

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ
شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ
لَهُ، وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ
لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

All Praise be to **اللَّهُ** .

We praise him and ask him for help and forgiveness. We ask him for protection from the evilness within ourselves and from our own bad deeds. Whom-so-ever God guides to the truth no one can lead astray, and whom-so-ever He leaves misguided, no one has the power to guide.

I testify that there is no God but **اللَّهُ** to whom there is no partner and I testify that Muhammad **ﷺ** is his servant and messenger

﴿ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴾

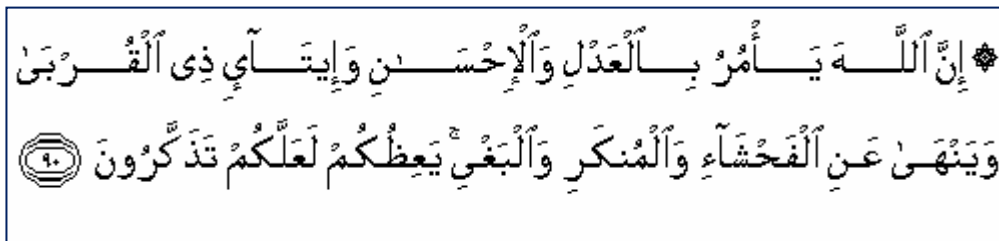
“Allah commands justice, commands Ihsan, and commands the giving to the kin, and He forbids indecency, forbids shameful deeds, and forbids injustice and rebellion: He admonishes you that you may be mindful” (S19, A90)



Dear brothers and sisters, ASA. It has certainly been a memorable week. We met Brother Moazzam Begg last Saturday. We witnessed the power of democracy to promote change, and we have had constant reminders about Armistice Day. We still have daily reminders of the “toxic debts” and the credit crunch. And to finish it off, we also had bonfire night on Wednesday. It has indeed been a very eventful week.

This Sunday the 9th, we mark Remembrance Day, which is the official commemoration of Armistice. Armistice literally means cessation of war. Tuesday the 11th will mark the 90th anniversary of the Armistice between the Allies and Germany, bringing the First World War to an end. Cessation of hostilities on the western front took effect at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. This event has been commemorated in many countries under different names, such as veteran’s day or national day. In the UK it is commemorated as Remembrance Day, and is celebrated on the nearest Sunday, hence Remembrance Sunday. It has become customary to have a two minute silence at eleven o’clock to commemorate the millions of people that died during these conflicts.

I was gripped throughout the week between the grand events of the US elections, and a number of less grand documentaries about the First World War. What is poignant about it all was that it related to real people, people like you and me. When we listened to Moazzam Begg last week, many brothers said praise be to Allah it was not me. These events brothers and sisters affect ordinary people like you and me. This is why Allah(SWT) said in the Holy Quran:



“Allah commands justice, commands Ihsan, and commands the giving to the kin, and He forbids indecency, forbids shameful deeds, and forbids injustice and rebellion: He admonishes you that you may be mindful” (S19, A90)

This is a wonderful ayah from Surat An-Nahl, Surat 19. In it Allah(SWT) commands three actions and forbids three actions. When one looks at what is involved, we realize that this is about enabling the establishment of a sound, just and healthy society. Let us look at these commands bit by bit.

First of all, Allah(SWT) commands justice. Justice may be understood as the equitable dispensation of rights. Allah commands us that we enjoy the full rights of everyone, whether

those be moral, social, economic, legal or political. In Islam, Justice is a command from Allah. When we look at what is happening in the world today, we sometimes feel that we the Muslims are fresh out of justice. When we look at what has happened to many of our fellow Muslims, and the injustices that have been dished out at us, it is very difficult for us to behave justly. But, as Muslims, Allah will not have us behaving in any other way. In Islam, “Justice” is the cornerstone of an equitable and healthy society and we cannot accept anything else.

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ
 شَتَّانُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا أَعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ
 خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

“O you who believe, be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity; and let not hatred of any people lead you to injustice. Deal justly, that is closer to “Taqua”. And be mindful of your duty to Allah. For Allah is well aware of all that you do” (S5, A8)

Brothers and sisters, let us remember that the Muslim has no choice but to be just. He needs to apply justice in the way he feels. He needs to apply justice in the way he speaks and he needs to apply justice in the way he acts. As Muslims, we must have justice as a second nature to us. Justice must run through our veins. We need to be just within our families. We need to be just within our society. We need to be just within our nation. It is only then that we can truly gain the rank of being the witnesses against all other nations. To be so, we must be just.

وَكَذَٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ أُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى النَّاسِ وَيَكُونَ
 الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا ﴿٢١٤٣﴾

“And thus We have made of you a nation justly balanced, that you will be witnesses over all people, and the Messenger be a witness over you” (S2, A143)

Can you see it brothers and sisters. When Allah(SWT) is ordering us to be just, this is a directive that does not directly relate to our relationship with Allah, but it relates to our relationship with everything else. Our relationship with people should be based on justice. Our relationship with the environment should be based on justice, and so on. We, the Muslims, should be the nation of justice. When we listened to Moazzam last Saturday and heard about the injustices in the Muslim

world dished out by Muslims, it tells you how far removed many Muslims are from the commands of Allah.

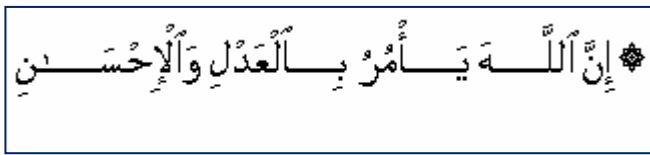
History has shown us over and over again that when justice is lost, society breaks down.

