

Begging and Islam: an Analysis

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Abstract: *The religion of Islam is designed to guarantee the establishment of a noble and virtuous society where the rich and the poor, the well-off and the needy, the powerful and powerless can safely coexist. Islam considers begging a hateful and forbidden act except in case of dire necessity. Muslims believe it's better to depend on Allah for everything the "Provider & Protector."*

According to Islamic beliefs, no Muslim should ever be hungry and no Muslim must ever beg. This means that as a Muslim nation, it's believed that it is the community's responsibility to assist those who are in genuine need. Islamic Sha`riah command and encourages working and views it as a high virtue; it forbids and disapproves laziness and begging. Begging impairs human honor and virtue, shatters personality and leads to the exploitation of benevolent people's pure feelings, is regarded as ugly act.

A report Issued by the United Nations International labor Organization in 2000 estimated the number of those with special needs to be more than 610 Million, out of which 400 million live in developing countries. According to the World Bank statistics, this category represents 15 percent of the world population.

Key words: Begging, Islam.

Introduction: Islam is the complete way of life and ultimate solutions of mankind. Everything is detailed in the Quran & Sunnah. There are no other religion or moral systems which teach humans the ways to preserve their integrity, morality and honor as much as Islam does. In Islam, the future of the community and its honor and integrity are important; similarly the honor of one's self is important and must absolutely be preserved. Each Muslim is responsible to preserve that valuable trust. So, in order to preserve that trust, people are shown all the ways of virtue and commanded to abstain from evil. Each evil takes away certain things from one's self and honor. And the situation of those begging without any need is even worse. It is because they cause their honor and respectability to decay and cause them to fall into the pit of spiritual bankruptcy. For this reason, Islam strongly commands helping the destitute and the weak, and forbids those who are not poor and are not in need from begging.

The Prophet (saw) tried to keep Muslims away from such an evil as begging on the one hand, on the other hand, he advised them to work and he wanted no Muslim to prefer the ignominy of begging to the honor of working for one's livelihood.

Objectives: The main objective of this study is to know the right way of solving the begging in Islamic perspective. Besides this the other objectives of this paper are:

- ❖ To explore the begging situation;
- ❖ To identify the major problems of begging;
- ❖ To find out the role of Islam to solving begging;
- ❖ To create awareness concerning begging eradication in the developing countries and all over their societies;
- ❖ To suggest necessary measures and recommendations in policy formulations regarding begging eradication from the society;

Prior Research: The civilized world has recently paid attention to people with special needs. This started after it had cast aside corrupt, racist theories calling for neglecting them on the false grounds that people with special needs are not of any benefit to the society.

It is nationally and internationally recognised that poverty is the root cause of begging. At present the world's population is around 6 billion with 1.7% annual growth rates. Around 75% of them live in the developing countries and 30% of them reside in abject poverty. More than 100 million are homeless and jobless. They do not have social security. Most of them exist in south Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Around 600 million stay in Asia, 200 million in sub-Saharan Africa, 70 million in Latin America and the Caribbean and the rest live in North Africa. Near 80% poor in Latin America survive in marginal land areas whereas 60 percent in Asia and 50 percent in Africa (Rahman 1998). They have various deficiencies such as employment, housing and infrastructure, social protection, access to health, education as well as personal security (Mayo and Mashauri, 1993; Hukka, 1991; Satterthwaite 1999; Mbilinyi and Omari, 1996; UNEP, 2003; and Rahman, 1998). The places here they live, are unhygienic and vulnerable.

Another report issued by the United Nations International Labour Organization in 2000 estimated the number of those with special needs to be more than 610 million, out of which 400 million live in developing countries. According to the World Bank's statistics, this category represents 15 percent of the world's population.

According to the Bangladesh Government estimate of 2004, there were 250000 street children in Dhaka city (The Daily Star, 12 December, 2007). There were 100000 beggars in the Dhaka city among which approximately 4000- 6000 were disabled (the New nation, 1st February, 2010). There are over 100 million street children worldwide, most of them are beggar. (Wikipedia)

A New UNICEF report shows that 2.6 million children have sunk below the poverty line in the world's most affluent countries since 2008, bringing the total number of children in the developed world living in poverty to an estimated 76.5 million. The report also shows, one in four British children living in poverty (UNICEF 28 October 2014). The Guardian shows in the top position of poverty line Greece 40.50% and in Norway lowest 5.3%. (28 October 2014). This picture really alarming because, it will increase worldwide the number of beggars.

