

REVISION NOTES: 1.6 Justice and Equality in the Prophet's Life

A. Social and Economic Justice

The Prophet (PBUH) transformed a tribal society into one based on fairness and shared responsibility.

- **Social Justice:** He abolished the class system. In his **Farewell Sermon**, he famously stated: *"An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab... except by piety and good action."*
- **Economic Justice:** He introduced the system of **Zakat** (obligatory charity) to ensure wealth was redistributed from the rich to the poor.
- **Fair Trade:** He prohibited **Riba** (usury/interest) and cheating in measurements. He taught that a "truthful merchant" would be with the prophets on the Day of Judgment.
- **Workers' Rights:** He taught, *"Give the worker his wages before his sweat dries,"* emphasizing the protection of the poor from exploitation.

B. Human Rights

Long before modern charters, the Prophet (PBUH) established fundamental rights:

- **Sanctity of Life:** He taught that life is a gift from Allah and cannot be taken without due process of law.
- **Right to Property:** In his Farewell Sermon, he declared that the blood and property of every Muslim are a sacred trust.
- **Equality:** He stood up when a funeral procession (regardless of religion) passed by, saying, *"Is it not a human soul?"*
- **Justice for All:** He famously said that even if his own daughter, Fatima, committed a crime, he would apply the law fairly, showing that no one is above the law.

C. Relationship with People of Other Religions

The Prophet (PBUH) promoted a policy of **religious pluralism** and tolerance.

- **Constitution of Madinah:** Upon arriving in Madinah, he drafted a treaty that recognized Jews and Pagans as part of the *Ummah* (in a political sense), granting them equal rights and religious freedom.
- **Protection of Minorities:** He warned, *"He who wrongs a Jew or a Christian will have me as his adversary on the Day of Judgment."*

- **The Najran Christians:** When a Christian delegation from Najran visited Madinah, he allowed them to pray in his own mosque (Masjid an-Nabawi), demonstrating extreme respect for their faith.

D. Respect for Mothers and Women

The Prophet (PBUH) significantly improved the status of women in 7th-century Arabia.

- **Status of Mothers:** A man asked, "Who is most entitled to my good companionship?" The Prophet replied, "*Your mother,*" three times before mentioning the father. He also said, "*Heaven lies under the feet of your mother.*"
- **Rights of Women:** He abolished the practice of female infanticide. He gave women the right to inherit property, the right to education, and the right to choose their husbands.
- **General Treatment:** His final words in his Farewell Sermon included a command to "*Treat your women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers.*"

E. Importance of these Teachings (The Nature of Society)

Why do these teachings matter for Muslim beliefs about society today?

1. **Society as a Body:** The Prophet taught that the *Ummah* is like one body; if one part suffers, the whole body feels the pain. This creates a sense of **global community**.
2. **Accountability:** These teachings remind Muslims that they are accountable to Allah for how they treat others (Huquq al-Ibad).
3. **Foundation of Law:** These examples form the basis of the **Shari'ah**, ensuring that Islamic law always prioritizes justice over power.

PRACTICE EXAM QUESTIONS

1. Describe Question (6 Marks)

"Describe the Prophet's teachings regarding the status of mothers."

- *Tip:* Mention the Hadith where he prioritizes the mother three times and the saying about "Heaven lies under the feet of mothers."

2. Explain Question (6 Marks)

"Explain how the Constitution of Madinah established the rights of non-Muslims."

- *Tip:* Focus on the concepts of religious freedom, shared defense of the city, and the Prophet's role as a fair mediator between different faith groups.

3. Assessment Question (12 Marks)

"The Prophet's teachings on economic justice were the most important factor in the growth of early Islam. Assess this statement."

- **Agree:** Mention how Zakat and the ban on Riba attracted the poor and marginalized who were being exploited by the rich Quraysh.
- **Disagree:** Argue that his teachings on **Tawhid** (Oneness of God) or **Human Rights** (equality of races) were more important factors for converts like Bilal (RA).
- **Conclusion:** State that Islam offered a "complete package" of social, spiritual, and economic reform that appealed to all levels of society.