

Humanist Elements in Islam

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Abstract: Islam is the religion of Humanity. It is the religion of every prophet of God, who appeared for the well being of mankind in any part of the world such as Adam, Noah, Abraham ,Moses and Jesus etc. the great characteristic of Islam is that it requires its followers to believe that all the religions of the world that prevailed before it were revealed by God; and thus Islam lays down the basis of peace and harmony among the religions of the world. The name of Islam , which itself means peace, made it clear that Islam has given utmost importance to peace and prosperity to create a society where Muslim and non Muslim can live side by side. it bound its followers socially and religiously to be a good fellow inwardly and outwardly in their attitude and conduct and do no harm to other fellow which could lead them to hell. With this spirit, Islam has always tried to establish an ideal society where each and every person has some responsibility and liability for the society, where murder of an innocent is considered murder of whole mankind, where a neighbor feels safe and protected, where feeding a poor and needy is considered best deed. A man asked Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) **“Which act in Islam is the best?” He replied, “To feed (the poor and needy) and greet those who you know and those who you do not”**.

Key words: concept of humanity , brother hood, help of needy and neighbor rights

Islam is the religion of Humanity. It is the religion of every prophet of God, who appeared for the well being of mankind in any part of the world such as Adam, Noah, Abraham ,Moses and Jesus etc. the great characteristic of Islam is that it requires its followers to believe that all the religions of the world that prevailed before it were revealed by God; and thus Islam lays down the basis of peace and harmony among the religions of the world. According to the Holy Quran, there is not a single nation in the world where a prophet has not been sent. **“ there is not a people but a Warner has gone among them”**¹. The name of Islam , which itself means peace, made it clear that Islam has given utmost importance to peace and prosperity to create a society where Muslim and non Muslim can live side by side.

Unlike the materialists and western philosophers - who ignore the relation of God with human being and think nothing beyond matter and metaphysics- Islam always emphasizes on the full alignment of religion and humanity. Thus it bound its followers socially and religiously to be a good fellow inwardly and outwardly in their attitude and conduct and do no harm to other fellow which could lead them to hell. So, Muslims are made cautious all the time of their deeds because every single deed counts near the Almighty and will get its reward eventually. With this spirit, Islam has always tried to establish an ideal society where each and every person has some responsibility and liability for the society, where murder of an innocent is considered murder of whole mankind. Allah says in The holy Quran: **“whoever killed a soul, except for a soul slain, or for sedition in the earth, it should be considered as though he had killed all mankind; and that whoever saved it should be regarded as though he had saved all mankind.”**² where an individual has freedom to live as he wishes, where neighbor takes care of his neighbor irrespective of color, cast and belief, where old

¹ The holy Quran, Surah Fatir, Verse No: 24

² The holy Quran, Surah Maeda, Verse No: 32

parent have a respectful position till their last breath, where needy and miserable persons get fulfilled their requirements, where animals are treated with kindness and carefulness.

Universal Brotherhood:

Islam has always emphasizes on unity of mankind. It has never allowed to discriminate between man and man on the basis of color, cast, creed. The holy Qur'an declares that the human race is one family. All of us are the children of Adam and Eve, whether our skin is white or black. At various places it says in The holy Quran: "**All human beings are a single nation**"³. In his Last Sermon, The Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), removed all forms of inequalities creating a bond of universal brotherhood. He said, "**There is no superiority for an Arab over a non – Arab, and for a non – Arab over an Arab, or for white over the black, or for the black over the white, except in piety. Verily the noblest among you is he who is the most pious**". Thus Islam has discarded all kind of discrimination and prejudice. The rights of non Muslim are well protected in Islam. In Madinah, the Prophet Mahammed (PBUH) allowed non Muslim to practice their religion freely and warned his follower that if anyone murdered or mistreated a non Muslim in any other way he would not even be able to smell the aroma of paradise⁴. He always desired peace with Christians, Jews and idolaters, and only unsheathed his sword when he was forced to do so to defend Islam and to repel aggression.

The Prophet (PBUH) once said, "**A true believer is one others feel secure with his hand and tong. One who returns love for hatred**".⁵ The Prophet made it clear that one who would only return love for love was on a lower ethical plane. We should never think that we should treat people well only if they treat us well. We should, rather, be accustomed to being good to those who are not good to us and to not wronging those who harm us.

According to a tradition recorded in the Sahih of Imam Muslim, when the Prophet's opponents greatly increased their persecution, his Companions asked him to curse them. At this the Prophet (S.A.W.) replied, "**I have not been sent to lay a curse upon men but to be a blessing to them**".⁶ His opponents continued to treat him and his Companions unjustly and cruelly, but he always prayed for them. The Prophet (S.A.W.) molded his own life without giving trouble to anybody. To understand this fully we must look to the Qur'an. Allah states "**And we have sent you (O Muhammad S.A.W.) not but as a mercy for the alamin (all that exists)**".⁷ This refers to Muslims, non Muslims, animals plants etc. are all encompassed by the Prophet's mercy. It is no surprise then that the date palm tree which the Prophet (S.A.W.) used to lean on cried upon separation from him when the pulpit was built.