So, we can not avoid the 15% of the world population. They are the part and parcel of our society. True development depends upon their progress & prosperity.

Causes of the begging: Causes of the begging are:

- Poverty is the main cause of begging;
- Absence of Shari'ah law;
- Social inequality;
- Unequal distribution of property and wealth;
- Due to colonial control and exploitation;
- Lack of the consciousness of the rich people about their rights and obligations;
- Absence of fundamental rights such as food, dress, health, shelter and education;
- Lack of good governance and democracy;
- Lacking of management;
- Absence of social awareness, bondage and responsibility;
- Lacking of morality and moral teaching;
- Absence of God fearing;
- Lack of proper management of Zakat, Ushr, Fye, Kharaj etc.

Methodology: To preparing this paper both primary and secondary data have been used. Secondary data have been accumulated from different published journals and books. Most of the corner I am trying to cite the Qur'nic and Sunnatic references.

Meaning of begging: Begging the question means "assuming the conclusion (of an argument)", a type of circular reasoning. This is an informal fallacy where the conclusion that one is attempting to prove is included in the initial premises of an argument, often in an indirect way that conceals this fact. Garner, B.A (1995). The term "begging" originated in the 16th century as a mistranslation of Latin "petitio principii" assuming the initial point.(Liberman, Mark 29 April 2010).

In modern vernacular usage "to beg the question" is sometimes used to mean "to raise the question" (Corbett Philip B. 25 September 2008).

Grammar & Composition expert Richard Nordquist said: "A fallacy in which the premise of an argument presupposes the truth of its conclusion; in other hand, the argument takes for granted what it is supposed to prove. In this sense, the word beg means "to avoid" not "ask" or "lead to"

Begging the question is also known as circular, argument, tautology.

Begging in Islam: Islam commands and encourages working and views it as a high virtue; it forbids and disapproves laziness and begging. It is the duty of a Muslim to give food to the poor and to offer the one who asks for something. However, begging, which impairs human honor and virtue, shatters personality and leads to the exploitation of benevolent people's pure feelings, is regarded as an ugly act.

The Prophet (saw) affirms in His hadith, the concept of a poor person. He said: "The poor person is not the one who goes round the people (begging them) and is dismissed with one or two morsels, and one or two dates. The poor is that who has not enough

(money) to satisfy his needs; his condition is not known to others that they may give him something in charity, nor does he beg of people” (Muslim, Book of Zakat, Chapter: Al-miskinul lazi la yazidu gani wla yuftinu lahu, Hadith number: 1039)

The Qur’an refers to this outstanding category of people as:

"Those needy ones who are restricted in the cause of Allah, and who are hindered from moving about the earth in search of their livelihood, especially deserve help. He who is unaware of their circumstances supposes them to be wealthy because of their dignified bearing, but you will know them by their countenance, although they do not go about begging of people with importunity. Whatever wealth you spend on helping them, Allah will know of it"(Al- Quran 2:273).

However, some poor persons may exaggerate concealing their destitute condition in order to preserve and maintain their own dignity. In so doing, they try not to let their dignity violated or hurt even if they were given something in a subtle and courteous way.

In fact, this is in direct contradiction to the Prophetic guidance that can be learnt from the following hadith: “The Messenger of Allah (saw) gave to `Umar ibn Al-Khattab some gift. Umar said to him: ‘Messenger of Allah! Give it to one whom needs it more than I. Upon this the Messenger of Allah (saw) said, Take it; either keep it with you or give it as a charity, and whatever comes to you in the form of this type of wealth, without your being avaricious or begging for it, accept it, but in other circumstances do not let your heart hanker after it. And it was on account of this that Abdullah ibn `Umar never begged anything from any one, nor refused anything given to him.” (Bukhari, (1987), Book of Ahkam, Chapter: Rijkul Hukkam wal-amilina aliha, Hadith number-6744; Muslim, Book of Zakat, Chapter: Ibahatul Akhji liman a'ta min gaire masalatin, Hadith number: 1045)

The Prophet (saw) teaches `Umar (Ra) that if someone is given something without asking for it or having greed for it, one should take it; and if one is not given anything, he should not run for it.

