



Islām's Position on Oppression, Racism, and Police Brutality

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All praise is for Allāh, we praise Him, seek His aid, and seek His assistance. We seek refuge with Allāh from the evils of our souls and from our wicked actions. Whomsoever Allāh guides there is no one who can misguide them, and whosoever He misguides, then there can be no one who can guide them. I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped in truth except Allāh, alone without any partners, and I bear witness that Muḥammad Ibn 'Abdullāh is His servant and final Messenger.

We have all witnessed what has been unfolding in the United States over the last month or so, with the merciless killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis Minnesota, the brutal murder of Ahmaud Arbery in Glynn County Georgia, the killing of Breonna Taylor in Louisville Kentucky, and many other racially motivated, indiscriminate killings of people of color throughout the country. In light of these events, the Muslim may ask himself what Islām says about oppression, racism, and police brutality. Especially since there are dozens of predominately African American Muslim communities throughout the United States, and in particular the region of Southeastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey. These Muslims have been a fixture in cities such as Philadelphia, Chester, Camden, Atlantic City, Trenton, and Newark, NJ for decades, and their numbers continue to grow. We often hear of discussions, panels, town halls, and even protests that claim to offer answers, but are those answers adequate? And more importantly, has Islām addressed these matters, and does it offer solutions? Without a doubt, Islām has clarified these matters and offers the best solutions. And how would it not, when Islām is a complete and perfect Religion, whose legislation has been revealed by the All-Knower, All-Wise. The One who said:

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islām as your religion.”¹

And He also said:

“And We have sent down to you the Book (the Qur‘ān) as an exposition of everything, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who have submitted themselves (to Allāh as Muslims).”²

¹ Al-Mā'idah 5:3

² Al-Naḥl 16:89

Therefore, Islām has not neglected any matter which brings good to mankind or warns them from evil. So, in this brief article, let us examine some of the texts of the Qur‘ān and Sunnah that address these crucial issues in order to highlight how the Muslim must behave in these times of tribulations, and with Allāh lies all success.

What does Islām say about Oppression?

Islām has unequivocally rejected all forms of oppression. The scholars have defined oppression as placing matters in other than their proper place. They have also said that oppression is of three types. The first relates to the right of Allāh, and the other two relate to the rights of mankind:

- I. Shirk (i.e. polytheism), which is the greatest form of oppression. This is because a person directs worship – which is the sole right of Allāh and the reason for our creation – to other than Allāh, the only deity worthy of worship. Allāh says in the Qur‘ān:

“And remember when Luqmān said to his son when he was advising him: ‘O my son! Join not in worship others with Allāh. Verily, joining others in worship with Allāh is a great *dhulm* (wrong and oppression)’.”¹

- II. That a person oppresses himself by committing sins, risking an unbearable punishment from Allāh.
- III. Oppression of others.

The last type revolves around three matters which the Prophet (ﷺ) clarified during his farewell Ḥajj sermon:

“Verily your blood, your wealth, and your honor is inviolable, like the sacredness of this day of yours, in this month of yours, and in this land of yours (i.e. Makkah).”²

Therefore, killing a person or shedding his blood is a transgression against the sanctity of his body, and this is oppression. Robbing him, stealing from him, or not paying what is owed to him is a transgression against the sanctity of his wealth, and this is oppression. Finally, backbiting him, slandering him, and defaming him is a transgression against the sanctity of his honor, and this is also oppression.

¹ Luqmān 31:13

² Reported by al-Bukhārī (4406) and Muslim (1679).

Ultimately, all forms of oppression are forbidden in Islām, and Allāh has stated that the oppressor will have no helper on the Day of Resurrection¹:

“There will be no friend or intercessor for the *thālimūn* (oppressors) who could be given heed to².”

And Allāh informed in the *Ḥadīth Qudsī*: “O My slaves, indeed I have forbidden oppression for Myself, and I have made it forbidden between you, so do not oppress one another...³”

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Beware of *dhulm* (oppression), for verily oppression will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection...⁴”

Also, when the Prophet (ﷺ) sent Mu‘adh to Yemen to call its people to Islām, he cautioned him: “And beware of the supplication of the oppressed, as there is no screen between it and between Allāh [answering it].⁵”

Concerning this Ḥadīth, Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn (d.1421H) - رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ - said: “This narration contains a proof that it is incumbent upon a person to beware of oppressing [others] and to fear the supplication of the oppressed, because this is what the Messenger ordered.⁶”

Notice here how the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) forbade even oppressing non-Muslims, as the people of Yemen at that time were Jews and Christians; and if they are oppressed, their supplications to Allāh against their oppressor would be answered. This is the complete and perfect justice of Islām, unlike other religions that oppress others because of their belief, or because of their race, or ethnic background. Look, for example, how the Theravada Buddhists in Myanmar (Burma) oppress their Muslim Rohingya minority, simply on account of their religion and ethnic background.

