

ISLAM AND GLOBAL HUMANITY

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Preamble:

Islam is the only religion in this world, which is characterized, in its very nature by the concept of globalization. This statement might have surprised many of those who have come across this after they have already observed that Christianity has also a global approach, which is more apparent than Islam, because the Christian Missionaries are found ceaselessly active in their missionary activities all over the world. But the fact is that Jesus Christ was not sent as a Messenger to the people of the world, nor did he ever claim to be a Global Messenger from the Lord. He was rather reported to have said that he was sent to call the sheep of the house of Israelites who went astray, to the right course. The following verse of the Bible establishes this statement, which reads:

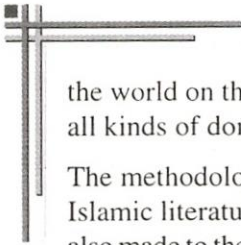
"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."⁽¹⁾

If you read the Bible, the Old Testament and the New Testament carefully, you will never find even a verse where either Moses or Jesus were found to address the whole of mankind. All of their activities were limited to the Israelites. There was a period in the history of mankind when the sons of the house of Israel (*Banu Israel*) were considered the chosen nation on earth. But Allah (swt) wanted that He would replace them with another nation due to their mischievous activities and transgressions. This alternative nation is the Muslims who emerged on this earth under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) who shall continue to uphold the teachings of justice and humanity on a global context.

The objective of this Study and the Methodology:

This study aims at looking for data to establish the idea that Islam – because of being the last revealed religion – has calls and teachings that are universal, its addresses are for mankind at large, its aim has always been uniting the people of

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the world on the basis of the Faith in the Unity of God, on a commitment to reject all kinds of dominance of one creature over the other.

The methodology adopted in this study is limited to using the original sources of Islamic literature e.g. the Qur'an and the Sunnah. However, some references were also made to the Biblical literature for comparison where the necessity arose. Making any other reference from the Islamic history and other Muslim literature has been avoided to avoid lengthiness of discourse.

Islam and the foundation of Global Humanity:

The following verses of the Holy Qur'an lay down the foundation of Global Humanity in Islam:

- 1) *"Say: O men! I am sent unto you all as the Messenger".*⁽²⁾
- 2) *"We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures".*⁽³⁾
- 3) *"Thus have We made you an Ummah justly balanced, that ye might be witness over the nations and the Messenger a witness over yourselves."*⁽⁴⁾
- 4) *"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you, and Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)."*⁽⁵⁾

Apart from these, there are many verses of the Holy Qur'an which give the same message, and many prophetic traditions are also seen establishing the same idea. This is why the Muslims never had throughout its history been a closed nation having communal outlook towards other nations of the world.

We can sum up the principles of global humanity upon which the Islamic social system is founded in the light of the Qur'anic verses and Prophetic Traditions within the following points:

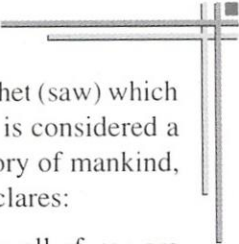
◆ The Unity of the Origin of Mankind:

Allah (swt) says in this regard:

"O mankind! Fear your Guardian Lord, who created you from a single person, created out of it his mate and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women, fear Allah, through Whom ye demand your mutual (rights) and be heedful of the wombs (that bore you): for Allah ever watches over you".⁽⁶⁾

Allah (SWT) says again:

"Among His signs is this that He created you from dust, and then behold, ye are men scattered (far and wide)"⁽⁷⁾



We can quote here from the famous farewell Sermon of the Prophet (saw) which he had delivered on the occasion of his last hajj. This sermon is considered a most valuable document of Human Right, throughout the history of mankind, which was declared by any chief of state. Here the prophet declares:

“O men! Verily your Lord is one, and verily your father is one, all of you are from Adam and Adam is created from the dust. There is no position for an Arab over a non-Arab nor for a white over a black, verily the most respectable among you is one who is the most righteous of you.”⁽⁸⁾

◆ **The status of man:**

Islam teaches us to see all mankind on the same status, all are the same in respect of being the members of mankind and sons of Adam. The only criterion for preference of one upon the other is Righteousness or God fearing. Al-Qur'an says:

“We have honored the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure, and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of Our creation.”⁽⁹⁾

This honor for men is neither limited to one particular person nor for a particular color or race, but all the sons of Adam are equal in status.