The reasons behind begging prohibition

According to Islam there are three primary reasons behind begging prohibition. Those are:

- ❖ Begging will cause the Muslim to lose dependence on Allah alone. The Muslim turns from asking Allah for money and support and turns to asking men for help.
- ❖ The Muslim who begs lowers himself before others and thus loses honor and dignity.
- ❖ The Muslim who begs causes others to go without. Muslims are afraid to anger Allah by not helping the beggar and the person who gives charity and does not have the funds, feels a loss of property for their family

The Prophet (saw) said in His hadith "Begging is similar to scratching the flesh off your face; so if someone wants to save his face he should avoid it, except for asking from the ruler or asking in case of dire need" (An-Nasa'i, Book of Zakat, Chapter: masalatur rajuli za sultanin, Hadith number: 2601-2602). Notably, when the hadith speaks about "the ruler," this refers to government and welfare.

Begging permissible situation: Begging in Islam is forbidden except in case of dire necessity. In three special situations begging is permissible. Those reasons are as below:

1. A man who has debts is allowed to beg until the debt is paid in full.
2. A man who has experienced a disaster which has ruined his home — such as with an earthquake or tornado — is allowed to beg until him able to work once more.
3. A man who is starving or in dire need is permitted to beg if three men speak of this need or express their agreement that this is appropriate for the individual. It is lawful for this Muslim to beg until able to work once more.

It is understood that begging is not the same as a Muslim desiring to give Sadakah or charity to a person who is in need.

It is permissible to ask for people for money, for the one who is in need and does not have enough to suffice him and he is not able to earn a living. He may ask people for as much as will meet his needs only. As for the one who is not in need, or the one who is in need but is able to earn a living, it is not permissible for him to ask and whatever he takes from people in this case is haram for him, because of the hadith of Qabeesah ibn Mukhaariq al-Hilaali (Ra) who said: It was narrated that Qabeesah ibn Mukhaariq al-Hilaali said: I incurred a debt (in order to reconcile between two parties) and I came to the Messenger of Allah (saw) to ask him (for help) with it. He said: “Stay with us until the Zakah comes, and we will order that something be given to you.” Then he said: “O Qabeesah, asking for help is not permissible except in one of three cases: a man who has incurred a debt (in order to reconcile between two parties), for whom it is permissible to ask for help until he has paid it off, then he should refrain; a man who has been stricken by a calamity that has destroyed all his wealth, for whom it is permissible to ask for help until he gets enough to get by – or he gets enough to meet his basic needs; and a man who is stricken by poverty and three men of wisdom among his people acknowledge that So and so has been stricken by poverty, then it becomes permissible for him to ask for help until he gets enough to get by – or to meet his basic needs. Apart from these cases asking for help, O Qabeesah, is haram and the one who begs is consuming something haram” (Muslim, Book of Zakat, Chapter: Man tahillu lahul masalatu, Hadith number: 1044)

Repulsing or chiding the beggar is also not allowed because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): “and do not chide the one who asks for help” (Al-Quran, 93:10). What is referred to here is rebuking him and raising one’s voice against him; this includes both the one who asks for money and the one who asks about shar‘i rulings. But this does not rule out offering guidance to the beggar who is asking wrongfully, and advising him with wisdom and beautiful preaching. (Fataawa al-Lajnah ad-Daa’imah, 24/377).

Shaykh ‘Abd al-‘Azeez ibn Baaz (R.) said: If a person has enough to meet his needs whether it is from the salary of a job, or from trade, or income from some property set aside as a waqf for his benefit by a relative, or real estate, or earnings from a craft such as carpentry or blacksmithing, or from farming and the like, it is haram for him to beg. But if a person is compelled to do that, there is nothing wrong with him asking for as much as he needs. The same applies to one who incurs a debt in order to

reconcile between people, or to spend on his family and children. There is nothing wrong with him asking for help to pay off this debt.

Majmoo‘ Fataawa Ibn Baaz, 14/320

Ruling on streets and mosques beggars: the mosques of beggars who ask people for money, they are not all truly needy people. One who wants to give money to one of these people should try to use his own institution to work out whether he is genuine or not. Whatever the case, the best option is to refer these people to the Zakah and charity committees so that they can do their job of finding out about their circumstances and follow up on them even after giving to them.