Allāh tells us in the Qur‘ān:

¹ *Riyāḍ al-Saliḥīn* by Shaykh ‘Uthaymīn, with slight adjustment. (2/485).

² Ghāfir 40:18

³ Reported by Muslim (2577) from the Ḥadīth of Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ).

⁴ Reported by Muslim (2578)

⁵ Reported by Al-Bukhārī (1458) and Muslim (19).

⁶ Explanation of *Riyāḍ al-Saliḥīn* 2/508.

“O you believe! Stand out firmly for Allāh as just witnesses; and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just, that is nearer to piety. And fear Allāh. Verily, Allāh is Well-Acquainted with what you do.”¹

These are the just scales that Allāh has enjoined upon the Muslims, contrary to those who feign religion but still discriminate against others because of their skin color, race, or religion.

Therefore, as these evidences illustrate, the only true solution to oppression is following the teachings of Islām.

What does Islām say about Racism?

Islām's position on racism is clear and unambiguous: it has been denounced and rejected in the Qur'ān and Sunnah.

Allāh says:

“And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the difference of your languages and [skin] colors. Verily, in that are indeed signs for men of sound knowledge.”²

This verse demonstrates that the variation of skin colors is from the wondrous signs of Allāh. Therefore, no man should belittle or discriminate against another whether he is black or white, or Arab or Asian. No one realizes this except he who has sound knowledge and a pure heart. As for those who have been blinded by customs, biases, and false beliefs, they are those who use skin color and race to attack and discriminate against others. This has been witnessed throughout American history from the time of slavery, to Reconstruction, to the Jim Crow South, to mass incarceration, to this very hour. Such disturbing events have rarely ever been found in the history of Islām. This again shows that all good lies in following and adhering to Islām, as these divine guidelines cannot be found in any other religion, and if they are found, they are distorted, or neglected.

And Allāh said:

“O mankind! We have created you from a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is that (believer) who has *al-taqwā* (piety). Verily, Allāh is All-Knowing, Well-Acquainted (with all things).”³

¹ Al-Mā'idah 5:8.

² Al-Rūm 30:22

³ Al-Ḥujurāt 49:13

Ibn Kathīr (d.774H) (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) commented on this verse saying, “Meaning, you are all only different in front of Allāh on account of your piety, not by race or origin¹.”

Also Prophet Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: “Verily Allāh does not look at your physical appearances, nor your wealth, but He looks at your hearts and your actions².”

Concerning this Ḥadīth, Shaykh ‘Uthaymīn (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) stated: “This Ḥadīth points to the same thing [which is established] in Allāh’s statement: ‘O mankind! We have created you from a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you with Allāh is that (believer) who has *al-taqwā* (piety). Verily, Allāh is All-Knowing, Well-Acquainted (with all things).’ So Allāh does not look at the bodies of people; whether they are large or small, healthy or sick, nor does He look at their appearances, whether they are beautiful or ugly. None of this amounts to anything with Allāh. He likewise does not look at lineage, whether it is noble or ignoble, nor does He look at wealth, or anything else of this sort, whatsoever. There is no connection between Allāh and between His servants except piety (*taqwā*). So, whoever possesses more piety, they will be closer to Allāh, and have more honor with Him...³”

And he (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) said: “Verily, Allāh has removed from you the haughtiness of pre-Islāmic ignorance and the boasting by your forefathers. There is either the pious believer or the one who is sinful and wretched. You are all the children of Ādam and Ādam was created from dirt. Indeed men will cease boasting about people who are only coals for the Hell-fire, or they will be more worthless in front of Allāh than a dung beetle that pushes dung with its nose⁴.”