Helping Poor and Needy:

Allah said in The holy Quran: "**And serve Allah and do not associate anything with Him and be good to the parents and to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the neighbor of (your) kin and the alien neighbor, and the companion in a journey and the wayfarer and those whom your right hands possess; surely Allah does not love who is arrogant, the**

³ The holy Quran, Surah Baqarah, Verse No: 213

⁴ Sunan Abu Dawood Vol.3. P.170 Hadith no.3052. Also Sahih Bukhari. Vol.3. Hadith no. 2995.

⁵ Sahih Bukhari. Hadith no: 10. Also Sahih Muslim, Hadith no: 40

⁶ Sahih Muslim, Hadith no: 2599

⁷ The holy Quran, Surah Anbiya, Verse no: 107

vainglorious".⁸ In this verse, Almighty Allah very beautifully guides the Muslims to discharge their duties towards all sections of society whether they are Muslim or None Muslim, whether they are kind to them or not.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) was extremely generous and sociable himself. He encouraged others to be likewise. A man asked him "*Which act in Islam is the best?*" He replied, "*To feed (the poor and needy) and greet those who you know and those who you do not*"⁹.

Neighbor Rights:

Islam always promotes harmony among people. The best way to do so is to start from one's closest one, i.e. neighbor. If everyone cares for its next door fellow, there would not be any kind of animosity on the surface of the earth and an amicable atmosphere keeps on building throughout the world. However, Islamic scholars differed over the definition of neighbors as some says that forty houses in each direction are neighbors while others are of the view that it is defined linguistically, and that the neighbor is only the one whose house is next to your own. Any way Muslims are required to take care of their neighbors. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) discarded a Muslim from the community when he sleeps with full of stomach while his neighbor sleeping with empty stomach. In a Hadith, The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) made it clear "*that man is not from me who sleeps contentedly (full stomach) while his neighbor sleeps hungry*". In an another place he said: "*Jibreel kept urging me that neighbors should be treated well until I thought he would make them heirs*"¹⁰. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: "*By Allah, he is not a believer!, By Allah, he is not a believer!, By Allah, he is not a believer!*". It was asked, "*who is that, O Messenger of Allah?*". He said, "*one whose neighbor does not feel safe from his evil*"¹¹. Rasulallah (PBUH) has directed Muslim to share every small good thing with the neighbor. Hazrat Aishah(RA) reported: "*O messenger of Allah, I have two neighbors, to which of them should I send a present ?*". He replied, "*to the one whose door is nearer to you*"¹².

Similarly, he forbid jealousy and mutual estrangement. Anas bin Malik (R.A.) narrates that the Prophet (S.A.W.) said, "*Do not hate one another, and do not be jealous of one another; and do not desert (cut your relation with) each other, and O Allah's worshippers! Be brothers. Lo! It is not permissible for any Muslim to desert (not talk to) his brother (Muslim) for more than three days*"¹³.

In fact Islam has always propagated for peace, security and prosperity and emphasized on peaceful coexistence and tolerance with other faith. The history of mankind has witnessed aforesaid characteristics of Islam since its beginning.

Recent interview of German Finance Minister Wolfgang schauble to Al-Jazeera Arabic News Chanel dated 28/05/2017 regarding Islam and Muslim world is enough to prove these characteristics. In the interview to Al-Jazeera, German Finance Minister said that German Christen and Atheist should learn strong human values of Islam such as hospitality and tolerance. He further said that in comparison to Christen world Jews lived in an atmosphere of tolerance in Muslim world and their situations were better during

⁸ The holy Quran, Surah Nisa, Verse no: 36

⁹ Sahih Bukhaari, hadith No: 12. Also Sahih Muslim, Hadith No: 39

¹⁰ Sahih Bukhaari, hadith No: 6015. Sahih Muslim, Hadith No: 2625

¹¹ Al- Musnad, Imam Hanbal Hadith No 7865 Volume: 7

¹² Sahih Bukhaari, hadith No: 2140 Volume: 2

¹³ Sahih Muslim, hadith No:2559

a long period they lived in Muslim countries. If we go through the history, we find that Jews, Christian and other community were as secured as Muslim. There was no as much hatred as we find today both in Islamic world and so called civilized world. And after 9/11, it seems that civilized world became blind with prejudice and discrimination Muslim community is suffering from in Europe, the United States and elsewhere. Today Muslim community is facing increased security screenings, hostile media attention, and oppressive new laws, as well as localized acts of violence. Moreover, hostile propagandas and disinformation campaigns are creating too much confusion and intolerance among different faiths.

As for the terrorism is concerned, there is too much confusion and ambiguity and it is difficult for a common Muslim to understand who is fighting with whom. In fact Muslims are more sufferer than anybody else. Now Muslim countries have become a practical ground where big powers are exhibiting their weaponry might and Muslims are soft target to do petty politics and to gain cheap popularity. It is easy for any country to resolve its enmity with its ethnic minority specially Muslim by leveling the charge of terrorism and start the process of ethnic cleansing. Current massacre and refuge crisis of Rohingya Muslim in Myanmar is enough evidence to prove that how a tiny minority is being eliminated ruthlessly in spite of world protest. Myanmar is looking more confident in its approach against Rohingya Muslim and world mechanism failed to stop the violence because there is no such resource or interest to attract world powers like Middle East to intervene physically.

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