If a person gives something to someone to whom it is permissible to give, thinking that he is in need, he will have the reward for that act of charity even if it turns out later that he was not in need, and even if the money he gave him was the Zakah of his wealth. It will be accepted from him and he does not have to give it again.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: “A man said: I shall certainly give charity. He went out with his charity and placed it in the hand of a thief. The next morning, they said: He gave charity to a thief. He said: O Allah, praise is to you; I shall certainly give charity (again). He went out with his charity and placed it in the hands of a prostitute. The next morning they said: Last night he gave charity to a prostitute. He said: O Allah, praise be to You for a prostitute. I shall certainly give charity (again).’ He went out with his charity and placed it in the hand of a rich man. The next morning, they said, Last night he gave charity to a rich man. He said: O Allah, to You be praise for a thief, a prostitute and a rich man. It was said to him: As for what you gave in charity to a thief, perhaps it will be the cause of his refraining from stealing; as for the prostitute, perhaps it will be the cause of her refraining from fornication; and as for the rich man, perhaps he will learn a lesson and spend from that which Allah has given him” (Bukhari, Book of Zakat, Chapter: Iza tasaddaka 'ala gain wahua la yalamu, Hadith number-1355; Muslim, Book of Zakat, Chapter: subutu azril mutasaddiki, Hadith number-1022).

Islamic Approach for solutions of Begging

Islam applies some measures for eradication begging from society. Those are as below:

Begging is disapproved:

The Prophet (saw) warned against begging from others without being in a real need. Such a practice has adverse effects and serious impact on the individual in this present life as well as in the hereafter. As Prophet Muhammad (saw) said in these Hadith:

“A man would continue begging from people till he would come on the Day of resurrection with no flesh on his face”(Bukhari, (1987), Book of Zakat, Chapter: Man Sa'alan Nasa tukassiran, Hadith number: 1405).

"He who begs the riches of others to increase his own is asking only for live coals, so let him ask a little or much" (Muslim, Book of Zakat, Chapter: Karahatul masalati lin-nas, Hadith number: 1041)

"It is better for one among you to bring a load of firewood on his back and give charity out of it (and satisfy his own need) and be independent of people, than that he

should beg from people, whether they give him anything or refuse him" (Bukhari, (1987), Book of Zakat, Chapter: Kawlullah ta'ala la yasalunan nasa ilhafa, Hadith number: 1410).

Islam does not deem Muslims who do not work; who sit idly; make do with a morsel and a coat, and who pose burden on other Muslims as good Muslims. As is understood in the hadiths above, it is strictly forbidden to beg and to take begging as an occupation.

Islam encourages labor:

Islam encourages every Muslim to be a productive member of the society and not to ask people for their properties or money. Islam likes that every Muslim should maintain his dignity and not to do anything that might hurt it or let others look down on him while they answer his plea or act of begging.

Therefore, the Prophet (saw) encourages the needy to strive and to exert themselves to earn their livelihood with dignity and honour as can be seen in the following hadith:

"Verily, the upper hand is better than the lower hand", (Bukhari, (1987), Book of Zakat, Chapter: Al-istitafu anil masalati, Hadith number: 1403).

Islam lays great emphasis on work. In many places in the Qur'an it is made clear that time should not be wasted. In the Qur'an, Allah draws attention to all the magnificent creations as an indication of the proper planning that leads to wonderful results—for Muslims believe that He creates nothing haphazardly. Allah said:

"That man can have nothing but what he strives for; that (the fruit of) his striving will soon come in sight: Then will he be rewarded with a reward complete" (Al-Qur'an, 53:39-41).

Therefore, Islam is a religion of worshiping the Creator, with an essential part of that worship being working for survival. Allah tells us in the Qur'an to traverse the universe and make use of all the abundant resources that have been created for us. Islam is a religion that orders its followers to be part and parcel of a working and productive society. Allah said: "and help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah" (Al-Qur'an 5:2).

The Prophet Muhammad himself, who is considered a paragon of virtues in Islam, used to pray seeking Allah's refuge from laziness or idleness. Even before he was chosen as a messenger of Allah, he was a hardworking person. This earned him the respect of his employer, Khadijah, who later proposed marriage to him because of all the merits and virtues she saw in him (As-Sallaabee, 2005). In His instructions to Muslims on this aspect, the Prophet Muhammad strikes a balance between worship and work. So, as Muslims have to be constant in their acts of worship, they also have to work hard to make a living.

Responsibility of the Government to disable people

In Islam a ruler is obligated to care for disable people with special needs, socially, economically, and psychologically, and that the ruler should fulfil their needs and grant their request.

The 5th caliph of Islam `Umar ibn `Abdul-`Aziz (R.) asked rulers of the provinces to send him the names of all those blind, crippled, or with a chronic illness that prevented them from establishing *salah*. So they sent him their names. He, in turn,

ordered that every blind man should have an employee to guide and look after him, and that every two chronically ill persons - those with special needs - be attended by a servant to serve and care for them (Yakubi).