He also said: “O mankind! Verily, your Lord the Mighty and Exalted is One, and your forefather is one. Behold, there is no virtue of an Arab over a non-Arab, nor a black person over a white person except with piety (*taqwā*). Have I not conveyed [Allāh’s message in full]?”

They said: “Yes.” He said: “Then let those present inform those absent⁵.”

Furthermore, when Abū Dharr reviled Bilāl (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) as being the son of a black woman, the Prophet (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) censured him, saying:

¹ Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr 4/277. Dar al-Fayha/Dār al-Salām Print (1998).

² Reported by Muslim (2564)

³ Explanation of Riyāḍ al-Saliḥīn (1/61).

⁴ Reported by Abū Dāwūd No. 5116 and al-Tirmidhī No. 3955 and 3956.

⁵ Collected by Aḥmad with a similar wording (5/411).

“Indeed you are a person who has in you [traits] from pre-Islāmic times of ignorance (*al-Jāhiliyyah*)¹.”

So, the above-mentioned texts illustrate Islām's firm stance against racism. The only distinguishing factor between people in the sight of Allāh is the one who is most God-fearing and adheres to what the Creator has revealed and follows His Messengers. Additionally, these texts show that the one who boasts about his race or lineage is not a person of sound understanding, but rather is worthless in the sight of Allāh, the Mighty and Majestic.

Again, this exhibits the excellence of Islām in comparison to other religions. If one were to examine Muslim countries, there are people of all skin colors, black, white, and in between. They pray and worship together, greet one another, visit one another, and respect one another. Further, we have not known of any cases where white Muslims have persecuted, let alone killed black Muslims on the account of their skin color, as we have seen with whites and blacks in this country, who many claim to follow Christianity. Rather during slavery, slave owners claiming to be Christians used Christianity and the Bible to further their oppression of black slaves, who were their fellow Christian brothers.

I would like to end this point by mentioning a quote from Malcolm (Malik) el-Shabazz –may Allāh have mercy on him – which is relevant here because he witnessed the injustices of racism in America, and then travelled overseas and saw the justice of Islām in the Muslim countries. He wrote from Makkah, describing whom he had encountered on the Ḥajj pilgrimage:

Their sincere submission to the Oneness of God, and their true acceptance of all nonwhites as equals makes the so-called 'whites' also acceptable as equals into the brotherhood of Islām with the 'nonwhites'. Color ceases to be a determining factor of a man's worth or value once he becomes a Muslim. I hope I am making this part very clear, because it is now very clear to me.

If white Americans would accept the religion of Islām, if they would accept the Oneness of God (Allāh), then they could also sincerely accept the Oneness of Man, and they would cease to measure others always in terms of their 'differences in color'.²

What does Islām say about Police Brutality³?

¹ Reported by Bukharī No. 30 and Muslim No. 1661 from the Ḥadīth of Abū Dharr (رضي الله عنه)

² <https://www.nytimes.com/1964/05/08/archives/malcolm-x-pleased-by-whites-attitude-on-trip-to-mecca.html>

³ The translation of the Ḥadīth in this section and the commentary which follows it was taken from the article compiled by our brother *Shaykh* Hassan Somali entitled: “Police Brutality: A Sign of the Hour. The Killing of George Floyd.”

It is unfortunate that many times when a person of color in this country thinks about the police, the concept of oppressive police is looked at as the rule, while the just among them are looked at as the exception. African Americans must have frank talks with their sons about how to interact when stopped by a police officer, fearing that the police encounter could be the last their son has with a human being.

This is the black man's reality in America, which even I myself have not been exempt from. On the contrary, I have not experienced discrimination and bias due to my skin color during my travels throughout the lands of Islām, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates.

In Islām, police brutality is forbidden because it is oppression. So all the aforementioned evidences regarding the prohibition of oppression can be applied here. However, there is a text in the Sunnah which the scholars of Islām have specifically interpreted to mean police brutality.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “At the end of time there will appear men from this nation with whips like the tails of cattle. They will go out in the morning under the wrath of Allāh, and they return in the evening under the anger of Allāh.¹”

The object which they carry in their hands that resembles the tails of cattle is referring to a whip which they use to tyrannically beat the people².

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn (رحمته الله) stated: “[These are] the oppressive police officers who beat the people without justification. They are the dwellers of Hell, because whoever aids an oppressor shall receive a portion of their sin that he deserves³.”

How can one escape what we see today from Oppression, Racism, and Police Brutality?