◆ **The directive for mutual cooperation:**

The sense of mutual cooperation is one of the basic foundations of brotherhood according to Islam. The Qur'anic injunctions and prophetic traditions establish this truth. I would like to mention here one of the Qur'anic verses which reads:

“Help ye one another in righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour.”⁽¹⁰⁾

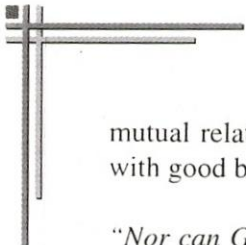
The following Hadith also emphasizes the same instruction:

“Surely Allah remains in assistance to the servant, as long as the servant remains in the assistance of his brother.”

Here the Hadith implies for all mankind regardless of race or religion. As a matter of fact, Islam had always endeavored to establish a global society on the foundation of common humanity and mutual cooperation in welfare and justice.

◆ **Forgiveness:**

Forgiveness is one of the important characteristics of the society in the light of Islam. Islam calls upon the people for practicing the policy of forgiveness in



mutual relationship between persons and groups, and for addressing enmity with good behavior and sagacity. The Qur'an says:

"Nor can Goodness and Evil be equal. Repel (Evil) with what is better, then will be between whom and there was hatred become as it were thy friend and intimate."⁽¹¹⁾

In case of retaliation it must be made on the basis of equality, inclining towards forbearance wherever possible.

Al-Qur'an says:

"Be proportionate to the wrong that has been done to you, but if ye show patience that is indeed the best (course) for those who are patient."

And do thou be patient, for thy patience is but with the help from Allah"⁽¹²⁾

Due to the lack of patience and the sense of forgiveness most of the people do transgress against their opponents and the enemies whenever they get a chance.

◆ **Freedom:**

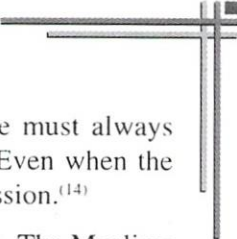
Freedom in Islamic context does not imply being free from bondage of the sense of responsibility and moral dignity; it is rather the right of protecting one's belief, religion, intellect, his wealth and the chain of genealogy. And as such, Islam guarantees for the freedom of one's soul from the bondage of self-desire and personal interest. Islam assures the right, and prevents man from all sorts of transgressions upon others for fulfilling one's personal desires or for serving the interest of individuals, which is common in all other societies.

◆ **Honor and Position:**

One of the principles for foundation of human relationship in Islam is preserving the honor and position of an individual. Whether it is on individual or group level, both carry the same weightage and importance, regardless of the consideration of situation, whether it is the state of peace or war. A Muslim is not permitted to transgress on the others' honor or human dignity just for enmity. It permits only retaliation, if unavoidable, on equal basis. Al-Qur'an says:

"There is the law of equality, if then any one transgresses the prohibition against you, transgress ye likewise against him. But fear Allah and know that Allah is with those who restrain themselves."⁽¹³⁾

It is to be noted here that at the same time the Muslims are commanded to exercise self-restrain as much as possible. Force is a dangerous weapon. It may



have to be used for self-defense or self-preservation, but we must always remember that self-restraint is pleasant in the eyes of Allah. Even when the Muslims are fighting, it should be for a principle not out of passion.⁽¹⁴⁾

The long history of Islam has proved the truth of this principle. The Muslims whenever they attained victory upon their enemies who were fighting against them severely, they never transgressed against them out of passion and with the attitude of inhuman retaliation. On the other hand, the people of other races or religions had always taken the opportunity for transgressing against the Muslims inhumanly and mercilessly.

◆ **Justice:**

Justice is the basis of all relations in Islam. Islam looks at the humanity as a whole in the viewpoint of common origin and it determines the criterion of the degrees of position based on righteousness. This is why the *principle* has always been the basis for interaction between the individuals and the groups or the nations. Justice is considered the main factor in the eye of Islam, regardless of race or religion.

The following injunction of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) are worth mentioning here:

“Behave with the people as you would like to be behaved with by them.”

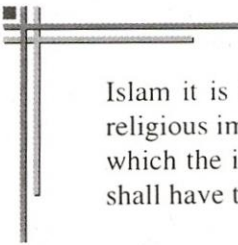
The Holy Qur'an has very strongly emphasized on practicing *the principle of Justice* in all spheres of life: A verse of the Qur'an reads as follows:

“O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah, for Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do.”⁽¹⁵⁾

To do justice and act righteously in a favorable and neutral atmosphere is meritorious enough, but the real test comes when you have to do justice to people who hate you or to whom you have an aversion. This is why Islam has emphasized on upholding justice in all situations. It is only possible for those who believe that this is an injunction of Allah to whom all are responsible in the Life after Death.