The same course was taken by Umayyad caliph Al-Waleed ibn `Abdul-Malik (R.). The idea of the establishment of institutes or centers for the care of people with special needs was his. In AH 88 (707 CE), he ordered the establishment of a foundation specialized in looking after them. Doctors and servants, paid fixed stipends, were employed in this foundation. He granted a regular allowance to persons with special needs, and told them, "Do not beg people." Thereby, he made them sufficient enough to not beg others. In addition, he appointed employees to serve all those who were disabled, crippled, or blind (As-Suwuti, 1952). It happened in a well-known incident that Prophet Muhammad (saw) frowned at the face of a blind man, `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktoum (Ra.) when he came to ask the Prophet about a Shari `ah matter. The Prophet (saw) was sitting at that time with a group of noble and high-placed people attempting to win them over toward Islam. Although the blind man did not see nor perceive his frowning face, yet Allah blamed His Messenger for doing this, Allah said in the Qur'an: "He frowned and turned away, that the blind man came to him. And what makes you realize whether he would possibly (try) to cleanse himself? Or that he would constantly remember, and the Reminding would profit him?" (Al-Qur'an: 80:1-4).

Afterwards, the Prophet used to meet that blind man with a welcoming and smiling face, saying to him, "Welcome to a man for whom my Lord has blamed me!" (Ash-Shankiti, 1995).

Showing reverence and mercy to the needy people

The beloved Prophet's mercy toward those with special needs, his forgiveness to the ignorant and his forbearance toward the fool did most evidently emerge in the battle of Uhud (Shawwal AH 3/ April 624 CE). It is reported that when the Prophet headed along with his army toward Uhud, intending to pass by a farm owned by a blind hypocrite, the latter insulted the Prophet (saw). The blind man picked a handful of dust and insolently said to the Prophet, "By Allah, if I am certain that none but you will be affected by it, I will definitely throw it at you." The Companions of the Prophet were about to kill that blind person, but the Prophet forbade them, saying, "Leave him alone" (Ibn Kathir. 1988).

The Prophet (saw), addressing all who have illnesses and disabilities, said, "No Muslim is pricked with a thorn, or anything larger than that, except that a hasanah will be recorded for him and a sin will be erased as a reward for that"(Muslim, Book of Adab, Chapter: IJhalatul Aja anit-Tarik, Hadith number: 1914).

To give the proper position for the needy

Islam gives the needy people proper position. Many examples found in the history of Islam for this subject. Some examples as below:

It is narrated that the Messenger of Allah left Ibn Umm Maktoum twice as his successor in Madinah to lead the prayer, though he was blind (Ash-Shankiti, 1995).

Ibn Umm Maktoum was a muezzin of Allah's Messenger (saw) though he was blind (Muslim, Book of Salat, Chapter: jawajhu azanul a'ma iza kana ma'ahu basirun, Hadith number: 381).

When Muslims would go on their expeditions, they used to leave those among them, who were chronically ill, submit the keys of their doors to them, saying, "We have made it lawful for you to partake of our houses' food" (Al-Baihaqi, (1994) Book of Hibah, Chapter: Al-Azan Rakiban Wa-jalisan, Hadith number-14377).

Al-Hasan ibn Muhammad said, "I entered upon Abi Zayd Al-Ansari, who called out the Adhan and Iqamah while he was sitting." He added, "a man advanced and led us in prayer. That man was lame whose leg was hit in the Cause of Allah, the Exalted" (Al-Baihaqi, (1994), Book of Haid, Chapter: Naskhud Daik fil akl mim malil gaire, Hadith number-1712).

Thus was the Prophet's society, a society that was marked by mutual support, cooperation, and unity in consoling, honouring, and respecting those with special needs. For all of this, the course of the merciful Prophet (saw) was the role model in dealing with those who have special needs.

To visit the ill, sick & weak & console them

Visiting the sick in general, and the disabled in particular, was legislated by Islam for the purpose of relieving their suffering. A disabled person, compared to a sound one, is closer to withdrawal, isolation, a pessimistic view, and psychological illness. The Prophet used to visit the sick, pray for them and console them, instilling confidence in their souls and covering their hearts and faces with happiness and joy. He could once go to someone in the outskirts of Madinah particularly to answer a simple need of his or hers or to perform salah in the house of an afflicted one, as granting of his or her request.

An example of this was `Etban ibn Malik (Ra); he was a blind man from Ansar. He said to the Prophet (saw), "I wish that you, O Messenger of Allah, would come and perform salah in my house so that I would take it as a place of prayer." As a reply, the Prophet promised to visit him and perform prayer, so humbly saying, "I will do, if Allah so wills."