Belief in Allāh's divine decree (Qadr) is one of the pillars of faith, which includes the belief that He willed everything that occurs. It is a must that Allāh's universal decree take place because of His Infinite Wisdom, and it does not necessarily mean that He loves everything that transpires. However, the Qur'ān and Sunnah prove that Allāh loves justice and He hates oppression. Thus, according to His universal decree, He sends trials and tribulations upon the people to see who will remain firm in the face of trials, remain firm upon what He revealed, and to see who will fail these tests and trials and forsake what He revealed.

¹ Collected by Imām Aḥmad in his *Musnad* (5/250) and others. This Ḥadīth was graded as authentic by Shaykh al-Albānī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (no. 1893).

² Refer to *Mir'āt al-Maḥāṭib Sharḥ Mishkhāt al-Maṣābīḥ* (11/94).

³ <http://binothaimeen.net/content/11902>

Allāh said:

“Allāh will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good. Nor will Allāh disclose to you the secrets of the unseen, but Allāh chooses of His Messengers whom He wills...”¹

The Imām ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Nasir al-Sa’dī (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ) said about the above verse: “It does not befit the Wisdom of Allāh to leave the believers in the state which you are in now, as it relates to mixing and not being able to distinguish [who the people truly are], until He distinguishes between the wicked and the good, the believer and the hypocrite, and the truthful and the liar. Furthermore, it does not befit His Wisdom that He discloses to His servants matters of the unseen which He knows concerning them. For this reason, His utmost Wisdom necessitates that He tests His servants and puts them through different types of tribulations to the extent it distinguishes the wicked from the good. So, Allāh sent His Messengers and commanded the people to obey them, submit to them, and believe in them. He promised those who have true faith and piety a tremendous reward. Thus, the people fell into two categories as it relates to following the Messengers: those who obeyed them, and those who disobeyed them, believers and hypocrites, and Muslims and disbelievers; [this is] in order to see who will be rewarded, and who will be punished, and so that [Allāh’s] justice, favor, and Wisdom can be plainly seen by mankind.”²

This clarifies that it is a must that Allāh sends upon the people trials and tribulations. If it were the case that people were not tested and put through trials, it would never be known those who are truthful from those who are liars, and those who are believers from those who are hypocrites. It is Allāh who allows these trials to occur, and these are some of the wisdoms behind what we see today from turmoil, whether it is within the Muslim *ummah*, or among mankind in general. As it relates to the current tribulations here in America, they reveal those who truly stand up against injustice and oppression from those who support injustice or remain silent about it.

Also, it is upon the Muslim to ponder over the lives of those whom Allāh sent as reformers and rectifiers, at the head of them the Prophets and Messengers (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ). They were sent to people of disbelief, and because of their disbelief in Allāh, they were also morally bankrupt in other areas of life, as correct belief is the foundation of sound morals. There were those who were tyrants, deceived by their stature and size, and were arrogant, like the people of Thamūd to whom Prophet Ṣāliḥ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) was sent. There were those who dealt in homosexuality, like the people to whom Prophet Lūṭ (Lot) (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) was sent. There were people who

¹ Āli ‘Imrān 3:179

² *Taysīr al-Karīm al-Raḥmān*, p. 156, Dar Ibn Jawzī print.

discriminated against their fellow countrymen based on race and ethnicity, such as those to whom Prophet Mūsā (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام) was sent. There were also those who buried their daughters alive such as the people to whom Prophet Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) was sent.

Let us ponder over what transpired with Prophet Mūsā and his people, as racial discrimination was prevalent in his time, just as it is prevalent today. Their ruler, Fir'awn, was a tyrant who oppressed and persecuted the Children of Isrā'īl. He enslaved them, killing their boys and raping their women. Allāh relates to us their story in the Qur'ān:

“Verily, Fir'awn (Pharaoh) exalted himself in the land and made its people sects, weakening (oppressing) a group among them (i.e. the children of Isrā'īl); killing their sons, and letting their females live. Verily, he was of the mufsidūn (i.e. great oppressors and tyrants).”¹

This oppression went on for decades, from the time of Mūsā's infancy until his adulthood when Allāh chose him as a Prophet and Messenger. Allāh commanded Mūsā and his brother Harun to go to Fir'awn and confront him for his tyranny and oppression of the Children of Isrā'īl. He said:

“And go both of you to Fir'awn and say: ‘We are the Messengers of the Lord of the ‘Ālamīn (all creation). So allow the children of Isrā'īl to go with us...’ Fir'awn said to Mūsā, ‘And who is the Lord of the Worlds?’ He (Mūsā) said: ‘The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is in between them, if you seek to be convinced with certainty.’ (Fir'awn) said to those around him: ‘Do you not hear (what he says)?’ [Mūsā] said: ‘He is your Lord and the Lord of your ancient fathers!’ ”²

Although Mūsā's people were oppressed and enslaved, he began his call to Fir'awn with *Tawḥīd*, reminding him of He who created him and his forefathers. Mūsā remained firm in this call, produced signs given to him by Allāh, and encouraged his people upon patience and seeking Allāh's aid.

“Mūsā said to his people; ‘Seek help in Allāh and be patient. Verily, the earth is Allāh's. He causes it to be inherited by whom He wills of His slaves; and the (blessed) end is for the muttaqūn (pious).’ ”³

When Fir'awn continued upon his tyranny, oppression, and arrogance, Allāh –the High and Exalted – destroyed him and his followers, as He said:

¹ Al-Qaṣaṣ 28:4

² Al-Shu'arā 26:16-17, 23-26

³ Al-A'rāf 7:128

“Then Fir‘awn pursued them with his hosts, but the ocean completely overwhelmed them and covered them up. And Fir‘awn led his people astray, and he did not guide them!”¹

This is just one of the many proofs that show that rectification of social ills, whether it is prejudice, racism, or other than that can only begin by calling the oppressors to the correct belief. Also using textual and intellectual arguments to prove to them who their creator is, and that He only created them and all of mankind so that He be worshipped alone and obeyed.

Allāh said:

“And I have not created the Jinn or mankind except to worship Me (alone).”²

This foundation can be seen in the call of all the other Prophets and Messengers. For example, Allāh said regarding the call of his Prophet Hūd (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ):

“And to ‘Ād We sent their brother Hūd. He said: ‘O my people! Worship Allāh! You have no other God but Him. Will you not fear Allāh?’³”

And Allāh said regarding His Prophet Ṣāliḥ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ):

“And to Thamūd We sent their brother Ṣāliḥ. He said: ‘O my people worship Allāh! You have no other God but Him.’⁴”

And He said regarding Lūṭ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ):

“The people of Lūṭ (Lot) denied the Messengers. When their brother Lūṭ said to them: ‘Will you not fear Allāh and obey Him? Verily I am a trustworthy Messenger to you. So fear Allāh, keep your duty to Him, and obey me. No reward I ask you for it; my reward is only from the Lord the *‘Alamin.*’⁵”

All this demonstrates that true rectification begins with calling the disbelievers to the Oneness of Allāh. This was the way of the Prophets and Messengers who were more knowledgeable than us regarding how to rectify communities, societies, and nations. In fact, through their call to *Tawḥīd*, rectification came about, and the ills that plagued many of their societies disappeared, or at the very least diminished greatly. An example of this path’s success can be

¹ Ta-Ha 20:78-79

² Al-Dhāriyāt 51:56

³ Al-A‘rāf 7:65

⁴ Al-A‘rāf 7:73

⁵ Al-Shu‘arā 26: 160-164

witnessed through reformers who adhered to the way of the Prophets and Messengers in calling to rectification, such as Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ). Through his persistent call to first implementing Tawḥīd and eradicating shirk, a country built upon safety and security was established: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Ibn Bāz (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) said: “As it relates to propagation of Islām (*da‘wah*), there is no path which is better for rectification than the path of the Messengers; they are the example and the leaders. They showed a great deal of patience [in calling their people]. Nūḥ (Noah) was patient with his people for nine hundred and fifty years. Hūd exerted patience, so did Ṣāliḥ, Shu‘ayb, Ibrahim, Lūṭ, and others from the Messengers. Then Allāh destroyed their people due to their disobedience, and He saved His Prophets and their followers. So you, O caller, have an excellent example in these Prophets, these chosen men. You also have a great example in Prophet Muḥammad who remained patient in Makkah, and remained patient in Madinah with the presence of the Jews, hypocrites, and those who did not embrace Islām from those of the *Aws* and *Khazraj* tribes, until Allāh guided them...”¹

Are Protests and Demonstrations allowed in Islām?

