

Theoretical Aspects of Prophetic Justice

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Ali Akbar Alikhani*

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Abstract

This article mainly undertakes to discuss theoretical aspects in the Noble Prophet's political conduct. In this article, firstly the necessity and importance of political justice has been explained in three parts. Thereafter, we have undertaken to define the essence of justice and to discuss its levels and principles in the Noble Prophet's thought. Equality, as the most important principle of justice in human societies, has also been dealt with. The final discussion focuses on two standards of justice, namely "the syndrome of justice" and "the main criterion of justice". In this discussion political justice from the viewpoint of the Noble Prophet (s) has two principles, three levels, one beginning point and one cardinal standard. The principles of justice are reason and equality, and the levels of justice are the system of being, society and Human being. The beginning point of justice is the epicenter of power at every level of the political system and naturally higher levels have more importance, and the main standard of justice is an indisputable Islamic principle, namely "do unto others what you would like them do unto you". In political justice, "the method of justice" and "the goal of justice" bring society close to the actualization of justice, and avoiding extreme ends is compatible with ease and tranquility, both of which are the ultimate goals of justice, namely Human's felicity and happiness in the world and the Hereafter.

Keywords:

Prophet Muhammad, political justice, Islamic justice, happiness

* Associate Professor, University of Tehran, Iran

a.alikhani@ut.ac.ir

Introduction

The discourse on "justice from the viewpoint of the Noble Prophet (s)" may be arranged in three but of course difficult ways. The first is to collect and study that part of the Prophet's sayings which clearly deal with the theme of justice and equity. The second is to collect and include in this discussion all the sayings, letters, agreements and precedents of the Noble Prophet (s) which we our present day mindset considers to be related to the subject of justice. The third is to consider all the viewpoints and actions of the Noble Prophet (s) as equitable and as the exact manifestation of justice because [the Glorious Qur'an says] "in the Apostle of Allah there is certainly for you a good exemplar" (The Glorious Qur'an, 33:21), and "indeed you possess a great character" (The Glorious Qur'an, 68:4). For two reasons, choosing the third method will basically make it difficult to put together a coherent scholarly discourse on this theme. The first reason pertains to the questions as to whether all the actions the Noble Prophet (s) performed were just or whether justice has priority and [hence] the Prophet (s) acts in just manner (Mihrizi, 1376 AHS, pp.188-190).¹ The second reason is that all of the Prophet's ethical, social, doctrinal and political sayings and precedents will have to be considered as part of the subject of justice.

It is possible to adopt the second approach on certain conditions and restrictions, but the first way is the surest and most reliable way [of approaching this theme]. In this article we have adopted the first methodology. The only problem with this approach is the paucity Prophetic sayings which directly and categorically pertain to the subject of justice and equity. This difficulty constrains us from entering into a detailed and lengthy discourse on this theme. Nonetheless the paucity of Prophetic sayings in the domain of justice has not prevented us from presenting an accurate and reliable discussion and whatever has herein been said is based on Prophetic statements that directly appertain to justice. The other point is that this article mainly undertakes to discuss theoretical aspects in the Noble Prophet's political conduct and leaves out examination of the practical aspects of this theme. In this article, firstly the necessity and importance of political justice has been explained in three parts. Thereafter, we have undertaken to define the essence of justice and to discuss its levels and principles in the Noble Prophet's thought. Equality, as the most important principle of justice in

human societies, has also been dealt with. The final discussion focuses on two standards of justice, namely "the syndrome of justice" and "the main criterion of justice".

1. The Necessity and Importance of Political Justice

1-1. The Value of Justice

The value and importance of a thing is usually explained by comparing it to things whose value and importance is already known. Every society, in accordance with its particular environment and culture, has its own needs and understanding of things. Therefore it is natural that in order to explain the value and importance of justice in the Islamic society and culture of his time, the Noble Prophet (s) had to take recourse to comparisons and metaphors which were important and understandable in the Islamic society and culture of his time. One of the important and cardinal concepts and themes in Islam and the Islamic community is "worship". It has been unequivocally stated in some Qur'anic verses that we, human beings, have been created to worship God.²

In Islamic culture and beliefs, worship and devotion to God is a very great virtue and high position which believers try to achieve. The Noble Prophet (s) has compared justice to worship in order to make a comparison that is comprehensible to people and thereby explain the value and importance of justice. From the Prophet's point of view, one hour of dispensing justice is nobler and more worthwhile than seventy years of worshipping God daily, keeping vigil and fasting (*Nahj al-Fasaha*, 1360 AHS, hadith no. 1936, p.410).³ If we pay careful heed to the Prophet's statement, we will see that he has made a momentous statement. On what basis would one equate an hour of dispensing justice with seventy years of worship? Hereunder, a few points are mentioned with a view to clarifying the position and domain of influence of worship and justice as well as the basis of the Prophet's statement:

A person's acts of worship only edify and build the worshipper himself, whereas dispensation of justice edifies and builds society.

