

In the Name of the Most High



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## **A Message for Our Students While We Stand in Solidarity with Those Who Denounce Racism and Oppression of All Kinds**

As-Salaamu Alaikum MCS Family,

It is times like now that we wish we could be in a Morning Assembly or in the masjid during salat time to share our thoughts on what is happening, why it's happening and what is our responsibility. We know, and have taught you well, that it is our duty to first be aware, and then to take appropriate actions - within our abilities - to make better any distressful, concerning and wrongful acts - often referred to as 'standing for justice'.

Allah says in Surah Nisa, Ayah 135:

*"O you who are Securely Committed (to Allah). Be ever steadfast in upholding social justice, bearing witness to the truth for the sake of Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether the person concerned is rich or poor, Allah's claim takes precedence over (the claims of) either of them. Do not then follow your own desires, lest you swerve from justice. And if you distort (the truth) or refuse (to give it), then indeed Allah is aware of all that you do!"*

We know it is a sign of Allah's Majesty that He has created us in varying colors and languages; that He created us in nations and tribes to know one another; and that the killing of one human impacts and equates to killing all of humanity.

We know you have been taught that the 'freedom and justice for all' claim is a façade and there are too many examples to prove it as such – George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Freddie Gray, Trayvon Martin and too many others whose tragic murders were all caused by this country's systemic racism and oppressive policies -- enough is truly enough!

So what do we do? First, be careful that we are not resting too comfortably knowing that we as a diverse Muslim school and community, fully aware that racism and Islam do not mix, are therefore automatically preventing racism and can go through life with a clear conscience. While all good, this does not make racism go away.

Allah says in Surah Ash-Shura, beginning with ayah 39:

“...The Believers are those who, when visited by aggression, come to each other’s aid...”

This ayah does not give us permission to be on the sidelines, quiet, or to turn away, thinking it’s not our problem. We have to *actively* be anti-racist. We must open our ears and listen, and we must amplify the voices of the downtrodden and oppressed. MashaAllah with your social media talents, share information and articles to bring more awareness. Write your own articles, songs, and poetry. Never allow a racist, stereotyping, prejudiced word become part of your vocabulary – even as a joke. Continue to educate yourselves about the civil rights movement. Join some of the rallies and discussions taking place, while following all laws, of course. In the very least, make du’a asking Allah to help us understand what we don’t know, to let our compassions always lie with the victims, and keep all forms of racism, hatred towards others and arrogance away from us.

Rely on your ‘media smarts’ to not reduce what we are seeing to ‘riots and violence’. This is something very different – this is an uprising. This is the normal reaction to too much unchecked police brutality, to an immoral and unjust system that wreaks of disrespect, inequality and hatred towards people of color. As Dr. Martin Luther King said: “Riots do not develop out of thin air...it is the language of the unheard.”

Allah is not looking for us to solve this issue. He wants to see us move, make the change in ourselves, work to better the conditions of those around us. The conclusion of all of that work on our part is up to Him. Don’t ever feel like there are no results. We are not to busy ourselves with waiting for results.

Oh Allah! We know you will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. Help educate and empower us to make that change within us so we can then work to change the condition of those around us.

In Solidarity,

Sr. Somayyah Nahidian