`Etban said, "Allah's Messenger and Abu Bakr came early in the morning. Allah's Messenger asked for permission to enter, which I gave." Without sitting, he immediately entered and said, "In which part of your house do you like me to pray?" I pointed to a certain place in the house, so the Messenger of Allah stood and started praying and we, in turn, stood and he lined us in a row. He performed a two-rak`ah prayer, ending it with taslim (Ibn Sad, 1957; Bukhari, (1987), Book of tatawu, chapter: salatun-nawafili jama'atun, Hadith number: 1130).

Mental & moral motivation by education

The mercy of the Prophet of Islam toward people with special needs was so manifest as well when he legislate the supplication for them as a way to encourage them to endure afflictions. He desired to create will and build resolve in their souls.

A woman, who would usually have epileptic fits, came to the Prophet and said, "I do have epileptic fits that, as a result, cause parts of my body to be revealed. So, pray to Allah for me." To this came the reply of the Prophet, "If you will, be patient and

Paradise will be your reward. And if you will, I shall supplicate Allah to cure you."She said, "I choose patience." Then she said, "But parts of my body to be revealed, so pray to Allah that this will not happen." And the Prophet prayed for her. (Bukhari, 1987, Book of Al-Marda, Chapter: Fadlu mai yasrawu minar-rih, Hadith number: 5328; Muslim, Book of Al-birru was-silatu wal-adab, Chapter: sawabul mumini fima usibuhu mim marad, Hadith number: 5328)

Islam never ridicule the needy

People with special needs, in some societies of Europe, were taken as objects of mockery, amusement, or fun. The handicapped would, therefore, find themselves stuck between two fires: the fire of exclusion and isolation on one hand, and the fire of derision and malicious joy on the other. Accordingly, the society would turn, within itself, into an abode of estrangement, persecution, and separation.

However, Islamic law came to forbid ridiculing all people in general and the afflicted in particular. Allah the Exalted revealed most evident Qur'anic verses stressing the prohibition of such an ignorant attribute of pre-Islamic era; Allah said in the Qur'an: "O you who believe, let not folk deride a folk who may be better than they (are), not let women (deride) women who may be better than they are; neither defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. Bad is the name of lewdness after faith. And whoso turned not in repentance, such are evil-doers" (Al-Qur'an, 49:11)

Perhaps the afflicted one is higher in rank in Allah's sight and has precedence over people in terms of knowledge, jihad, piety, chastity, and good manners. Let alone the general and decisive rule set by the Prophet: "Indeed, Allah has made your blood, your wealth, and your honour forbidden for you, one to another"(Muslim, Book of Hajj, Chapter: Hajjatun Nabi (saw), Hadith number-1218).

Additionally, the Prophet (saw) has warned in such a strict manner against misleading the blind away from their path or harming them or making them an object of fun and mockery: "Cursed is he who misleads a blind person away from his path"(Authenticated by Al Albani, www.onislam.net/english/shariah/muhammad/a-mercy-for-all).

This carries a severe threat for those who take the congenital defects as a method of fun, amusement, or derision, and for those who look down at those who are defected. People afflicted with certain defects could be a brother or sister, father or mother, son or daughter, tested by Allah, so that we may take a lesson from their condition and recognize the power of Allah; not for the purpose of making them an object of entertainment and fun.

Islam didn't exploit the weakness of those with special needs

The pre-Islamic society used to boycott people with special needs, isolate them, and prevent them from leading normal lives, such as their right to marriage or even interaction with people. The people of some European societies killed the disable babies. Even philosopher and scholar held such ideas such as Solon, allowed getting ride of them; Plato declared them as a malicious category constituting a burden on the society and a damaging factor to the Republic, English philosopher Herbert Spenser remain the needy as a heavy burden of society. Before Islam, people of Madinah used

to prevent the lame, the blind, and the diseased from sharing food with them, because they deemed them disgusting. On this, Allah said:

"No blame is there upon the blind nor any blame upon the lame nor any blame upon the sick nor on yourselves if you eat from your houses, or the houses of your fathers, or the houses of your mothers, or the houses of your brothers, or the houses of your sisters, or the houses of your fathers' brothers, or the houses of your fathers' sisters, or the houses of your mothers' brothers, or the houses of your mothers' sisters, or (from that) where of you hold the keys, or (from the house) of a friend . No sin shall it be for you whether you eat together or apart. But when you enter houses, salute one another with a greeting from Allah, blessed and sweet. Thus Allah makes the clear His revelations for you that easily you may understand" (Al-Qur'an 24:61).