The benefit of worship goes to the worshipper himself, whereas the benefits of dispensation of justice are enjoyed by all people and the whole society.

The fruits of worship are limited to the realm of the individual, whereas the fruits of dispensation of justice embrace the whole society.

The foregoing points hold good with respect collective worship, but the important question that arises is: in view of the fact seventy years of worshipping during the day, keeping vigil and fasting is very strenuous, whilst an hour's dispensation of justice is a short period, is it fair and just to equate the two, and what is more, to elevate dispensation of justice over prayer? And basically which of the two is harder? The response to these questions is:

Every person, according to their state and understanding, is able to worship God, be they an old lady with a spinning wheel or a desert shepherd or a scholar -whether individually or collectively- and God accepts their acts of worship, but not every man is able to act with impartiality and dispense justice. Dispensation of justice demands special qualifications, some of which are knowledge, wisdom, ability and management.

People perform acts of worship with a view to edifying their characters and attaining spiritual elevation, whereas a just person has to already have attained a noble character and spiritual elevation for them to be able to dispense justice.

Acts of worship are –virtually- performed extemporaneously, whereas justice is a product of a complex process whose actualization demands traversing many hard stages.

Worship is a personal act and feeling whose value increases with more concealment of the act, whereas is essentially a trendsetting social act.

In worship the worshipper pursues personal benefit -even if it were spirituality and entrance into paradise-, whereas in justice the just man aims for social and communal benefit, and in the pursuit of justice he is likely do things that endanger his personal good.

We can give many such plausible responses but the above suffice to illustrate our point that dispensation of justice is nobler and more worthwhile than worship. There are other Prophetic statements appertaining to the value and importance of justice, but there is no room to discuss them here.⁴

1-2. The Prophet (s) and Justice

If the necessity and importance of justice is as we have said, then divine prophets (a) ought to hold justice in high esteem and observe equity. In this theme we will briefly discuss four points relating to the Prophet's justice. The first point pertains to God's command to the Noble Prophet (s) that he should observe justice, the second to the Prophet's statement regarding his own justice, the third to the Imams' sayings about the Prophet's justice, and the fourth to the Prophet's advice to people that they should observe justice. With regard to the first point, the Glorious Qur'an categorically commands the Noble Prophet (s) to dispense justice.⁵

Likewise the Noble Prophet (s) says he has been instructed to act justly at all times and in all circumstances (Harani, 1398 AH, p.25). Thus justice can be considered a great divine mission in Islam. The Noble Prophet (s) has also assured people that he is the most just human being and that under no circumstances would he deviate from justice (*Nahj al-Fasaha*, 1360 AHS, p.640, hadith no. 3176).⁶ And this strengthens the mission and goal of Islam in actualizing justice. After the Battle of Hunayn a man from Tamim uttered harsh words against the Noble Prophet (s), saying, "O Muhammad! Observe justice." The Noble Prophet (s) smilingly answered, "If I do not observe and dispense justice, then who would?" (Ibn Umar Waqidi, 1369 AHS, p.102). For various and many reasons, there is not the least doubt regarding the Noble Prophet's justice. Many other people have also spoken a lot about the Noble Prophet's justice, the most important of which are the sayings of the Imams ('a). Imam Ali (a) has said the Noble Prophet (s) acted justly in all instances (*Nahj al-Balagha*, 1368 AHS, sermon no. 94, p.87), that his government and judgment was just (*Nahj al-Balagha*, 1368 AHS, sermon no. 94, p.87), and that he dispensed justice among the people (*Nahj al-Balagha*, 1368 AHS, sermon no. 185, p.197). Imam Baqir (a) has also said that the Noble Prophet (s) nullified pre-Islamic customs and dispensed justice among the people (Sheikh Tusi, 1365 AHS, vol. 6, p.154)⁷. Likewise Imam Sadiq (a) has mentioned one instance of the Prophet's justice, and then said, "The Noble Prophet (s) used to look at his companions in equal measure" (Kulayni, 1401 AH, vol. 8, p.268); This is an allusion to

the fact that the Noble Prophet (s) was so observant of justice that he used to divide even his glance in equal measure.

