

Core Curriculum

2 Foundations of Islam - Theology

2.4 **Adala: Divine Justice in Islam**

‘Adāla means “Divine Justice” and it is the second principle of the uṣūl al-dīn, that is, the fundamental beliefs of Islam. In Arabic, the word literally means to keep a form of balance in weight. In His treatment of humankind, Allah makes ‘adāla or justice obligatory upon himself and therefore always acts with goodness and justice.

This means that He never wrongs His creation. For example, on the Day of Judgment, Allah will not punish people with more than what they deserve. Furthermore, God, according to Islam, does not test people with more than what they can bear. Indeed, they may fail the test, but the test is never beyond the possibility of success.

Parallel to this, just as God makes justice obligatory upon Himself, He also makes it obligatory upon humankind. Human beings have the responsibility of maintaining the “balance” of justice in the world. Transgressing this balance leads to corruption and evil.

We say it is evil as the rules and boundaries God sets for humans is intended to lead them to the divine Good and Truth. Transgressing these boundaries leads one to the opposite, that is, the opposite of Good and Truth which is evil, corruption and falsehood.

Only with God do we find real justice for His justice is not arbitrary, but an expression of the goodness of his own nature.