It is indicated here that there is no harm in jointly partaking of food with the sick, the blind, and the lame. They are people just like us, having the same rights as ours. So, Muslims do not boycott, isolate, or forsake them, for the most honourable among Muslims in Allah's sight are the most pious, regardless of anything else. The Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

"Allah looks at neither your appearances nor your wealth; rather, He looks at your hearts and your deeds" (Muslim, Book of Adab, Chapter: tahrimu julmil Muslimi wa khajalihi wa-ihlikarihi, hadith number-2564).

As Allah said in the Holy Qur'an: "Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you" (Al-Qur'an, 49: 13).

Thus, the Qur'an has been revealed as a mercy for people with special needs, consoling, relieving, marrying and supporting them.

To take the burden and ensure the rights and obligations of helpless people

They have rights as well as obligations. Muslims did not take away their due rights or deny them their rightful property. Imam Ahmad (R.) said, "If any man marries a woman who is insane or leper and touches her (i.e. have intercourse with her), then the whole dower becomes due to her" (Al-jaziri, 2005).

Among the forms of mercy toward people with special needs is the fact that Shari`ah takes them into consideration with regard to many of the obligatory rulings, removes the difficulties they might encounter, and makes things easy for them.

On the authority of Zayd ibnThabit (RA), the Prophet (saw) dictated to him the verse that says what means: (Those of the believers who sit still ... are not on an equality with those who strive in the way of Allah with their wealth and lives) (Al-Qur'an, 4:95). He said, "Ibn Umm Maktoum came while the Prophet was dictating it to me to write it down, and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, if I was capable of jihad, I would certainly do;'" he was a blind man. Zayd ibn Thabit further said, "Then, Allah, Almighty and Exalted be He, revealed to His Messenger, (other than those who have a (disabling) hurt)" (Al-Qur'an, 4:95). (Al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad, Chapter: kawlu Allah ta'ala, Hadith number: 2676,)

Relieving the burdens of people with special needs, Almighty Allah said: "There is no restriction on the blind, nor is there restriction on the lame, nor is there restriction on the sick. And whoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, He will cause him to enter Gardens from beneath which rivers run; and whoever turns away, He will torment him with a painful torment" (Al-Qur'an, 48:17).

Proper collection and distribution of Zakat

Almighty Allah commanded us to give compulsory-charity, which is known as 'Zakat' (Pronounced: Zakaat). Zakat has to be given by the rich class of the society to the poor. It is thus paid on the accumulated wealth at least equal to Nisab. Nisab is the minimum amount on which Zakat must be paid. If the wealth below Nisab one does not have to pay Zakat. The Nisab is as follows:

Gold: 85 grams

Silver: 595 grams

Cash: equivalent to gold or silver which ever is less Stocks and Merchandise: same as cash (Al-Jaziri, 2005).

Allah said the recipient of Zakat is eight: wayfarer, the bankrupt, the needy, converts, captives, collectors of Zakat, and the cause of Allah. (Al-Quran 2:177).

This help in the eradication of poverty and hunger. And when the Zakat money is collected from each and every rich individual, then we can collect around thousand billion dollars annually from all over the world.

Imagine what we can do with the money collected. Apart from satisfying the hunger, the governments can give interest-free loans to the farmers who in turn increases the yield of the country, the loan can be given to the small industries who can develop and multiply the income of the country, the loan can also be provided to the poor students for their educations who can later contribute to the country. Systematic use of the Zakat money not only eradicates the poverty but also makes the country developed.

Using the crops of Ushr (Zakat of land):

Allah said in the holy Qur'an: "And He it is who causes gardens to grow, (both) trellises and without, and palm trees and crops of different (kinds of) food and olives and pomegranates, similar and dissimilar. Eat of (each of) its fruit when it yields and gives its due (Zakah) on the day of its harvest" (6:141). Ushr is a kind of Zakat. In a predominantly agro-based country, Ushr may form a very important component of sustenance fund for the poor and the needy. Ushr is livable on all crops and agro products. A tradition of the Prophet (saw) quantified the amount of Ushr. Prophet (saw) said: "you pay as Ushr 1/20th of the produce of a land of it is irrigated, 1/10th of the produce if non-irrigated" (Sahih Bukhari, Book of Zakat, Chapter: Al-Ushru fima yaski mim ma-in wabil mail jari, Hadith number: 1412).