The next theme pertains to the Prophet's advice to people that they should observe justice. In various ways the Noble Prophet (s) unequivocally enjoined Muslims to observe justice in all their words, deeds and judgments (Kulayni, 1401 AH, pp.236, 38, hadith no. 200). According to the Prophet's express statement, God loves to see his servants observe justice even in the kissing of their children (Kulayni, 1401 AH, p.152, hadith no. 754).

1-3. Political Justice and the Hereafter

Another important theme in Islamic culture and beliefs and a concept which is a criterion of the value and importance of things is the Hereafter and eschatological reward and punishment. The Noble Prophet (s) has used the Hereafter to explain the necessity and importance of political justice. For this reason, we will in this section adduce some Traditions wherein the Noble Prophet (s) has spoken about political justice and politicians. These sayings are themselves divided into two sections, of which the first pertains to just rulers and the second to unjust rulers. The Noble Prophet (s) says just rulers are the most beloved of God and the nearest to Him on the Day of Resurrection (Majlisi, 1386 AH, vol. 75, p.351).⁸ In another Tradition he has divided the dwellers of paradise into three categories, the first of which is of just rulers (Nuri Tabarsi, 1408 AH, vol. 4, p.88). Likewise on the Day of Resurrection there will be big chairs made of light on God's right hand side and seated on them will be dispensers of justice and just rulers (*Nahj al-Fasaha*, 1360 AHS, p.168, hadith no. 829).⁹ The Noble Prophet (s) considers the second group, namely the unjust rulers, to be the most debased and lowly of all people in the sight of God. He has said if one rules with injustice over ten or more people, they will meet a very painful end and will be resurrected while fettered in fiery shackles and chains (Nuri Tabarsi, 1408 AH, vol. 4, p.89).¹⁰ Similarly the first person to be thrown into hell will be the powerful ruler who did not dispense justice (Sheikh Saduq, 1373 AHS, vol. 2, p.28, hadith no. 20).¹¹

The foregoing discussion has two benefits: the first is that it shows us the position and importance of justice in the system of Islamic thought.

Naturally an important part of Islam is [made of belief in] the Resurrection and the Hereafter and a perspective understanding of the theme on justice in the Hereafter appears to be important. The second [benefit] is that encourages rulers to reduce their injustice and increase their justice.

2. The Essence of Justice

2-1. Levels of Justice

In order to have a perspective understanding of the essence of justice in the Noble Prophet's viewpoint, we will discuss four of his Traditions. In these four Traditions, justice begins from the most universal part of the system of creation and, after passing through certain stages, ends in the most particular part of being. This most particular part [of justice] has been called the most important goal of creation. The first level embraces the whole of being, namely the skies and the earth, and the Noble Prophet (s) has said "the skies and the earth function on [the basis of] justice" (Kashani, 1402 AH, vol. 5, p.107). Therefore, justice can be defined as the thing that holds the skies and the earth in their places and manages their orderly rotations. The Prophet's saying suggests that the skies and the earth have no volitional will in accepting the justice that controls them and hence submit to the justice controlling them.

The second level [of justice] pertains to human communities and societies. The Noble Prophet's statement in this regard is that justice is God's criterion and standard on the earth and in human communities, and all people have to measure themselves against this yardstick. Whoever pays heed to this criterion has chosen the right path and felicity, and whoever forsakes this standard and yardstick has chosen the wrong path and wretchedness (Nuri Tabarsi, 1408 AH, vol. 11, pp.18-317). The second part of the Noble Prophet's statement, which says that paying heed to this criterion guides people to felicity and paradise and forsaking it guides them to wretchedness and hellfire, shows that God has in mind human societies and their daily life and this criterion and yardstick, namely justice, has been conceived and ordained for mankind. He has also tried to extend justice to the domain of social political interactions and challenges. Therefore, in the second level

justice is God's criterion and yardstick against which human societies are measured. Likewise the second part of the Prophet's statement indicates that people have the free will to adopt or forsake this criterion and yardstick.

