

Justice and Compassion in Education

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

﴿ قَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴾ ١٥٩ ﴿

سورة آل عمران، ١٥٩

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ

خَدَمْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) عَشْرَ سِنِينَ، وَاللَّهِ! مَا قَالَ لِي: أَقَا قَطُّ، وَلَا قَالَ لِي لَشَيْءٍ: لِمَ فَعَلْتَ كَذَا؟ وَهَلَا فَعَلْتَ كَذَا؟

مسلم، كتاب الفضائل، ٥١

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Today, how education should be delivered and which methods should be used is an important issue. Whether in the mosque, at school or within the family, education must be provided through healthy methods. One of the most important principles is that education should be established on both justice and compassion.

Indeed, our Prophet Muhammad (saw) guided people to the right path by approaching them with kind words. The Qur'an states, **"It was by Allah's mercy that you were gentle with them. Had you been harsh and hard-hearted, they would surely have dispersed from around you."**¹ This tells us that our Prophet (saw) won people's hearts through compassion and gentleness.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

This exemplary manner of our Prophet (saw) should guide teacher-student relationships at school and education within the family. Gentle words are more effective and persuasive, whereas harsh language can distance a child not only from the educator but, over time, from the lesson, the school, the mosque and the entire learning environment.

Anas ibn Malik (ra), who grew up in the company of our Prophet, relates: *"I served the Messenger of Allah (saw) for ten years. By Allah, he never once even said 'Uff!' to me. He never said about anything I did, 'Why did you do that?' nor did he say, 'Why did you not do it this way?'"*² Therefore, teachers and parents alike should take care not to break a child's heart when correcting a mistake, not to overlook compassion when maintaining discipline and to show the right path without hurting the child's self-esteem.

Allah (swt) commanded Musa and Harun: **"Speak to him gently; perhaps he may take heed or become fearful."**³ Thus, even the Pharaoh was to be invited to the right path with gentle words.

Dear Jama'ah!

While education must be compassionate, it must also be just and a balance between the two should be maintained. Justice is a fundamental principle that encompasses every area of life. The Quran commands, **"Be just; that is nearer to righteousness."**⁴ This teaches us that acting justly is one of the qualities of a God-conscious Muslim.

Justice does not always mean giving everyone the same thing, it means safeguarding each person's rights and giving each person what they are due. Justice means applying a fair measure when awarding grades, giving opportunities to speak, enforcing discipline, recognising achievement and assessing mistakes. It is not justice to show leniency to a student we like while treating one we dislike more harshly, to be close to the child of a wealthy family while remaining distant from the child of a poor family or to continually favour the high-achieving student while ignoring the quiet student who is struggling.

Likewise, showing favouritism, placing someone ahead of others when they do not deserve it or pushing aside someone who is rightfully entitled is incompatible with justice. Such conduct not only causes injustice but also violates the rights of others.

Dear Brothers and Sisters!

Justice and compassion are two important qualities we must express not only in education but in every area of our lives. In our families, workplaces, relations with neighbours, business dealings, words and actions, we must always uphold justice and treat people with compassion and understanding. Let us remember that justice strengthens trust, while compassion strengthens the bonds between hearts. Where justice is absent, injustice arises, where compassion is absent, resentment and distance develop.

May Allah (swt) make us among those who never leave from justice, reflect compassion in every area of life and safeguard the rights of others. Ameen.



¹ Surah Al Imran, 3:159.

² Muslim, Fada'il, 51: al-Bukhari, Adab, 39.

³ Surah Ta-Ha, 20:44.

⁴ Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:8.