of trials and tribulations. When the relentless, ruthless and remorseless tormentors observed no sagging or relaxation in his resolve or determination, they changed their tactics. They paraded temptations and allurements to induce the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to soften his missionary zeal and zest. But the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) did not succumb to their deceptive technique. His resolve

remained as firm and unshakable as ever. Then there occurred the outbreak of hostilities which also signally failed to tell on his death-less determination. The tactics of the enemies are referred to in the Holy Quran which says : *ودوا لو تدهن فيدهنون* : (They wish that thou shouldst be pliant so that they may also be pliant). They desired that if the Holy Prophet should display a spirit of compromise, they would reciprocate by adopting milder methods. When all types of strategy failed, the enemies waged war against the Holy Prophet and his followers. In spite of the evident resourcelessness and the conspicuous lack of the sinews of war, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) faced the fiery ordeal with unparalleled gallantry. At long last, the enemies were routed and the Holy Prophet came out with flying colours and entered the Holy City of Mecca as a glorious victor.

General Amnesty

If the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) showed remarkable perseverance and determination during thirteen years of soaring crises, he displayed marvellous courage and bravery as a front-rank warrior in the wars. Now in the most exhilarating moment of victory over the enemies who had left no stone unturned to torment and torture him, he rose to the occasion in a manner which has no parallel in the annals of his ory. He proclaimed general amnesty and said *لا تثریب علیکم الیوم*

(No blame shall lie on you this day ” 12 : 93) Thus day he pardoned his persecutors. The manner of forgiving was so unique and so humanly impracticable that it made one feel that the Kingdom of God had descended on the earth as only the most Merciful and the most Compassionate God alone pardons the sinners. Humanly speaking, it is unthinkable that after thirteen years of victimization by the enemies and after three military expeditions against Medina when the dearest and nearest Companions and the relatives were martyred and the Holy Prophet himself sustained wounds, the inveterate foes would be pardoned by the divine proclamation of لا تثریب علیکم الیوم. This day of unprecedented amnesty and pardon is a red-letter day in the history of mankind, because the blood-thirsty enemies are not hauled over coals. They are not even reprimanded. They are not commanded to recall their inhuman atrocities. They are just let off. They are allowed to live peacefully.

Justice Without Discriminations Against Foes

After the establishment of the Islamic State, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) set a rare example of justice which does not discriminate between a friend and a foe. The erring Muslims are duly punished. The guiltless Non-Muslims are treated justly. During the British Raj, we witnessed that in a case between a Mussalman and a Britisher, the British judges invariably favoured

the Britisher. But in a striking contrast with this, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) always treated the non-Muslims strictly in conformity with the canons of justice and fairplay. In a famous case between a Jew and Taumah Ansari, the Jew was found innocent and was acquitted honourably. Similarly when it was reported that the son of the Governor Amr bin-al Aas had beaten a Christian, both the father and the son were summoned to stand trial for this atrocious behaviour. The false sense of *amour propre* was spurned with the contempt it deserved.

The Holy Quran Needs no Human Advocacy for its Surpassing Excellence

During my stay in England, I used to write articles on the excellences of the Holy Quran and Hadith. The readers reacted to them in a curious manner. They felt that I was a socialist, whereas Socialism was quite alien to me. Whatever I state today in this sermon is derived solely from the Holy Quran. It is all spontaneous and natural, because a laboured or strained interpretation of the Holy Quran to suit a certain situation is forbidden as it amounts to blasphemy. It is because the Holy Quran does not stand in need of any secular support.

Socialism Is Born of Social Contrasts

Socialism appeared in England and Communism was born in Russia, because the socio-economic systems were detrimental to the real social well-

being. In England the lords look down upon the commoners. They keep at an arm's length from the poor people. But Islam does not countenance any social disparity. This is why during my stay in England there was unfailing equality at the dining-table. The invitees regarded it a privilege to dine in an atmosphere of human equality, Lord Headley a Muslim convert also sat at the same table. This was something very striking for the British society. It was the rare blessing of the Islamic teachings that the lords and the commoners sat cheek by jowl.