However, does Islam stop at justice? A very interesting question; as wonderful as justice may be, can we actually improve on it?

Well, in this simple ayah, Allah(SWT) commands justice, and Allah(SWT) then commands “Ihsan”.

When we want to translate the Arabic word “Adle” into English, we get an adequate understanding by using the word “justice”. However, there is no such word in English that is equivalent to “Ihsan”. Ihsan is a wide concept. In the hadeeth where s/Jibreel(AS) came to the Prophet(SAAWS) and asked him about Islam, Iman and Ihsan, the response to Ihsan was to worship Allah as if you see Him. And know that if you do not see Him, He sees you.

Ihsan also conveys a sense of goodness, generosity, sympathy, tolerance, forgiveness, politeness, cooperation, selflessness and so on. It literally encompasses all that is good in a person “beyond the call of duty” and in deed “beyond the call of justice”.



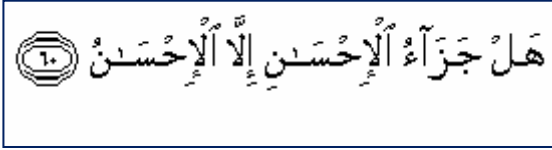
“Allah commands justice and Ihsan”

We have seen how important justice as a foundation to a sound and healthy society, yet, we are also commanded with Ihsan.

Brothers and sisters, this is the crux of this khutbah. Having listened to brother Moazzam, I was already aware that to regain his rights, there needs to be justice. However, I never realized that his oppressor has lost his humanity in his transgression against Moazzam. The humanity of the transgressor can only be restored through Ihsan.

Justice will protect society from the violation of rights, but Ihsan makes this society sweet and joyful and worth living in. No society can flourish if every individual insists on exacting his pound of flesh through justice. At best such a society might be free from conflict but it will also be free of love, of gratitude, of generosity, of sacrifice, of sincerity, of sympathy and of such humane qualities that make us what we are. There is no doubt that justice is the foundation of a sound society but Ihsan allows it to achieve perfection.

We know from bitter experience that to be just can at times be so difficult, so where are we from Ihsan. This is why Allah(SWT) reminds us in the Holy Quran that there can only be one reward for Ihsan:



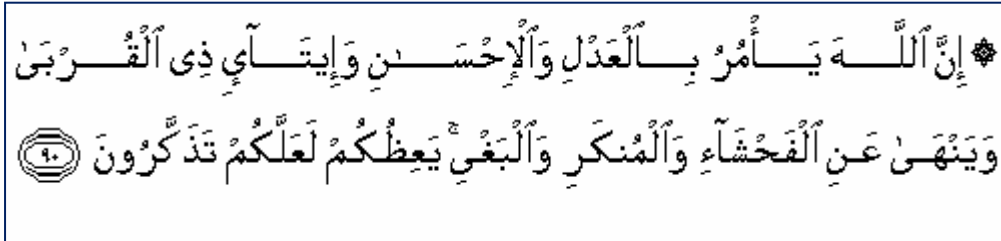
*“Can the reward for Ihsan be anything but Ihsan”
(S55, A60)*

What better reward can one ask from Allah(SWT)? Brothers and sisters, the least that we are commanded to be is just. However, if we want to elevate ourselves and our society, we must push ourselves to deal with others within the concept of Ihsan.

أقول قولي هذا وأستغفر الله لي ولكم

2nd Khutbah:

الحمد لله ثم الحمد لله. الحمد لله نستعينه ونستغفره، ونعوذ بالله من شرور
أنفسنا وسيئات أعمالنا. أما بعد:



“Allah commands justice, commands Ihsan, and commands the giving to the kin, and He forbids indecency, forbids vulgarity, offensiveness and rebellion: He admonishes you that you may be mindful” (S19, A90)

The third command after justice and Ihsan is the good treatment towards one’s relatives. This ayah, in a very simple coherent sentence, sets us the golden rules for a just and happy society. To achieve that, we are commanded to be just, we are commanded to apply Ihsan and we are commanded to be good to our kinship.

In contrast to these three virtues, Allah(SWT) prohibits three vices which can ruin people as individuals and can ruin society as a whole. Another poignant moment from last week relates to the aftermath of the indecent phone call by Russell Brand and Jonathan Ross. Society went up in

arms, and if we want to use an Islamic term, society enjoined standing up against what they felt as being unacceptable to them. This is known in Islam as “Munkar”.

Allah(SWT) has therefore forbidden us from three things: “Fahsha”, “Munkar” and “Baghi”. In Arabic the word “fahsha” applies to all those things that are obscene, nasty and vulgar. “Munkar” applies to offensive and unacceptable behavior that stands against the recognized standards of propriety and good taste. “Baghi” has a number of meanings including transgression against the proper limits of decency. The violation of the rights of others. Rebellion against the command of Allah.

All three acts have wide ranging meanings, but the ultimate outcome of each is to undermine the individual, and ultimately, to undermine society.

Brothers and sisters, Islam came to reform the individual, and Islam came to reform society. This does not happen simply by praying and by fasting. These acts of worship are our lifeline to Allah(SWT). Without this lifeline, we cannot even start our journey of reform. Without prayers and fasting, our foundations will simply not be sound. But, this lifeline is only a foundation, and only a starting point to better ourselves and our society. The Sahabah did not just pray and fast, but they also applied themselves to daily living. They applied themselves to everything that has to do with the functioning of their society. They did that with the directive that they have to improve the lives of their fellow human beings. They applied themselves within the teachings of Islam:

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ
الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

“ And let there be among you a nation that invite to goodness, enjoin what is acceptable and forbid what is offensive; and it is these that shall be the successful” (S3, A104)