◆ **Fulfilling the commitment:**

Fulfilling the commitment is one of the most striking characteristics of Islam, which plays an important role for establishing global humanity. According to



Islam it is not only a social, political or economical activity, which has no religious importance; it is rather considered a religious obligation in Islam for which the incumbent must be responsible before Allah, and failing which he shall have to face punishment in the Hereafter.

Al-Qur'an says:

"And fulfill (every) engagement, for (every) engagement will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning)"⁽¹⁶⁾

"Fulfill the covenant of Allah when ye have entered into it, and break not your oaths after ye have confirmed them; indeed ye have made Allah your surety, for Allah knoweth all that ye do."⁽¹⁷⁾

This verse implies that every oath taken or covenant made is a contract before Allah and it should be faithfully observed.

◆ **Sense of mutual love and respect:**

The solid foundation of the gigantic palace of Islamic culture has been laid down on the basis of the sense of mutual respect and love. Islam has come to establish a global society and this is impossible without practising the principle of mutual respect and sense of love to each other. This is why Islam has always called the people towards establishing a human society based upon the unity of human origin. Islam tries to establish a society on the basis of this relation and on the principle of non-transgression to each other.

Al-Qur'an says in this respect:

"Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just."

Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection), it is such as turn to them (in these circumstances), that do wrong."⁽¹⁸⁾

In the light of the above verses the Muslims are advised to deal even with the unbelievers kindly and equitably, unless they are rampant and out to destroy them and their Faith. This was always practiced by the Prophet (saw) himself and the Muslim rulers after him.

◆ **Fighting against mischief:**

The main objective of Islam is to establish a global society where the people shall live in a state of peace and order, where the rule of law shall prevail and all sorts of wrong and lawlessness shall disappear. The people shall fight against mischief and shall establish justice for the greater interest of humanity.

This is why the most forbidden thing in the eye of Islam is to kill a person without a legitimate reason. Al-Qur'an says:

"If anyone slew a person unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land, it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people."⁽¹⁹⁾

"Ye are the best of Peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah."⁽²⁰⁾

These verses establish one fact, that "The logical conclusion to a **Universal Religion** should be a non-sectarian, non-racial, non-doctrinal religion, which Islam claims to be. For Islam is just to submit to the will of Allah. This implies (1) Faith, (2) doing right, being an example to others to do right and having the power to see that right prevails, (3) eschewing wrong, being an example to others who eschew wrong, and having the power to see that wrong and injustice are defeated. Islam therefore lives not for itself but for mankind."⁽²¹⁾

◆ **The Conclusion:**

In the light of the above discussion we can conclude that if there is any religion on this earth, which can claim to be a global ideology, calling the whole of mankind towards establishing Global Humanity, then it is Islam and only Islam, which can refer to the main sources of its teachings. None of the other religions prevailing on this earth can dare to make the same claim based upon its original teachings and authentic historical documents.

References:

⁽¹⁾ Mathew; 15 : 24

⁽²⁾ Abdullah Yousuf Ali; *The Holy Qur'an, (English Translation)*; 7 : 158

⁽³⁾ *Ibid*; 21 : 107

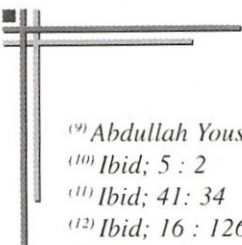
⁽⁴⁾ *Ibid*; 2 : 143

⁽⁵⁾ *Ibid*; 49 : 13

⁽⁶⁾ *Ibid*; 4 : 1

⁽⁷⁾ *Ibid*; 30 : 20

⁽⁸⁾ *This Hadith is one of those Traditions which is very widely circulated and narrated by many people.*



⁽⁹⁾ Abdullah Yousuf Ali; *Al-Qur'an, (English Translation)*; 17 : 70

⁽¹⁰⁾ *Ibid*; 5 : 2

⁽¹¹⁾ *Ibid*; 41: 34

⁽¹²⁾ *Ibid*; 16 : 126-127

⁽¹³⁾ *Ibid*; 2 : 194

⁽¹⁴⁾ See *Ibid*, note # 210

⁽¹⁵⁾ Abdullah Yousuf Ali; *Al-Qur'an, (English Translation)*; 5 : 8

⁽¹⁶⁾ *Ibid*; 17 : 34

⁽¹⁷⁾ *Ditto*; 16 : 91

⁽¹⁸⁾ Abdullah Yousuf Ali; *Al-Qur'an, (English Translation)*; 60 : 8-9

⁽¹⁹⁾ *Ibid*; 5 : 32

⁽²⁰⁾ *Ibid*; 3 : 110

⁽²¹⁾ See Abdullah Yousuf Ali, *Translation of the Holy Qur'an*, note # 433 under the above-mentioned verse.