

A CURE FOR THE HEART

EPISODE 8: ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE FACE OF INJUSTICE





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THE TWO FARMERS

وَدَاوُدَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ إِذْ يَحْكُمَانِ فِي الْحَرْثِ إِذْ
نَفَثَتْ فِيهِ غَنَمُ الْقَوْمِ وَكُنَّا لِحُكْمِهِمْ شَاهِدِينَ

And [mention] David and Solomon, when they judged concerning the field - when the sheep of a people overran it [at night], and We were witness to their judgement. (Al-Anbiya 21:78)

- According to Tafsir, the story goes that there were two farmers, with one having a better vineyard than the other. The other farmer owned sheep which unfortunately trampled over the vineyard of the first farmer at night and destroyed his farm.
- The great farmer approached Prophet Daud AS, who was King, for judgment. It was judged that the sheep should be given to the great farmer as compensation for his loss.
- **Do you think Prophet Daud AS made a fair and good judgment?**

A LESSON ON PRAISING

فَفَهَّمْنَاهَا سُلَيْمَانَ ۚ وَكُلًّا ءَاتَيْنَا حُكْمًا وَعِلْمًا ۚ وَسَخَّرْنَا
مَعَ دَاوُدَ الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحْنَ وَالطَّيْرَ ۚ وَكُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

And We gave understanding of it [i.e., the case] to Solomon, and to each [of them] We gave judgement and knowledge. And We subjected the mountains to exalt [Us], along with David and [also] the birds. And We were doing [that].

(Surah Al-Anbiya 21:79)

- Note how Allah SWT did not criticise Prophet Daud AS even though He pointed out that Prophet Sulaiman's judgement was more accurate and superior. He acknowledged both their strength and knowledge.





ISSUES & SOLUTIONS

- From this story, **two issues** are highlighted:
- **1) Restoration of the great vineyard that has been destroyed.**
- **2) The loss of income of the farmer whose farm was destroyed.**
- However, we can argue that both issues are only temporary because once the farm has been restored to its former condition, the income-generating capability of the farm will be restored as well.
- **What was Prophet Sulaiman's judgement?**
- **1) To compensate for the loss of income, he suggested that the produce from the sheep belong to the great farmer.**





- 2) To compensate for the destruction of the vineyard, **the sheep farmer would work at the great farmer's vineyard until it was restored to its former condition**, upon which, his sheep would be returned to him.
- These suggestions would solve both issues and it doesn't permanently penalise the sheep's owner.
- Justice is an obligation from Allah, as narrated in many verses in the Quran. (For example, the whole of Surah An-Nisa discusses justice.) But **justice is many times, non-obvious** to people like us who don't possess the same wisdom as the messengers and who rarely think about upholding justice.

Reminder for us:

As we reflect on how to become a better Muslim, don't forget that **the commandment to justice comes before the commandment to pray**, and justice is owed to both Muslims and non-Muslims.





JUSTICE IN SALES

- Justice usually exists in a transaction, especially between a buyer and seller.
- Kak Natasha recounts a story of when she bought a piece of cloth which she sent for tailoring to make a dress. When she turned up two weeks later to collect her dress, she was informed by the tailor that it had been stolen.
- So often, we take simple transactions like this for granted. There should have been a contract outlining the rights of each party in case anything goes wrong.
- In Islamic jurisprudence, it is strongly recommended to write contracts or agreements when transactions take place. The process of writing the terms ensures that **we are aligned with our understanding** and also for **accountability** reasons.



WHERE'S THE PARK?

- In recent news in Malaysia, home buyers were promised the development of a park near their houses as marketed by their property developers. Instead, a condo was built in its place.
- This upsets the homeowners because they had bought their nice houses on the assumption that they could have access to the park with its scenery and greenery. The developers argued that no clause in the contract promised the development of the park, even though they had marketed the site as a park when selling the houses.
- **Lesson for business owners or developers:** If you are going to make a specific feature part of the value of a product, you have to take accountability by committing to it. You cannot be vague only to manipulate that vagueness later. Sadly, these incidents of manipulation have become normal today.



BE AKHIRAH- CONSCIOUS

- As Muslims, our awareness of the Day of Judgement prevents us from robbing somebody (of their rights, of their property etc.). If we had, we would feel obliged to apologise to the person we wronged.
- Sometimes we overlook situations like this because we think it may not happen to us, but Allah made it happen precisely to test us. Hence, we need to be ready to apply our judgment.
- Today, we have social media or Google at our disposal to leave negative reviews of a restaurant or a product. Sometimes, we don't see the implication of our words, especially if we post them in a moment of anger.
- If there is indeed an injustice, we must prevent similar injustice from happening to somebody else. Otherwise, we have to be cautious about our words in order not to harm the other party.

Take a moment to think:

Have you
ever posted
a negative
or an unfair
review?





HOLD YOURSELF ACCOUNTABLE



- Imagine if someone stopped patronising a restaurant, stopped watching a beneficial video, or stopped reading a book because of our posts - we are accountable for them.
- We should learn not to transgress limits, especially since we have gotten too lazy to fact-check. We tend to see or read everything at face value nowadays and do not see things from two sides of the coin.
- Comfort for those who choose to be off social media:

- **If a piece of news is meant to come to you, it will come to you in forms that Allah SWT wills. <3**



COURAGE VS. COWARDICE

- Imagine you are an employee or a senior management in a company and you heard that a certain group of people in the company are proposing to do something that is not right; what would you do?
- Alhamdulillah there are enough of us in leadership roles who have integrity and would not do the wrong thing.
- But if we do leave our position or roles because of this situation, it is not because of ethics or integrity. It is cowardice.
- This is because when we leave, we are only protecting ourselves and not stopping the wrongdoing. Don't confuse cowardice with integrity because Faith (Iman) encourages us to have courage.





Do not
confuse
cowardice
with
integrity!

WORD OF JUSTICE



Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported: The Prophet ﷺ said, ***“Verily, among the greatest acts of jihad is a word of justice before a tyrannical ruler.”***

(Tirmidhi)

- Wrongdoing happens because the people who know choose to step away and save themselves instead of pointing out the wrong. The rest may not have the credibility or the position to speak up, but a person who has the position or the ability to speak should feel obliged to speak out against injustice or evil.

“Whosoever of you sees an evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then [let him change it] with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart — and that is the weakest of faith.”

(Muslim)



THE BEST NATION

- Remember to think about justice implications in the decisions we are making and where we may have the obligation to speak up. Sometimes we don't speak up because we are either scared or we are not thinking of justice at that moment.

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ
عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ ۗ وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ
خَيْرًا لَهُمْ ۚ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ

You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allāh. If only the People of the Scripture had believed, it would have been better for them. Among them are believers, but most of them are defiantly disobedient. (Surah Ali 'Imran 3:110)

- Something to think about: **are we worthy of the title or to be part of the best nation?** Do we think only about ourselves and what is convenient or comfortable for us?

The foundation of
our inner justice is
shaking if we only
think about what is
best for ourselves.





When we
try to apply
justice, even
if we get it
wrong, we

get rewarded
for trying.



HEART WORK

ACTION:

Starting today, make sure to put any agreement with another party in writing or text message.

REFLECTION:

How do you take accountability of yourself in moments where your inner justice is being challenged?

CONTRIBUTION:

Give a business that you previously stopped patronising because of an unfair review another chance!