The third level becomes a bit more particular in that justice is related to the man's knowledge and personal life. In this level, the Noble Prophet (s) states that justice has four subdivisions, the first of which is deep understanding and the second is reaching a high level of knowledge (Sheikh Saduq, 1373 AHS, vol. 2, p.28, hadith no. 20).¹² Here, there is a difference between understanding and knowledge. The third subdivision of justice relates to juridical laws and the fourth to endurance. These four subdivisions have logical relations with one another and hence lead to a particular conclusion which can help us provide a definition of justice. With respect to their connection, it has to be said that deep understand is prior to all the other subdivisions, and in view of the difference that exists between understanding and knowledge, perhaps what is meant by understanding is that basically man has to endeavor to understand the truth and reality as it is without any presuppositions and fanaticism, and without any personal objective and ambition, and without perceiving knowledge as means of attaining personal gain. It is after this level that man reaches the level of universal knowledge and his erudition blossoms and becomes noticeable.

Basically in the Prophet's political thought, knowledge and erudition are very important and they hold a very high position. The Noble Prophet (s) believes that whoever undertakes to do something or occupy a managerial position without the requisite knowledge does more harm than good (Harani, 1398 AH, p.46). It is self-evident that knowledge and specialization will have a very key and pivotal role in a theme as important as the actualization of justice.

A person whose knowledge has blossomed and has attained understanding of its universality and role will know juridical laws and the principles of jurisdiction and government. So far, even if a part of the course of justice has been traversed, it is still nonetheless incomplete and hence cannot be called justice. The next step is to have great endurance and fortitude. Justice becomes complete when and after this fourth subdivision has been attained. One outcome relates to the methodology of justice and the

other to its objective. The outcome related to the methodology of justice is not taking to extreme ends, in the sense that whoever attains or actualizes the four subdivisions of justice does not adopt extremism of any kind. The outcome related to the objective of justice is attainment of well being and ease in life.

At the fourth level, the description made of justice is even more particular, accurate and of course more important. Here justice fulfils the function which is the very goal of man's creation, but a goal which has to be attained by passing through the world, society and life. This objective may be attained in both in this place of passage (the world) and in the Hereafter, or only in the Hereafter. In other words, perhaps what is meant is that in the first level we have to know that justice has fundamentality (or primacy) in the system of creation and that being would not get on its feet and function without justice. In the second level, man has to actualize justice in the human society on the basis of divine laws by understanding this fundamentality and taking this primacy of justice as example. In the third level, man has to attain the level of understanding and knowledge of justice and use it in his personal affairs, or if justice has not been actualized in the society, it has to be actualized to the greatest possible extent in the lives of individuals. In the fourth level, this justice has to finally lead to man's felicity and salvation in the world and in the Hereafter.

The Noble Prophet's description of justice in four levels is that one of the things that bring man salvation is dispensation of justice in all states (Harani, 1398 AH, p.10), and what is meant by "in all sates" is that man has act justly all the time, whether he is pleased or displeased with the society and the social conditions in which he lives, and whether dispensation of justice benefits or harms him and his near ones. It is in this case that justice brings him salvation. This "salvation" includes a variety of things; in this world, it includes things like salvation from ignorance, oppression, violence, poverty, and so on and so forth, and in the hereafter it means salvation from divine punishment and hellfire.

In order to explain and understand the essence and definition of justice from the Prophet's point of view, our discussion has revolved around the following four propositions:

The skies and the earth and the system of creation function on the basis of justice;

Justice is the criterion and yardstick against which God measures human societies;

The realization of justice in society is conditional on deep understanding, high knowledge, [observation of] juridical laws and fortitude, and this produces moderation (not going to extreme ends) and ease in life; Dispensation of justice brings man salvation.