Here, I would like to address the issue of demonstrations and protests which we have all been witnessing in the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder.

The senior scholars of Islām who we return to for proper understanding of crucial matters concerning the *ummah*, have addressed this subject:

Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn Ṣāliḥ al-‘Uthaymīn (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) stated: “Upon us is to give advice as much as possible. As for showing open civil disobedience, then this is in opposition to the guidance of the Salaf. So surely, you all know now that this matter does not have any relation to the Islāmic legislation whatsoever, nor does it have any relation to bringing about rectification whatsoever...”²

Shaykh Ṣāliḥ al-Fawzān –may Allāh preserve him– stated when asked about protests in Islām: “Our religion is not a religion of chaos, our religion is a religion of discipline, order, and composure. Protests are not from the actions of the Muslims, and it was never known from the Muslims [of old]. The religion of Islām is a religion of calm, and mercy; there is no chaos in it, or disorder, or inciting of tribulations. This is the religion of Islām. Rights can be obtained without going about things this way, [but rather by] legislated ways and requests.

¹ *Majmū‘ Fatāwā wa Maqālāt al-Imām Ibn Bāz: (6/252-526)* by way of the book “*al-Fatāwā al-Muḥimmah Fī Tabṣīr al-Ummah*” pp. 99-100.

² By way of the book “*al-Fatāwā al-Muḥimmah Fī Tabṣīr al-Ummah*” p. 101.

These protests bring about tribulations, cause bloodshed, and cause destruction of property and wealth. These matters are impermissible¹.”

He also stated: “Harm is not removed by harm [just like it]. So if a matter which entails harm arises, or an evil [arises], the solution is not by protesting, demonstrations, or rioting. This is not a solution; instead it increases the evil. However, the solution is by going to those in charge and advising them, clarifying what is incumbent upon them to do, and it is hoped that this harm will be removed.”²

And Shaykh Ṣāliḥ Āl al-Shaykh –may Allāh preserve him– stated: “If a large group came and said: ‘If we protest, this will put pressure on the leader, thus he will become upright, and this is what is desired. Also, the end justifies the means.’ We say that this is falsehood, because the means in itself is prohibited. So even if the means lead to an overall good, its origin is forbidden. This is similar to using a prohibited medical remedy to cure a sickness.”³

There are many other verdicts issued by the senior scholars in this regard, and Allāh has commanded us to return our religious affairs to them.

“Ask of those who know, if you know not.”⁴

As of late, statements have appeared from students of knowledge and *du‘āt* that oppose the senior scholars in this matter, and those statements should not be given any weight whatsoever. They lack the insight of the people of knowledge, and unfortunately many times they have evil agendas behind their calls, and they desire to remove the Muslim from the straight path of Allāh. Safety and blessings are in adherence to what the senior scholars have said in these very important issues.

Allāh says:

“When there comes to them some matter touching (public) safety or fear, they make it known (among the people); if only they had referred it to the Messenger or to those charged with authority among them, the proper investigators would have understood it from them (directly). Had it not been for the Grace and Mercy of Allāh upon you, you would have followed satan, except a few of you.”⁵

Imām ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Nāṣir al-Sa‘dī (رحمة الله) said in his *tafsīr* of this verse:

¹ By way of the book “*al-Fatāwā al-Muhimmah Fi Tabṣīr al-Ummah*” p. 102.

² By way of the book “*al-Fatāwā al-Muhimmah Fi Tabṣīr al-Ummah*” p. 103.

³ By way of the book “*al-Fatāwā al-Muhimmah Fi Tabṣīr al-Ummah*” pp. 104-105.

⁴ Al-Naḥl 16:43

⁵ Al-Nisā‘ 4:83

“This is a chastisement from Allāh to His servants because of their unbefitting action; and that rather it is befitting for them to first verify, when a matter comes to them which is crucial and has an overall effect on public life, which relates to the safety and happiness of the believers, or to fear which will result in misfortune. They should not hastily spread the news of that matter; rather they should return it back to the Messenger and to those in authority among them who are the people of wisdom, knowledge, and sound reasoning. They are those who know the affairs and know what is in the best interests [of the Muslims] and what is opposite to that. If they see that there is benefit in spreading it, and [in that is] vitality and happiness for the believers, and being cautious from their adversaries, they do it. However, if they see that there is no benefit in doing so, or there is benefit, but the harm outweighs it, then they do not spread it...and this proves an ethical principle: if discussions arise regarding a particular matter, those who are qualified should take charge of it. The matter should be designated to those qualified, and they should not be preceded. This way is closer to correctness, and more likely to be free of error¹.”