Divine Command to Follow the Quranic Injunctions

In the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) is commanded thus :

واتل ما اوحى اليك من كتاب ربك

“Recite the Holy Quran. It is the word of God. Who has revealed it to you for your spiritual sustenance.” In response, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said : انا اول المسلمين
 “I am the first of the Mussalman and the sincerest and most devoted follower of the Quranic commands.”

The Holy Quran is Immutable

The *raison de'tre* for strict and sincere conformity with the Quranic injunctions is that the Holy Quran is the perfect scripture as stated in the verse . لا مبدل لكلماته .
 (There is none who can change His words). It is an ideally perfect scripture. It does not leave anything wanting. Hence no one can ever think of changing

God's words. There is not a jot or a tittle which any rationalist can brand as irrational. Hence the question of deletion or amending is absolutely unthinkable. Its teachings are self-sufficient and everlasting. Their value does not decline by the lapse of time.

The Holy Prophet's Close Relationship with the Poor

The Holy Quran says :

واصبر نفسك مع الذين يدعون ربهم بالغدوة والعشي يريدون وجهه

“And keep thyself attached to those who call on their Lord, morning and evening, seek His pleasure.” (18:2) It refers to the poor who kept constant company with the Holy Prophet. The command came because the Arab aristocrats resented the Holy Propet's loving relations with the poor. They wanted that the poor must first be ousted if the Holy prophet desired to impart Islamic teaching to the tribal chiefs who thought it below their dignity to sit along with the poor and the slaves. They regarded the slaves and the poor people as the scum of the earth. Hence they gave wide berth to them. Overcome with the feelings of contempt they refrained from coming and sitting in the Holy Prophet's company. As a counter to this aristocratic resentment, God says :

لا تطرد الذين يدعون ربهم بالغدوة والعشي يريدون وجهه

‘And drive not away those who call upon their

Lord morning and evening, seeking His countenance ” (6 : 53) The poor are preferred by God because they seek His pleasure Hence they are not to be cast away to draw near the aristocrats who felt a sort of contamination in the company of the poor. Here is a clear and indubitable instance of the privilege granted to the poor. Humanly speaking, there appeared to be an advantage in bringing the tribal chiefs closer, because they could prove a source of strength But as their close association could be achieved only by black balling the poor, the Holy Prophet was commanded to prize the loyal and sincere contacts of the God-fearing poor people and discard the proud aristocrats. Allah warned the Holy Prophet against cold shouldering the poor people. That the Holy Prophet himself should be commanded to guard against the tactics of the aristocrats and that he should be strictly cautioned against parting company with the poor, shows the regard for the poor which God wanted to infuse in the mind of the Holy Prophet himself. It is the teaching of the Almighty Sustainer of the worlds. In sharing the divine sustenance, the rich and the poor are equal participants

The Holy Prophet’s Love of the Poor

It is reported by the Companions :

كان رسول الله يقعد معنا ويدنونا فتمس ركبتنا

“The Holy Prophet used to sit so close to us

that his knees touched our knees". The Holy Prophet used to say to the poor : معكم المي ومعكم الممات (I am bound with you in life and in death.) This is the Glorious Revolution which the Holy Prophet created in human society. In contrast with this transformation, Socialism and Communism are the merest moonshine. Islam broke the back of the stiff-necked and stiff-lipped Arab chieftains and created such an impressive scene of human equality, that Hazrat Bilal, Hazrat Salam and Hazrat Salman Farsi used to say with pride that the relevant verse was revealed for their sake. The Holy Prophet gave Hazrat Zainab (God be pleased with her) in marriage to a slave Zaid Zaid and Usama were appointed military commanders under whom many chiefs served as soldiers. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) eclipsed all forever by granting respectable status to the poor. Those who had slaves in their family were commanded thus :

