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(hafidhahullāh)

**ON OPPRESSION, RACISM AND
DIVINELY LEGISLATED MEANS TO
OPPOSE THEM, IN LIGHT OF THE
KILLING OF GEORGE FLOYD¹**

**“THIS SHOWS THAT ISLĀM ENCOURAGES THE
REMOVAL OF OPPRESSION, SUPPORTING THE
OPPRESSED AND DEFENDING THE OPPRESSED, BE
THEY MUSLIM OR NOT MUSLIM.”**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allāh, and may prayers and peace be upon Allāh’s Messenger, his family, his companions and all who follow his guidance. To proceed:

These are some brief words of guidance for my Muslim brothers in America and Europe, especially for the students of knowledge and du’āt to Allāh, in regards to the incident which has been reported in the media, which occurred in Minnesota, America, wherein a police officer killed a black man (George Floyd). As a result of this there have been demonstrations and rioting.

The reasons for these words are due to some students of knowledge and du’āt who have fallen prey to emotions and may have even participated in these actions (demonstrations and protests), encouraged them and spoken in the media. There is no doubt that a Muslim is regulated by the Divine Legislation of Allāh and must follow the Divine Legislation completely. Allāh Says,

¹ Recorded by the Shaykh and sent to translator on 8th Shawwāl 1441 AH/31 May 2020 CE.

Translated by ‘AbdulHaq al-Ashanti.

﴿وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“And We have sent down to you the Book as a clarification for all things and as guidance and mercy and good things for the Muslims.”

{*an-Nabl* (16): 89}

﴿اتَّبِعُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ إِلَيْكُم مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا مِن دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ﴾

“Follow, [O mankind] what has been revealed to you from your Lord and do not follow other than Him any allies.”

{*al-A'raf* (7): 3}

﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ﴾

“Then We put you, (O Muhammad), on an ordained way concerning the matter (of religion); so follow it and do not follow the inclinations of those who do not know.”

{*al-Jāthiyah* (45): 18}

For that reason, a Muslim should control his emotions and behaviour in accordance with what is in the Divine Legislation of Allāh.

Firstly, O beloved brothers, we should know that *dhulm* [oppression] is prohibited and Islām does not approve of oppression whether it is against a Muslim or a non-Muslim, the Prophet (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said:

«اتَّقُوا الظُّلْمَ، فَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ظُلُمَاتٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ»

“Fear *dhulm* [oppression], for indeed *dhulm* [oppression] will verily be *dhulumāt* [darknesses] on the Day of Judgement.”²

And Allāh Says in a hadeeth qudsī:

«يا عبادي إني حرمت الظلم على نفسي وجعلته بينكم محرماً فلا تظالموا»

² Narrated by Ibn 'Umar (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*), Bukhārī and Muslim.

“O My servants, I have prohibited oppression on Myself and have made it prohibited among you, so do not oppress each other.”³

The Messenger of Allāh (*sallallāhu alayhi wassallam*) said:

«لقد شهدت في دار عبد الله بن جدعان حلفاً، ما أحب أن لي به حمر النعم، ولو دعيت به في الإسلام لأجبت.»

“I witnessed a meeting of an alliance in the house of ‘Abdullāh bin Jud’an which was more beloved to me than the red-camel and if I had been called to join it in Islām I would join.”⁴

This is in regards to the *Hilf ul-Fudūl* [the alliance of virtue and justice] which was when the Arab tribes would come together as an alliance in order to support the oppressed regardless of tribal affiliation.⁵ So this shows that Islām encourages the removal of oppression, supporting the oppressed and defending the oppressed, be they Muslim or not Muslim. Islām does not approve of oppression whether it is based on racism or any other reason.

Secondly, when oppression strikes a Muslim, specifically or on a certain group, due to racism, tribalism, or any other reason, he must traverse Divinely Legislated means to remove this oppression. The Divine Legislation gives principles for this, alhamdulillah. Likewise, a Muslim who resides in the West should not break laws or rules so long as they do not oppose the Divine Legislation of Allāh. As it is from the *‘Aqd* [covenant] and *Amānah* [trust] to uphold these covenants and not break the law, Allāh Says

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ﴾

“O you who have believed, fulfil [all] contracts.”

{*al-Mā'idah* (5): 1}

So a Muslim has to follow the law and not break it, so long as such laws do not oppose the Divine Legislation of Allāh. So a Muslim is regulated by the Divine Legislation of Allāh firstly and then those laws, so long as they do not oppose the Divine Legislation of Allāh, secondly. As a result, those demonstrations we see in the media wherein there is destruction and damaging property are prohibited in Allāh’s religion. When there is Divinely Legislated fighting in Islām between Muslims and their enemies, it is not permitted to damage properties, burn crops, cut

³ Saheeh Muslim

⁴ Narrated by Talha bin ‘Abdullāh (*radi Allāhu ‘anhu*), *Sunan ul-Bayhaqī al-Kubrā*, vol.6, p.367

⁵ [Translator’s Note]: This alliance (*Hilf ul-Fudūl*) is sometimes translated as an ‘order of chivalry’ (a rather odd translation) or as ‘a league of nobility’, ‘an alliance of excellence’, ‘an alliance of the virtuous’, ‘a committee of wisemen’, ‘an alliance for charity’, ‘a treaty for mutual assistance and goodness’, ‘a pact of the virtuous’ or ‘a pact of justice’ most of these different translations capture the essence of the *hilf ul-fudūl* which was to help the poor, needy and oppressed and assure justice and human rights.

down trees, or kill those not permitted to kill, so then what about outside the time of war? Allāh Says,

﴿الَّا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَى﴾

“That no bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another.”