Other Sources: Islam encourages charity in all situations. For example, for the persons who are not able to fast in Ramadan, they are required to feed some poor people for each day they do not fast (Al-Jagiri, 2005). And there are many such examples. Almighty Allah several times greatly encourages Muslims to give extra charity in the holy Qur'an (Al-Qur'an, 63:10-11; 2:195, 254, 261-262, 272; 14:31; 8:36; 3:92, 134, 9: 121). These verses of the Qur'an inspired the Muslims to extra charity.

If the wealth or money of Sadakatul-Fitar, Waqf, Skin of the sacrificed (Qurbani) animal, one fifth of *Ganimath* (Al-Qur'an, 8: 41), *Fai* (Al-Qur'an, 59: 7), *Khiraj* (Al-Qur'an, 8: 41), *Jijiya*(Al-Qur'an, 9: 29), abandoned property etc used for the beggars

by planning, then the poor and needy people would be benefitted and the problem of begging would be solve.

Providing ordained incidental right on wealth such as *Kaffara (fine)*, *Mannot* (promise), helps the vulnerable people and so on.

Recommendations

To conclude, the following lessons can be highlighted as were clearly understood from the above:

- ❖ To ensure the implementation of Shari'ah in the state;
- ❖ To close all ways of corruption from all sectors of the state;
- ❖ To take awareness program by TV talk shows, dramas, films and by print media, symposium, seminar etc;
- ❖ To make up social consciousness by heedful of those self-sufficient or restraint poor persons;
- ❖ To give charity in a way that it not hurt the dignity of the poor;
- ❖ To provide training one's self on restraint;
- ❖ To prevent one's self from exaggerated restraint;
- ❖ To avoid begging without legal or shari`ah-based necessity;
- ❖ To find out all possible means for poor people to become a productive member of the society;
- ❖ To ensure social bondage and responsibility among the people;
- ❖ To make Zakat administration in lower level of the state for collection and productive disbursement of Zakat;
- ❖ To provide vocational training by state and NGOs;
- ❖ To establish charitable foundation for the welfare of poor and needy by the encouragement of those people who are solvent;
- ❖ To use the efforts of needy and poor for the betterment of the society;
- ❖ To give the proper position for needy and poor people;
- ❖ To establish Zakat Board for proper collection and distribution of Zakat, just like KSA, Iran, Sudan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Pakistan, Malaysia and etc.
- ❖ To take proper initiatives by civil society;
- ❖ To establish income based institutions and industries for the needy and unemployed people.
- ❖ To introduce social business and give the priority of the needy and disabled people;
- ❖ To ensure social awareness by the Jumah Khutbah (Friday speech).

Similar recommendations we see in the UNICEF report that. "The strength of social protection policies was a decisive factor in poverty prevention. All countries need strong social safety nets to protect children in bad time and in good- and wealthy countries should lead by example, explicitly committing to eradicate child poverty, developing policies to offset economic downturns, and making child well-being a top priority." O' malley said. (UNICEF report 2014)

Conclusion

One of the scholars of Islam, Imam Hasan Al-Basri, was asked one day the secret behind his asceticism. The imam mentioned four things in reply: "One, I believe that

my sustenance will never be hijacked by anybody (so I work to attain it). Two, I know that a work that is mine must be performed by me, so I do not decrease my efforts in performing it. Three, I believe that my Lord is Omnipresent (watching me), so I do not like Him seeing me committing sins. Four, I know that death is somewhere waiting for me, so I prepare for it (through good deeds).”

Islam lays down a practical framework for life by making principles and guidance. Islam strives to eradicate social ills and vices that result from unemployment, idleness, and poverty, by instructing the youth to rise up to the challenge of shouldering responsibility at an early age, and also for the old not to give up their efforts in benefiting the society with their experience and working skills. Thus, the true message of Islam is not just for a Muslim to profess faith and do nothing for his or her society. Rather, Islam teaches that the true faith is what is demonstrated through sincere deeds that make a noticeable addition to the progress of society.

Thus was the approach of the Prophet in dealing with people with special needs at a time the rights of those people were not recognized whatsoever by any people or regime. So, the Islamic law came and defined the comprehensive and perfect care for people with special needs. It has put them on a good place within the priorities of the Muslim society. It has legislated the forgiveness of the fool and ignorant among them. It has honoured their afflicted ones, especially those who have certain talents, useful crafts, or successful experiences. It has also encouraged visiting and praying for them. It has prohibited ridiculing them. It breaks their isolation and boycott, lightens the rules for them and absolves them from their obligations. Excellent indeed is the law of Islam and its Prophet (saw).

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