So again, we return to the scholars in such crucial matters, not to the youth, the ignorant, or those who feign knowledge.

Other harms in protesting are the loss of life, and the destruction of wealth and property. People have been killed, shot, hit by cars, etc. Essential businesses such as supermarkets and pharmacies have been looted and shutdown, even in African American neighborhoods. Banks have been broken into, and ATMs have been blown up and robbed. These are all actions of corruption which the Muslim does not praise or glorify, let alone take part in.

Furthermore, Muslims should also avoid so called “peaceful protests.” Many times they begin peaceful and end riotous. Even if they never ended in riots, potential harm still may take place as a result. For example, if people were to protest and gather on a highway to delay traffic in an act of civil disobedience, and a person had a medical emergency, he would not be able to get to the hospital because the roads were blocked. These so-called peaceful protests can result in a person’s demise, and this is not far-fetched, especially with the spread of Covid-19.

It should be noted that we support and believe that *black lives do matter*, and we recognize that there is an undeniable presence of systemic oppression and discrimination against people of color in this country, especially African Americans. But as Muslims, it is impermissible to participate with protest movements, and in particular the Black Lives Matter movement, as

¹ *Taysīr al-Karīm al-Raḥmān*, pp.193-194, Dar Ibn Jawzī print.

their core principles are founded on supporting the LGBTQ agenda, which is rejected in Islām¹.

Allāh said in the Qur‘ān about those to whom Prophet Lūṭ was sent:

“And (remember) Lūṭ (Lot), when he said to his people: ‘Do you commit the worst sin such as none preceding you has committed in the ‘Alamīn (mankind and jinn). Verily, you practice your lusts on men instead of women. Nay, but you are a people transgressing beyond bounds (by committing great sins).’ And the answer of his people was only that they said: ‘Drive them out of your town, these are indeed men who want to be pure (from sins)!’ Then We saved him and his family, except his wife; she was of those who remained behind (in the torment). And We rained down on them a rain (of stones). Then see what was the end of the *Mujrimūn* (criminals, polytheists, sinners, etc.).”²

And when Allāh sent his Angels to destroy the people of Lūṭ, Ibrahim began to argue with them due to the believers that were among them, so it was said to him:

¹ We are guided by the fact that all Black lives matter, regardless of actual or perceived sexual identity, gender identity, gender expression, economic status, ability, disability, religious beliefs or disbeliefs, immigration status, or location.

We make space for transgender brothers and sisters to participate and lead.

We are self-reflexive and do the work required to dismantle cisgender privilege and uplift Black trans folk, especially Black trans women who continue to be disproportionately impacted by trans-antagonistic violence.

We build a space that affirms Black women and is free from sexism, misogyny, and environments in which men are centered.

We practice empathy. We engage comrades with the intent to learn about and connect with their contexts.

We make our spaces family-friendly and enable parents to fully participate with their children. We dismantle the patriarchal practice that requires mothers to work “double shifts” so that they can mother in private even as they participate in public justice work.

We disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and “villages” that collectively care for one another, especially our children, to the degree that mothers, parents, and children are comfortable.

We foster a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking, or rather, the belief that all in the world are heterosexual (unless s/he or they disclose otherwise).

Source: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/what-we-believe/>

² Al-A‘rāf 7:80-84

"O Ibrahim (Abraham)! Forsake this. Indeed, the Commandment of your Lord has gone forth. Verily, there will come a torment for them which cannot be turned back."¹

Also on the authority of Ibn Abbas: "The Prophet (ﷺ) cursed the women that imitate men, and the men that imitate women."²

These Qur'ānic verses and this Prophetic narration highlight Islām's position against homosexuality, and clarify why we as Muslims do not stand with them.

It should not be understood that because of Islām's stern position against homosexuality that this means the Muslim leaves off inviting them to Islām. Rather, we still invite them to worship the One True Creator, and to abandon associating partners with Him, and disobeying Him. This is the only true path to guidance in this life, and the key to salvation in the afterlife.