لا يقولن احدكم عبدى وامتى

"None of you should call them : "My slave" and "My handmaid " Similarly he advised the slaves not to call their masters "My Master and My Lord." The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) exhorted all human beings that they all were the slaves of Allah Who was their Lord. If we compare with it the achievements of Socialism, the Socialist Revolution pales into in-

significance because its aims are earth-bound, hence very limited

Share of the Poor in the Public Exchequer

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) not only elevated the status of the poor in the society, but also defined their share in the Public Exchequer. The Holy Quran says

انما الصدقات للفقراء والمساكين والعاملين عليها فريضة من الله والله عليم حكيم

“The alms are only for the poor and the needy, and for those employed in connexion, and for those whose hearts are to be reconciled, and for the freeing of slaves, and for those in debt, and for the cause of Allah, and for the wayfarer an ordinance from Allah. And Allah is All-knowing Wise.” (9 : 60) The commandment given in this verse forms a basis for the Islamic Social Justice. All categories of the poor and needy people are defined and their right to economic assistance and subsistence is defined. It is made incumbent on the Islamic State to provide for them all out of the Public Exchequer. The poor are not surrendered to the small mercies of the wealthy classes.

Human Beings Constitute the Family of God

The Holy Quran says that the human beings should bear in mind that Allah is the Sustainer of the worlds. He has made adequate provisions for the economic sustenance of all His creatures. Side by side with this, He has made ample provision for

their spiritual upbringing also. All nations and races constitute His family. In this connection, God says :

يا ايهاالناس انا خلقنكم من ذكر وانثى وجعلنكم شعوباً وقبائل

“O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female ; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes.” (49: 14). After creation, some tribes went to the East and settled there Others went to the West and made their abode there. Even these physical distances do not negative the basic fact of being originally one, because their Creator is the Lord of the East and the West. If on account of the changing climates, colours of the skin have changed, that also does not tamper with fact that all human beings have a common origin. Hence their oneness as the creatures of God is immutable. They are the offsprings of Adam and Adam was created out of clay انتم بنوآدم و آدم من تراب. Thus the differences of race, language and nationality cannot divide human race into water-tight compartments. Likewise the differences of possessions and property should not raise Iron Curtains between the rich and the poor The mainspring of respectability lies in virtue and piety. The Holy Quran says : انا اكرمكم عندالله اتقاكم “The most honourable among you is one who is most God-fearing.” It is this principle which illumines the whole Islamic social set-up and brings into being real fraternity and genuine equality There can be no lasting equality without

a dynamic belief in the primacy of piety and virtue.

International Justice

It is this stress on piety and God-fearingness which leads to the establishment of international justice in the real sense of world. In the light of the basic principle of the oneness of human race, the Holy Quran says :

لايجرمكم شان قوم على ان لاتبدلوا عدلوا هو اقرب للتقوى

“Let not a people’s enmity incite you to act otherwise than with justice that is nearer to righteousness ” (5 : 9) Here also virtue comes into meaningful play, because it is the fear of God alone which debars a man or a nation from encroachment and aggression. Thus belief in the original oneness of mankind and strict adherence to piety and virtue can guarantee the maintenance of peace and cordiality between the Muslims and the non-Muslims. During the Holy Prophet’s time, there was not the slightest deviation from the twin principles of common origin and the primacy of piety. It was the miracle of the sacred personality of the Holy Prophet who was fittingly called Mercy for all Peoples by God Himself.

Claims of the Poor on the Rich

The Holy Quran lays down :

وفي اموالهم حق للسائل والمحروم

“It is obligatory on the wealthy people to share their wealth with the poor because it is the poor

people who as workers produce wealth. In a way, the rich people are dependent on the poor people. A wealthy man needs a cook. He needs a driver, a watchman. He cannot do without the services of these servants. This is why it is said :

الا تنصرون و ترزقون بضعفاءكم

“Bear in mind that the poor people help their wealthy bosses by rendering the required services” They are the real producers of wealth. Hence the wealthy people owe a debt of gratitude to them. This is why the needy and the destitute have a right to claim a share in the riches of their employers

