

SUMMARY OF MAJLIS

Date: 19th Holy Ramadhan 1426 AH / 22nd October 2005

Occasion: Holy Ramadhan Weekend Majalis

Topic: Al-Isti'adha – Part 6

“And say: My Lord! I seek Your protection from the promptings of devils; and I seek Your protection, my Lord, from their presence near me”.

(23:97-98)

THE FOURTH INSTANCE OF AL-ISTI'ADHA

The fourth instance when Islam highly recommends that we resort to **Al-Isti'adha** is during carrying out **Al-'Adl Wal-Insaaf**, which means 'Fairness & Justice' between the people. Allah (SWT) has instructed all of us to be fair and just; give people their due rights and never to oppress anyone. **“O you who have faith! Be maintainers of Justice”. (4:135) “Those who have faith and do not taint their faith with injustice – for such there shall be safety and they are the (rightly) guided”. (6:82)** Infact, Muslims have been commanded to be fair and just with all including those who are unjust to us and they are our enemies. **“And ill-feeling for a people should never lead you to be unfair. Be fair; that is nearer to Godwariness, and be wary of Allah. Allah is indeed well aware of what you do”. (5:8)**

JUSTICE & IMAM ALI (AS)

Tonight is the 19th night of the Holy month of Ramadhan. It is one of the nights of **Qadr** as well as the night of **Shab-e-Zarbat** meaning 'the night in which we remember when Imam Ali (as) was struck with a sword on his head'. Since the entire life of Imam Ali (as) was based on 'Fairness & Justice', and he (as) was an excellent role model in this, it would be appropriate to talk about this attribute in the light of his life.

HADITH OF IMAM ALI (AS) ON JUSTICE

Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) has said, **“Justice is (true) life”. (Ghurar al-Hikam)** What the Imam (as) is implying is that this life shall only be worth living if there is Justice & Fairness otherwise it will be like a living hell.

In another tradition, the Imam (as) has also said, **“Justice is the adornment of faith”. (Ghurar al-Hikam)** A person who claims to be a Mumin (faithful) and does NOT exercise Justice & Fairness; it is NOT the fragrance of Imaan that he shall emit; rather it will be the foul smell of deception that shall be felt from him.

[A person asked Imam Ali (as), “What is better: Justice or Generosity?” Imam (as) said, **“Justice puts things in their places, while Generosity takes them out from their directions; Justice is the general care-taker while generosity is a particular benefit. FAL-'ADLU ASHRAFUHA Therefore Justice is superior and more distinguished of the two”.**] (Nahjul-Balaghah/No.437)

ALI (AS) – THE ICON OF JUSTICE

Besides his knowledge, Imam Ali (as) shall always be remembered for his 'Adl 'Justice & Fairness'. Immediately after his death, the righteous people began to miss his justice. And centuries later, today when intellectuals and lovers of Justice & Fairness study the life of this great personality – they wish Ali (as) was amongst them!

INCIDENT OF AN OLD WOMAN

After the death of Imam Ali (as), Mu'awiya once came to Madina. There, he was informed that there is an old lady who keeps praising Ali (as). Wherever she goes – she only mentions Ali (as). Mu'awiya detested anyone who liked Ali (as). When he heard this, he summoned the old woman to his court. The woman arrived and Mu'awiya noticed that she was so old that she could barely walk.

Mu'awiya received her nicely and said her, "What is this I hear that you keep singing the praises of Ali?" As soon as the old woman heard the name of Ali (as), she began praising him and said, "**Yes Mu'awiya! How can I ever forget my master Ali? He was the bravest of all. He was the most pious of all. He was the most generous of all. He was the most humble of us...**" And she went on and on until Mu'awiya could no longer take it and said, "Enough old lady! I have not invited you here so that you praise my enemy in my presence".

He then turned towards his treasurer and instructed, "This woman should be given 7 camels – camels that have red hair (the most expensive of all camels in those days)". When the camels were brought, Mu'awiya said, "Get up and take these expensive camels, which I have gifted them to you".

As the old lady stood up to go, Mu'awiya said, "If Ali was alive, you would not have got even one of these camels". The old woman turned towards Mu'awiya and said, "**Ofcourse, if Ali was alive, how would he have given me such a camel – Ali believed in fairness and justice – He (as) was not like you who considered the public treasury as the property of his father!**".

And centuries later, people who study the life of Ali (as) marvel his justice. The United Nations issued a statement to Arab leaders to borrow a leaf from the life of Ali bin Abi Talib (as). The statement read and the whole world witnessed: "**You should emulate Imam Ali (as)'s philosophy and stand towards encouraging the acquisition of knowledge, the practice of Justice and institution of democracy**".

JUSTICE EVEN IF IT HARMS ONESELF

Imam Ali (as) believed so much in being just and fair that he (as) upheld it even when justice harmed himself.

[One day, during the days of his rulership, Imam Ali (as) went to the market and saw a Christian selling a coat of arms. Imam (as) instantly recognized it and said to the seller, "**This is my body of armour, let us go to the judge of the Muslims**". The judge was Shurayh appointed by the Imam (as) himself.

Shurayh asked what the matter was about and Imam (as) said, **"This is my coat of arms which I had lost since a long time"**. Shurayh asked the Christian if he had anything to say and he said, "I do not accuse Ameer al-Mumineen of anything but this coat of arms is my property". Shurayh asked Imam (as) if he (as) had any proof supporting his claim to which Imam (as) said, **"No!"**

Thereupon Shurayh said, "I do not see any ground on which you can take this from his possession." Imam (as) accepted the judgment of Shurayh and said, **"Shurayh is correct in his judgement"**. The judgement was based on the principle that possession itself is a proof of ownership and the claimant has to provide evidence in support of his claim.

When the Christian saw this, he said, "I bear witness that these are the laws of the prophets; A leader of the believers comes to judge appointed by himself and the judge passes a judgement against him. This coat of arms does belong to Ali (as), which I had taken away when it slipped down from his camel". The Christian then professed Islam.】

As followers of Ali (as), we must also learn the Akhlaaq of Islam, and exercise Justice even if it is against ourselves as taught to us by our Imam (as)

Mulla Mujahidali Sheriff
mulla@almahdi.org.uk