

Supporting the Underprivileged

Islam has supported the underprivileged and in many different ways emphatically recommended them to others. In addition to religiously prescribed instances such as obligatory alms, Islam has encouraged other ways of aiding the poor, and the Muslim leaders themselves have been pioneers in this regard.

Allah the Most High said: ***“It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the Last Day and the Angels and the Book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin, the orphans, the needy, the way-farer, the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and those who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and are performers of their promise when they make a promise and are patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflicts – these are they who are true (to themselves) and these are they who guard (against evil).”***

He also said: ***“Those who spend their property by night and by day, secretly and openly, they shall have their reward from their Lord and they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve.”***

He also said: ***“This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard (against evil). Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them. And who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which was revealed before you and they are sure of the hereafter. These are on a right course from their Lord and these are the ones that shall be successful.”***

He also said: ***“And serve Allah and do not associate any thing with Him, and be good to the parents, the near of kin, the orphans, the needy, the neighbour of (your) kin, alien neighbour, the companion on a journey, the way-farer and those whom your right hands possess; surely Allah does not love him who is proud, boastful; those who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly and hide what Allah has given them out of his grace; and We have prepared for the unbelievers a disgraceful chastisement.”***

He also said: ***“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord, and a Garden, the extensiveness of which is (as) the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who guard (against evil). Those***

who spend (benevolently) in ease as well as in straitness, and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men; and Allah loves the doers of good (to others).”

He also said: ***“The parable of those who spend their property in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears (with) a hundred grains in every ear; and Allah multiplies for whom He pleases; and Allah is Ample-Giving, Knowing. (As for) those who spend their property in the way of Allah, and then do not follow up what they have spent with reproach or injury, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. Kind speech and forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury, and Allah is Self-Sufficient, Forbearing.”***

He also said: ***“Those are only believers whose hearts become full of fear when Allah is mentioned, and when His communications are recited to them they increase them in faith, and in their Lord do they trust. Those who keep up prayer and spend (benevolently) out of what We have given them. These are the believers in truth; they shall have from their Lord exalted grades and forgiveness and an honourable sustenance.”***

He also said: ***“Surely they who recite the Book of Allah and keep up prayer and spend out of what We have given them secretly and openly, hope for a gain which will not perish. That He may pay them back fully their rewards and give them more out of His grace; surely He is Forgiving, Multiplier of Rewards.”***

He also said: ***“Surely those who guard (against evil) shall be in gardens and fountains. Taking what their Lord gives them; surely they were before that the doers of good. They used to sleep but little in the night, and in the early dawn they asked forgiveness. And in their property was a portion due to him who begs and to him who is denied (good).”***

He also said: ***“Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns, except the people of the right hand. In gardens they shall ask each other, about the guilty: ‘What has brought you into hell?’ They shall say: ‘We were not of those who prayed; and we used not to feed the poor; and we used to enter into vain discourses; and we used to call the Day of Judgement a lie; till death overtook us.”***

He also said: ***“And as for man, when his Lord tries him, then treats him with honour and makes him lead an easy life, he says: ‘My Lord honours me.’ But when He tries him (differently), then straitens to him his means of subsistence, he says: ‘My Lord has disgraced me.’ Nay! But you do not honour the orphan. Nor do you urge one another to feed the poor. And you eat away the heritage, devouring (everything) indiscriminately. And you love wealth with exceeding love. Nay! When the earth is made to crumble to pieces. And your Lord comes and (also) the angels in ranks. And hell is made to appear on that Day. On that Day shall man be mindful, and what shall being mindful (then) avail him? He shall say: ‘O! Would that I had sent before for my life!’”***

He also said: ***“Have We not given him two eyes, a tongue and two lips, and pointed out to him the two conspicuous ways? But he would not attempt the uphill road. And what will make you***

comprehend what the uphill road is? (It is) the setting free of a slave, or the giving of food in a day of hunger to an orphan, having relationship, or to the poor man lying in the dust. Then he is of those who believe and charge one another to show patience, and charge one another to show compassion. These are the people of the right hand.”

He also said: ***“Have you considered him who calls the Judgement a lie? That is the one who treats the orphan with the harshness, and does not urge (others) to feed the poor.”***

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S) said: *“He is not a Muslim who goes to bed on a full stomach while his neighbour remains hungry. God will not look at the people of a city on the Day of Judgement amidst whom one person went to bed hungry.”*

He (S) also said: *“Nothing destroys the Islam of a person faster than greed and miserliness.”*

He (S) also said: *“Anyone who empathizes with the poor with his wealth and possessions and is fair with people in his own personal relationships, such a person is a genuine Muslim.”*

Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a.s.) said: *“One of the rights of the believer on his fellow brother is the alleviation of his hunger, the covering of his shame, the paying of his debts, and on his death the fulfilling of his obligations to his family and children.”*

Imam Ja’far al-Sadiq (a.s.) said: *“One of the most beloved of actions to Allah the Almighty is making a believer happy through alleviating his hunger, removing his sadness and paying his debts.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“One of the rights of a believer on another is to have love for the latter in his heart, to share his own wealth with him to fulfill his obligations to his family in his absence, and to help and support him against anyone who wrongs him.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Any believer who is sparing of his wealth to a fellow believer while the latter needs it, Allah will not let him taste the fruit of paradise or to drink from its pure drink that is sealed from others.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Anyone who has an extra house which a believer needs to live in and he refuses to let him use it, Allah the Almighty will say: ‘**My angels, is one of My servants niggardly to My other servant with regards to a worldly house? I swear by My might that he will never dwell My paradise’.**”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Allah has given you extra wealth just in order that you may direct it to the place where He has directed, and He has not given it to you in order for it to be hoarded.”*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Surely of the causes for the continued existence of Muslims and Islam is that wealth be in the hands of those who acknowledge the rights of others in it and who do good. And surely of the causes for the disappearance of Islam and Muslims is that wealth be in the hands of those who*

disregard the rights of others in it and who do not do good.”

He (a.s.) also said: *‘To do good is something above and beyond almsgiving. So come nigh unto Allah the Almighty through benevolence and the maintenance of family relationships.’*

He (a.s.) also said: *“Anyone who warns Allah to enter him into His mercy and make him dwell in His paradise, he must beautify his conduct, be fair with people in his own personal relationships, be merciful to the orphans, help the weak, and humble himself before Allah, his Creator.”*

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