2-2. The Principles of Justice

In the human society justice has to be based on a strong foundation so that it may begin from one point, continue traversing its course and be invulnerable to plagues and calamities. In other words, justice needs a strong foundation to depend on and its point of departure will be that very same bedrock. From a theoretical point of view, this foundation has to have a strong essence and earn widespread consensus among human beings. It appears that from the Prophet's point of view the bedrock of justice is the primordial and essential "equality" of all human beings. There is a well known Prophetic saying that "human beings are as equal as the teeth of a comb" (*Nahj al-Fasaha*, 1360 AHS, p.635, hadith no. 3149).¹³ In various instances the Noble Prophet (s) has explained this equality as an indestructible human principle and he has tried, in ways suitable to the understanding of people during that era, to repudiate arguments against this equality. Sometimes he alludes to racial prejudices, and explains that all human beings are equal because they descend from one and the same father, namely Adam (Harani, 1398 AH, p.33).¹⁴ He categorically says that human nobility and superiority is contingent on piety, and piety itself is related to the Hereafter. Hence there is not any form of superiority in this world or in social and economic domains (Ibn Abi al-Hadid, 1387 AH, vol. 7, p.37).¹⁵

The other important point is that from the Prophet's point of view injustice provokes divisions and disagreements (Nishaburi, n.d., vol. 4, p.363). One of the important aspects of this statement is that people of every society mould and direct their conduct in view of their beliefs and conceptions of the society in which they live. Hence the measure of their

happiness with life and society is dependent on the measure of the happiness of the society in which they live. And the measure of the happiness of the society in which they live has its roots in their beliefs and conceptions of life. Usually in a society where inequality is deeply entrenched, some social classes harbor hostility against other social classes whom they consider to be trampling on their rights. And because they cannot get their rights through direct and open means, they engage in subversive and seditious activities which are detrimental to the whole society. These subversive and seditious activities are rooted in the disillusionment and disenchantment which people feel as a result of suffering inequality.

2-3. The Starting Point of Justice

Why does justice get established in some societies and does not get established in others? This very important question may have various answers. The difficulty of actualization of justice may have different causes, the most important of which refers back to the starting point of justice. Truly whence does justice have to be begun? This very important question is divided into two more precise questions: the first pertains to who should begin justice, and the second to whence does justice ought to begin. There is one response to these two different questions. It seems that from the Noble Prophet's point of view, the beginners and the starting point of justice are the rulers and leaders of a society. That is to say, in every society and its organizations justice has to begin from the epicenter of power and the rulers and holders of power have to be the first to dispense justice. Besides, those close to the epicenter of power ought not to be able to exert their influence on [the administration of] justice.

It is true that just structures have to be created and right tendencies engendered to make a just system finally manage to actualize justice, but who has to create these just structures? Or who ought to support these structures? Clearly, neither the masses of the people, nor the poor seeking justice, nor writers and intellectuals who are unable to observe just relations in their academic discourses and relationships, can create and support these structures. This issues demands power and free will which is in the hands of rulers and managers. Power and free will is the first requisite condition and

justice too has to begin from that very point, but it is not enough and hence needs another important factor, namely the presence of scholars and theoreticians as theorizers and planners of justice. The other point is that basically every person has to begin justice from themselves. What is meant by "themselves" is the whole realm of their power and authority; in order to actualize justice in a household, the father has to begin from himself, and in order to actualize justice in a school the headmaster has to begin from himself and his close associates, and in order to actualize justice in a society, the ruler has to begin from himself.

Imam Ali (a) and Fatima Zahra were the most beloved of the Noble Prophet (s), yet he told them: I will not give you any financial favors (Seyyid Qutb, 1352, p.202). This is indicative of justice in the endowment of resources and opportunities, which is the most important part of justice. The Noble Prophet (s) also said: The Jews would not prosecute thieves who came from noble and powerful families but would not hesitate to prosecute and cut the hands of thieves who came from weak and poor families. But I would cut the hand of Fatima -my own daughter- if she stole (Seyyid Qutb, 1352, p.202). Similarly the Noble Prophet (s) believed that the reason for the decline and extinction of former peoples and nations was discrimination in the execution of divine laws. They used to mete out punishment on the weak and let the powerful go free (Nuri Tabarsi, 1408 AH, vol. 18, p.7).¹⁶ This makes penal justice one of the bitterest truths of human justice. Seyyid Qutb is of the opinion that the Noble Prophet (s) used to give equal rights as prescribed in Islam to all human beings, whether they were rulers, including himself, or subjects. He even used to mete out retaliatory punishments on himself, unless the complainant forgave him (Seyyid Qutb, 1352, p.202).