The Poor Should Respect the Rich

The poor people are commanded to be respectful to the rich people, because they have a degree of respectability in the eyes of God Who has blessed them with riches. Once when Hazrat Saad-bin-Maaz came, the Holy Prophet exhorted those present thus :

قوموا الى سيدكم

“Stand up as a token of respect for your chief.” The rich people contribute to the construction of mosques. They finance social welfare institutions. They also build schools for the benefit of the poor. In the absence of their philanthropic services, there can be no missionary activities which require ample finances. Thus the rich people who unstring their purses for the good of the people at large, have a

status worthy of reverence. To this effect Hazrat Ayesha (God be pleased with her) observed :

امرنا رسول الله صل الله عليه وسلم ان تنزل الناس على منازلهم

“The Holy Prophet said that the people should be shown such respect as their status demands ,’

The Question of Self-respect

Socialism and Communism have very limited horizons. Their plans are confined to mere bread & butter. But the Holy Prophet’s splendid plan aimed at promoting self-respect among the poor people. He created a Balanced Society in which every individual commands such respect as is due to his social status. The rich are under obligation to vindicate their respectability by their benevolent behaviour. Hazrat Abu Bakr spent forty thousand dirhams to set the slaves free. Hazrat Usman got a well dug for the door. It was the Islamic teaching which urged them to spend their riches for the benefit of the poor.

International Equality

In his sermon on the occasion of the Last Hajj, the Holy Prophet said :

ان ربكم واحد وان ابااءكم واحد

“Indeed your Sustainer is One. Your progenitor is one.” Hence no Arab has any superiority over non-Arab nor has the non-Arab any superiority over the Arab. It is virtue and piety which elevate

one's status. This highlights the fact that Islam does not recognize nationalism in the political sense. This is why the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) did not claim any ascendancy for the Arab people. If he discountenanced Arabism, he also condemned any alien nationalism, because it is racial pride or national arrogance which fan the fires of international conflicts

Exhortation at the Time of Death

At the time of death, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) exhorted the chiefs to treat the slave benevolently. He also commanded that the rights of the wives should be jealously guarded and safeguarded. Thus throughout his life, he laid emphasis on providing safeguards for the poor and the destitute

The Holy Prophet in the Eyes of His Wife

On the occasion of the first prophetic revelation, the Holy Prophet was filled with fear and was trembling. He addressed his noble spouse Hazrat Khadijah and said : "O Khadijah what is the matter with me." She replied :

كلا والله ما يخزيك الله أبدا انك لتصل الرحم و تحمل الكل و تكسب
المعذوم و تقرى الضيف و تعين على نوائب الحق

‘I swear by Allah that He will never put thee to shame ; for thou art one who unites uterine relations, thou takest the burden of others on thyself and providest what is not available, thou honourest thy guest and helpest people when they are in trouble on account of their supporting the truth.’”

The Sons of Adam are Honourable

The Holy Quran proclaims :

ولقد كررنا بنى آدم

We have conferred honour on the sons of Adam ” The teaching is universal. Every human being, be he a Hindu or a Christian or one, belonging to a low caste is worthy of due regard. The criterion is :

خير الناس من ينفع الناس

“The best of the people is one who is most useful ”

The Holy Prophet also said :

ان اكرمكم عند الله اتقاكم

“The most honoured in the eyes of God is one who is most God-fearing.”

It is in the light of these comprehensive and all-encompassing code which Islam gave to mankind that God said : اكمات لكم دينكم “I have perfected your religion for you.” This categorical divine imperative leaves no room for any other teaching. As a matter of fact, after owning allegiance to Islam, humanity does not stand in need of any other code. This is why the Holy Prophet is called : خاتم النبيين “The Last of the Prophets.” This perfection is best depicted thus :

ختم شد بر نفس پاکش پرکمال - لا جرم شد ختم پر پیغمبرے

“In the Holy Prophet’s pious person every prophetic excellence reached its perfection Undoubtedly, prophethood came to an end.”