

Does the Quran Promote an Endless Cycle of Poverty?

Salaam to all,



Ramadan ended not too long ago. We Muslims were promised showers of rewards and blessings throughout the whole month for various recitations and rituals by our clergy. Eid-ul-Fitr came to pass and none of these promises came to fruition. Some would argue that the state of the Muslim World actually worsened. Then came Eid-ul-Adha. Millions of slaughtered animals to feed the growing hundreds of millions of poor Muslims worldwide for a few days. Is this the purpose of Islam...to feed an endless cycle of poverty?

CHARITY CAN NEVER END POVERTY. Charity (sadaqat) is deemed noble in the Quran, but it is simply a band-aid that can not begin to address the underlying cause of poverty and hunger: lack of circulation of wealth and opportunities. The Quran in no way promotes a society in which the poor have access to good food a few days a year and live off the scraps of the middle and upper class for the rest of the year. Witness the developed world, where even the "poorest" class have access to meat at any time and will not die of hunger. They also have welfare safety nets and chances of upward mobility. Compare this to the "Muslim World" with 50% plus poverty rates, hundreds of billions in charity programs, and only a worsening situation. Is this the failing system the Quran promotes? No!

The Quranic solution to poverty is Zakat, a mandatory contribution (tax) collected by the Prophet (S) CENTRALLY to His government from Muslim and non-Muslim citizens (9:5, 9:11) alike and then the funds were circulated to benefit all of society by building INFRASTRUCTURE and WELFARE SYSTEMS. The only possible agent that can replace this function now is a just government...not the multiple mosques scattered throughout all Muslim cities. Current welfare taxes (which many are dishonest to pay in the Muslim World) are the only modern equivalent of Zakat.

The current economic systems of the Muslim World are essentially feudal, with huge disparities of wealth distribution. And this system plays into the hands of dictators and the corrupt elite who have zero interest in providing opportunities or upward mobility to the poor. Rather they would give token amounts in dignity destroying charity. The priest class is happy to enable the system by blessing the funds deposited at the mosque..."build a house in Paradise." What about this world?!

The Quran promises worldly "Paradise" also to those who establish just systems on earth and the early Muslims realized this vision for centuries: success in THIS WORLD and THE HEREAFTER!

2:25: "And convey happy news to those who have chosen to be graced with belief, and have done

acts of service to humanity. Plush gardens with rivulets flowing underneath! When they are provided with the delicious fruit of their deeds therein, they will say, "This is the provision we were given before (on Earth)."

To understand the Quranic concepts of Zakat, Sadaqat, and Jizya...please read my brief essay:

[see Malaysian Insider article](#)

*Action Plan: wherever you reside in the world. pay your taxes, fund empowering charity programs for the disadvantaged, vote for leaders who will be honest custodians of the national treasury, and be generous with your surplus.