3. Standards of Political Justice

3-1. Requisites of Justice

Justice can have many requisites and indications that show which deeds and what criteria can later be grounds for justice. But there is only one main standard which always indicates the justness of an action. We have to see and gauge the grounds of justice, which are evident and observable in daily

affairs. Some of these particular requisites and criteria for justice have been explained by the Noble Prophet (s). From the Noble Prophet's point of view the ruler's justice can be seen in how his speech matches his deeds. If he never lies in his speech and does not break his promise, then he is just (Sheikh Saduq, 1403, p.208).¹⁷ Another requisite of justice is that in the administrative and political system attention has to be paid to the real role of all individuals, even if they may not have immense power and influence. In the Battle of Badr Sa'd Wiqas, one of the commanders, remonstrated with the Noble Prophet (s) about why he was distributing the booty equally among all the fighters instead of giving more to the commanders and leaders of the war. The Noble Prophet (s) responded by pointing to the crucial role played by the infantry division and mentioning that it was through these very weak people that they had won the war (Seyyid Qutb, 1352, p.202).¹⁸

The other theme that is related to requisites and indications of justice and is traceable in the sayings of the Noble Prophet (s) pertains to poverty and affluence. The Noble Prophet (s) has said that God has put the sustenance and daily bread of the poor in the wealth of the rich. Thus if the poor go hungry and naked the fault lies with the rich and it is God's right to cast them in hell (Nuri Tabarsi, 1408 AH, vol. 7, p.24). A few points are worthy mentioning regarding this Prophetic statement:

The first is that this shows that the "right" of the poor is in the wealth of the affluent and they are duty bound to give this right back. For this reason, if they do not give this right back they will be indebted and their wealth will be impure. Thus it is obligatory for them to discharge their religious duty by giving this right back to its rightful owners.

The second point pertains to the question as to why a part of the wealth of the affluent belongs to the poor. Have the rich not acquired their wealth through legitimate and legal means like hard work, inheritance, gifts, and so on and so forth? The response is that on the basis of equality as the principle of justice, all men are created with equal rights with respect to available resources and opportunities in the society. Newly born people have a share in the resources and opportunities of their society and enjoy equal rights with other members of the society. Thus on the one hand the birth of new individuals reduces social resources and opportunities because they

have to share by more people and on the other more resources and opportunities are created on account social and economic growth.

In a nutshell, resources and opportunities are not limited and they are endowed with limited capacity and volume. Thus for several reasons like personal ability, creativity, intelligence and effort, some people derive more benefit from social resources and opportunities and hence gain more wealth. One thing is for certain, namely that if all people -including the poor- were to enter the arena with the intention of deriving benefit from the available resources and opportunities, the competition would become fierce and profits less. In other words, there are two reasons why the rich become rich; the first reason is apparent, namely that their personal effort and creativity paves the way for their acquisition of more wealth, and second reason is somewhat hidden, namely that the absence of some people in the arena makes the competition less fierce and hence paves the way for more exploitation of social resources and opportunities.

Thus the affluent have the right to expropriate that part of their wealth which is a result of their personal effort and creativity because it belongs to them. However, another part of their wealth belongs to the society. In fact, it belongs to that part of society which for plausible reasons was unable to take part in the competition and hence is considered to be poor. Therefore, Noble Prophet's statement that God has put the sustenance and daily bread of the poor in the wealth of the rich and if the affluent do not give it to its rightful owners they will be cast into hell means that, as we have said, in a complex social process this property which belongs to the poor and unable has fallen into the hands of the rich, and that is why they are duty bound to give it back to the poor. Of course in today's complex societies, the correct thing is to enact laws that return this right in an orderly and legal manner.

3-2. The Main Standard of Justice

The standard of justice is the profoundest and most essential basis on which Islamic thought can found the theory of justice, and this writer has thoroughly discussed this issue elsewhere (Cf. Alikhani, 1382). The discourse begins with the proposition that actualization of justice demands a

program, and this program has to include the methodology of decision making. The question that arises is: what guarantees the justness of the program and decisions?

On account of the fact that programs and decisions are made by one man or a group of people (administrators and holders of power), we have no option but to seek guarantees of the justness of programs in human beings. And because people always have conflicts of interests and may resort to pretence and hide their real intentions, we have standard of justice that we choose has to be such that it precludes any pretences and truly restricts people to making just programs and decisions. Making programs and decisions is either related to the divisions of resources and opportunities or to determining the social position of these people, or to determining the kind of interaction and conduct. Decision makers may make decision for the whole society or for themselves. Thus in Islamic thought the standard of justice is that "the decision maker has to be pleased with changing his position with the people for whom he makes decisions". In other words, he has to decide for others what he would like them decide for him.