Moreover, Islām condemned all traces of bias against blacks over fourteen hundred years ago, as has preceded in the Prophet's statement to Abu Dharr when he disparaged Bilal (رضي الله عنه): "Indeed you a person who has within you traits of pre-Islāmic ignorance."³ This prophetic tradition and others similar to it suffices the Muslim from needing to use slogans or hashtags such as #BLM, as indeed the best guidance is the guidance of Muḥammad.

Also, the 6th century scholar⁴ 'Abd al-Raḥmān Ibn Jawzī authored his work entitled: "The Excellence of Sudan and Abyssinia," when he saw sadness from a number of notable Abyssinian Muslims due to their black skin tone. He writes: "So I informed them that piety is what is taken into account, not appearance, and because of that I authored this book lauding the excellence of many people from Sudan and Abyssinia."⁵

Here is a renowned scholar of Islām clarifying the evils of prejudice and racism, along with showing the humanity of blacks, nearly eight hundred and fifty years ago.

¹ Hud 11:76

² Collected by Abū Dāwūd (4097), Tirmidhī (2784), and Ibn Mājah (1904).

³ It should be noted that after this incident, Abū Dharr (رضي الله عنه) accepted the admonishment of the Prophet (ﷺ) and felt the utmost remorse. This becomes clear for the one who ponders over the narration in its entirety, which actually was reported by Abu Dharr himself: Narrated Ma'rūr who said: "I met Abū Dharr at [a place called] Rabathah. He was wearing a two-piece garment and his servant was wearing the exact garment, so I asked him concerning that. He replied. 'I disparaged a man on account of his mother, so the Prophet (ﷺ) said to me: O Abū Dharr, did you disparage him on account of his mother? Indeed, you a person who has within you traits of pre-Islamic ignorance. Your servants are your brothers, and Allah has placed them under your care. If a man has his brother under his care, let him eat from what you eat, clothe him with what you clothe yourself, and do not task them with what will overburden them. If you were to task them with something [burdensome], then assist them.'" Collected by Bukharī no. 30.

⁴ 12th century CE.

⁵ *Tanwīr al Ghabash Fī Fadl al Sūdān Wa al Habash*, p. 29.

Further, most of the nation – including Muslims – are angry and infuriated at the reprehensible killing of George Floyd and others, but it is important that the Muslim does not act off emotions or affiliate with any prohibited movement.

Allāh has given the Muslims remedies and solutions for life's problems, no matter how difficult they may get. He has sent down a perfect Book, untampered by the hands of men, in which lies complete guidance for those who follow it and adhere to it.

“Say it is for those who believe, a guide and a healing.”¹

He has made the Messengers of strong will (*Ulū al-'Azam*) –those who went through great trials and difficulties throughout their lives –an example for all Muslims. Some faced the same social issues that people face today, rather some faced worse social ills. For this reason Allāh commanded His Prophet Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ), which is also a command for us:

“Therefore be patient, as did the Messengers of strong will, and be not in haste about them (disbelievers).”²

So, the Muslim must exert patience in inviting our neighbors, our co-workers, and people we encounter in our daily routines to Islām, being patient upon the harm incurred in this effort, not hasty.

Another way the Muslim can be instrumental in tackling racism is by starting in his or her household and rearing their children upon the lofty teachings of Islām which condemn all types of racism and oppression.

Likewise, leaving this affair to the people who possess knowledge, wisdom, and sound understanding to advise those in authority to uphold what is just.

And lastly, the Muslim must not forget that du‘ā‘ is the weapon of the believer. He is diligent in supplicating with those statements that have been legislated to protect the Muslim from the harms and evil of jinn and mankind, and these are plentiful for the one who looks into the books of supplications.

Whatever I said in these lines that is correct is from Allāh, and whatever I said that is incorrect is from myself, and I seek Allāh's forgiveness and pardon.

“But if they (i.e. the disbelievers) cease [from the oppression that they commit], then certainly Allāh is All-Seer of what they do. And if they turn away, then know that

¹ Fussilat 41:44

² Al-Aḥqāf 46:35

Allāh is your *Mawlā* (Lord, Protector, and Supporter) – what an Excellent *Mawlā*, and what an Excellent Helper¹.”

و صلى الله و سلم و بارك على نبينا محمد و على آله و صحبه و سلم

15 Shawwāl 1441H

June 7th, 2020

¹ Al-Anfāl 8:39-40