

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

For Fast 8 – August 19

Topic: (E) Evidence

Evidence means not only evidence in a court case, but giving evidence in any situation.

- “O you who believe, be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah, even if it is against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives — whether he is rich or poor, Allah has a better right over them both. So do not follow (your) low desires, that you deviate. And if you distort (the truth) or turn away (from it), surely Allah is ever Aware of what you do.” — 4:135

“Allah has a better right over them” means that *they should be dealt with justly*. Thus, neither ties of kinship and love nor considerations of fear, favour, or compassion should make one swerve a hair’s breadth from the truth.

- “And when you speak, be just, even (against) a relative.” — 6:152

Islam requires a person to be so upright as not to be led away by the ties of relationship. Truth is not to be sacrificed to any interest but every interest must be sacrificed to truth.

- “And those who are faithful to their trusts and their covenant, and those who are upright in their testimonies, and those who keep a guard on their prayer. These are in Gardens, honoured.” — 70:32-35
- “O you who believe, be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice; and do not let hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably. Be just; that is nearer to observance of duty. And keep your duty to Allah. Surely Allah is Aware of what you do.” — 5:8

Muslims are here instructed always to bear witness with justice, even if it would be to the favour of someone they might dislike. What is “nearer to observance of duty” or *taqwa*? It is to be just in all circumstances, and not let your hatred for someone to sway you from truth and justice.

- “And do not conceal testimony. And whoever conceals it, his heart is surely sinful. And Allah is Knower of what you do.” — 2:283

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The Quran on false judgment and false evidence, in chapter 4:

- 105 Surely We have revealed the Book to you with truth that you may judge between people by means of what Allah has taught you. And do not be one pleading the cause of the dishonest,¹
- 106 and ask the forgiveness of Allah.² Surely Allah is ever Forgiving, Merciful.
- 107 And do not contend on behalf of those who act unfaithfully to their souls. Surely Allah does not love him who is treacherous, sinful:
- 108 They seek to hide from people and they cannot hide from Allah, and He is with them when they counsel by night matters which do not please Him. And Allah ever encompasses what they do.³
- 109 Look! You are they who may contend on their behalf in this world's life, but who will contend with Allah on their behalf on the day of Resurrection, or who will have charge of their affairs?
- 110 And whoever does evil or wrongs his soul, then asks forgiveness of Allah, will find Allah Forgiving, Merciful.
- 111 And whoever commits a sin, commits it only against himself. And Allah is ever Knowing, Wise.
- 112 And whoever commits a fault or a sin, then accuses of it one innocent, he indeed takes upon himself the burden of a slander and a manifest sin.

Notes:

1 The occasion of the revelation of these verses was a dispute between a Muslim and a Jew, in which judgment was given by the Prophet against the Muslim. It was a time when every Muslim hand was sorely needed for the defence of Islam, and a verdict against a man supported by his whole tribe meant the loss of that tribe. But such considerations did not carry any weight with the Prophet. Thus these verses lay down the broad principle that dishonesty must be punished, and the balance of justice must be held equal between Muslims and non-Muslims and between friends and foes.

2 The injunction in this as well as the previous verse is meant for every Muslim who is called upon to act as a judge. He must be strictly just as between his own people and aliens, and must further ask the protection of Allah from being guilty of an act of injustice, even unknowingly.

3 Those who supported the guilty man are condemned here as hypocrites. The same subject is continued in the verses that follow.