Conclusion

In this article we did not intend to provide a coherent and comprehensive discourse on justice because in that case we would have to discuss important and uncountable subject matters. Our aim in this article was to have a passing look at justice in the political viewpoint and sayings of the Noble Prophet (s). Justice can be considered one of the cardinal teachings of Islam and an important part of the duties of divine prophets (a). This clarifies the importance of two things; the first is that Islamic teachings and writings have to discuss political and social justice, and the second is extraction of principles of justice that can help us actualize justice in our own time and society. I, as a man who has spent many years writing in the domains of justice and political science, have to say we have failed in both domains. Besides, I have not seen good research work from other researchers in the field. With respect to undertaking the theme of justice from the viewpoint of the Noble Prophet (s), most of the available works have only dealt with generalities and recommended dispensation of justice without entering into

particular details and discussions, and without clarifying the essence of justice and the standards and methods of actualizing it. Thus in today's society and time no discussion has dealt with the method of actualizing justice.

In this article we have tried to clarify some aspects of theoretical justice in the conduct of the Noble Prophet (s) so as to prepare the ground for discussing the instances of justice in future discussions. Even if the current discussion has been about theoretical aspects of justice, nonetheless the article's approach mainly focused on objective deeds and results, which in the first place have to be achieved in the theoretical arena before a reliable theory is formed and executed. In this discussion political justice from the viewpoint of the Noble Prophet (s) has two principles, three levels, one beginning point and one cardinal standard. The principles of justice are reason and equality, and the levels of justice are the system of being, society and man. The beginning point of justice is the epicenter of power at every level of the political system and naturally higher levels have more importance, and the main standard of justice is an indisputable Islamic principle, namely "do unto others what you would like them do unto you". In political justice, "the method of justice" and "the goal of justice" bring society close to the actualization of justice, and avoiding extreme ends is compatible with ease and tranquility, both of which are the ultimate goals of justice, namely man's felicity and happiness in the world and the Hereafter.

Notes

1. Cf. Mutahhari, *Barrasiye Ijmali Iqtisade Islami*, p.14.
2. I did not create the jinn and the humans except that they may worship Me (The Glorious Qur'an, 51:57).
3. Majlisi, 1386 AH, vol. 75, p.352; Muhammadi Reyshahri, 1404 AH, vol. 6, p.79; Hakimi et. al., 1368 AHS, vol. 6, p.325.
4. Cf. Hanbal, 1994 CE, vol. 15, p.191; *Wasa'il al-Shi'a*, vol. 7, p.130; *Nahj al-Fasaha*, 1360 AHS, p.404, hadith no. 191; Hindi, 1979 CE, vol. 15, p.827, hadith no. 43288.
5. Say, "My Lord has enjoined justice," and [He has enjoined] "Set your heart [on Him] at every occasion of prayer, and invoke Him, putting your exclusive faith in Him. Even as He brought you forth in the beginning, so will you return" (The Glorious Qur'an, 7:30).
6. Hanbal, undated, vol. 3, p.65.
7. Hakimi et. al., 1368, vol. 6, p.359.
8. Hakimi et al., 1368, vol. 6, p.326.
9. Nishaburi, n.d., vol. 3, p.1458.
10. Muhammadi Rey Shahri, 1404 AH, vol. 6, p.90; Sheikh Saduq, 1367 AHS, p.592.
11. Muhammadi Rey Shahri, 1404 AH, vol. 6, p.90.
12. Muhammadi Rey Shahri, 1404 AH, vol. 6, p.84.
13. Ibn Ya'qubi, n.d., vol. 2, p.100.
14. Nishaburi, n.d., vol. p.363; *Nahj al-Fasaha*, 1360, p.89, hadith no. 467.
15. Rey Shahri, 1421, vol. 6, pp.7-106.
16. Nuri Tabarsi, 1408 AH, vol. 18, p.7.
17. Majlisi, 1386 AH, vol. 77, p.162; Muhammadi Rey Shahri, 1404 AH, vol. 6, p.75; Harani, 1398 AH, p.56.
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