{*an-Najm* (53): 38}

And it is not allowed for a Muslim to punish an innocent person due to the crimes of the guilty, Allāh has prohibited this and this is of the greatest forms of oppression itself, to kill a person who has not fought against him, or to hold responsible one not guilty of an action. There is no doubt that this is what the Divine Legislation has prohibited. What is happening today where an innocent person is punished for the crimes of the guilty, there is no doubt that this is something which the Divine Legislation has prohibited. Neither the Divine Legislation, nor intellect nor integrity, approves of this. As a result, a Muslim should stay away from these things and traverse the means of the Divine Legislation.

All praise is due to Allāh, there are many ways, especially in those states which have rules and regulations to maintain ethical standards for people, such as: legal and judicial means, raising complaints via organisations, parliament, even peaceful protests in accordance with laws which allow for them in non-Muslim countries. In Muslim countries the 'Ulama have prohibited peaceful protests.⁶ As for in lands ruled by non-Muslims these are not prohibited so long as they are in conjunction with the laws which allow for them and no destruction is involved and they rather express their views peacefully as has been the way of intelligent people [over there].⁷ As for causing damage and destruction to property, shouting and involving others who merely exploit the opportunity to take people's wealth or transgress against them, then this has been

⁶ [TN]: the wisdom in this is due to the leader and those in authority being Muslims already and thus being apt to take recourse to Islām, and likewise for the people under such an authority. Moreover, such methods are not from the heritage of Islām to resolve matters or rectify the affairs and history and experience has demonstrated the futility of them in the Islamic world.

⁷ [TN]: this is due to protests not being from Islām anyway, and also allowed by non-Muslim authorities. This was noted by Imām 'Uthaymeen (*rahimahullāh*) in his *Ta'leeq* [commentary] to *Kitāb ul-Jihād wa's-Siyar wa'l-Imārah min Saheeh Muslim*, tape no.9. See:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D53AWI-F12w>

prohibited in the Divine Legislation and it is not allowed at all for a Muslim to participate in this.⁸ whoever tries to remove oppression, with oppression, will be punished, Allāh Says:

﴿وَإِنْ عَاقَبْتُمْ فَعَاقِبُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا عُوقِبْتُمْ بِهِ﴾

“And if you punish an enemy then punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed.”

{*an-Nabl (16): 126*}

So, it is not allowed for a person to transgress against another on the basis that he has transgressed against him. A person must traverse the Divine Legislated means, Allāh Says,

﴿وَلَيْسَ الْبِرُّ بِأَنْ تَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهَا وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنِ اتَّقَى وَأْتُوا الْبُيُوتَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ﴾

“And it is not righteousness to enter houses from the back, but righteousness is [in] one who fears Allah. And enter houses from their doors.”

{*al-Baqarah (2): 189*}

Solving problems and removing oppression needs a person to enter these arenas from their respective doors and traverse the means which the Divine Legislation has allowed and has been permitted, authorized, and allowed for by those laws. As for a person taking means which firstly oppose the Divine Legislation, and then oppose the laws secondly, then this is prohibited in Allāh’s Religion and it will be feared the matter will become the reverse as it will lead to corruption, Allāh Says,

﴿وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ﴾

“And Allāh does not like corruption.”

{*al-Baqarah (2): 205*}

And Allāh Says,

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُصْلِحُ عَمَلَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ﴾

“Allāh does not rectify the action of the corrupters”

{*Yūnus (10): 81*}

⁸ [TN]: most protests in the West however, do involve the exploitation of intentions and the entry of those with their own agendas (which oppose the deen) into the affray.

This is even if their intent is good or they were oppressed. Yes, a person may be oppressed but he must traverse the Divinely Legislated means. And one should not face oppression with a greater oppression, or to transgress against someone whom it is not permitted to transgress against.

The students of knowledge and du'āt must adhere to the regulations of the Divine Legislation and not give in to emotions. Rather, if they are oppressed or on the brunt of racism then there is no problem in them facing people with sober emotions and to take the means allowed for in the Divine Legislation with which to avert that oppression. Even if they do not achieve any benefit in removing oppression, they cannot transgress the limits of the Sharee'ah or of laws and oppose those regulations, as this is from betraying the trust.

So, whenever a person feels oppressed, he should traverse *Shari'* means and if they are unable to achieve removal of the oppression, they are to be patient and supplicate to Allāh until Allāh decrees the situation to be rectified and the oppression to be removed. And supplication is of the greatest means for people to achieve that which they seek, and the Prophet (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) stated in regards to supplication of the oppressed that it is not rejected and there is no barrier to it being accepted, be it kufr or oppression. The Prophet (*sallAllāhu 'alayhi wassallam*) said: *“Fear the supplication of the oppressed as there is no barrier between it and Allāh.”*⁹

So whenever a person is oppressed they are to traverse Divinely Legislated means, adhere to its principles, not oppose the regulations of the countries in which they reside, and then if these means are taken and the intents are not achieved then they are to be patient, seek Allāh's Aid, and supplicate to Allāh until Allāh removes the oppression and returns one's right, as Allāh will grant victory to the oppressed even if it is after a time.

So beware of the evils of tribulations, Allāh knows best, and may peace and blessings be upon Allāh's Messenger, his family and all his companions.

⁹ Narrated by Mu'ādh ibn Jabal (*radi Allāhu 'anhu*), Saheeh Bukhārī.