

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter begins with the assertion that Islam believes in human brotherhood. Because all men and women have descended from a single pair, so there is a natural brotherhood. This brotherhood becomes more desirable among the people who embrace Islam. This is not parochialism but a natural social development. Islam wants its followers first to develop a strong brotherhood among them that cares for all and creates a healthy environment for a harmonious, prosperous and happy living together. Then, this Islamic brotherhood is extended to the entire humanity. That it is binding upon a true believing Muslims to work for the welfare of the whole mankind (Rafiabadi 259).

This value system also is founded on the same principles which have been discussed in connection with freedom and equality. Besides those foregoing principles, human brotherhood in Islam is based on an unshakable belief in the oneness and universality of God, the unity of mankind, and the unity of religion. For the Muslims, God is One, Eternal and Universal. He is the creator of men and provider of all men. He is the judge of all men and the Lord over all men. To Him, social status, national supremacy, and racial origin are insignificant. In the sight of God, all men are equal and brothers of one another (Usman 48).

Brotherhood demands that every Muslim should keep alive the feeling that his brethren, friends and associates will be with him in his good and bad conditions. In

the field of life only his strength is not in operation, but that the strength of all the Muslims is with him (Rahman *Islamic* 119).

In the chapter Forty Nine Allah says:

“The believers indeed are brothers, so make harmony between your two brothers, and fear you God so that mercy be done upon you” (Al-Quran 49:10).

In every state of war or peace it is necessary to consider that it is the war between two brothers or it is the peace between two brothers. When two brothers strike against each other, it is the duty of the believers to try level best to make harmony between them. While making such efforts fear God that partiality or sentiments of avengement should not come in between.

That society where the seeds of love and brotherhood among men are sown on the basis of the love of God, where the symbols of Islam are safeguarded and are watched, in such a society the spiritual brotherhood takes the place of racial brotherhood. This relationship of faith proves to be more strong and firm than the relationship of blood.

By virtue of religious brotherhood it becomes obligatory upon believers to help one another. But it is not to be prompted by blind bigotry. The main tasks of virtuous believers are to establish the truth. All believers must be united to check the hand of the tyrant and affording lawful support to the aggrieved. If someone may be transgressing the limits, he is to be stopped. This is the mutual cooperation which Islam has made obligatory upon its followers.

In order to strengthen the Islamic brotherhood, Islam has forbidden pride, vanity and boasting. Therefore, every brother deeming himself son of the same father and choosing mutual friendship on the basis of one religion cannot become enemy of one another. There is no place for false boasting and pride among the members of a nation who know that nobility is attained only through the fear of Allah (Hasan *Muslim* 227).

The spirit of aggressive nationality was abolished among Muslims by our Prophet's saying: Aggressive nationalism is anti human, therefore it was abolished. Race and colour prejudices disappear completely in the Muslim brotherhood and the differences of class are purged of arrogance or humiliation, and reduced to differences of occupation. Islamic civilization is a complete system which covers every field of human thought and action from the spiritual to the mental (Pickthall 59). Regarding the racial prejudice Prophet Muhammad said: He is not of us who incites class prejudice or fights for class interests or dies in its pursuit (Latif 139). Thus, Islam teaches the lesson of brotherhood which is one of the central ideals. If people cultivate the feeling of brotherhood among humanity then there will be real justice and peace in the society.

The five pillars of Islam show strong sense of brotherhood among Muslims. A Muslim is required to pray at the prescribed times wherever he may be. But it is preferable and meritorious to pray in congregation with his fellow Muslims. This gathering of all Muslims living in the same locality five times daily is a step towards the establishment of healthy social relations. In the daily service, these relations are limited to a narrow circle i.e., to members of the same neighbourhood. The circle becomes wider in the weekly Friday service which gathers together all Muslim members of a particular locality, and still more extensive in the two annual gatherings

of Muslim festivals of *Eid-ul-Fitr* and *Eid-ul-Adha*. Thus, prayer promotes social relations between different sections of the Muslim Community (Husain *Islamic* 109-110).

The congregation for *Salat* creates among Muslims a bond of love and mutual understanding. This arouses in them the sense of their collective unity. It also fosters among them national fraternity. In *Salat*, people from all walks of life- the poor and the rich, the low and the high, the ruler and the ruled, the educated and the unlettered, the black and the white all stand in one row and prostrate before one Lord with same devotion. *Salat* is thus a symbol of equality and brotherhood (Fazlie 128-129).

Fasting also has a social value, more effective than that which is realized through prayer. Rich and poor, great and small, residents of the same vicinity are brought together five times daily in the mosque on terms of perfect equality, and thus healthy social relations are established. But in their homes they live in different environments. A great social barrier thus exists between the two classes in their homes. This social barrier is removed only when the rich are made to feel the pangs of hunger like their poorer brethren and go without food throughout the day, and this experience has to be gone for a whole month. This course undoubtedly awakens sympathy for the poor in the hearts of the rich. It is for this reason that the helping of the poor is specially enjoined in the month of *Ramadan* (Ali *The Religion* 398-399). It gives rise to a sense of compassion and humanism and removes barriers between the rich and the poor (Husain *Islamic* 137).

Hajj is one of the best examples of universal brotherhood. It is the biggest annual congregation of the world irrespective of whether one is rich or poor, black or white-

from whichever part of the world people are coming. And our Prophet Muhammad in the speech of his farewell pilgrimage said,

‘There is only one God, and no Arab is superior to a non-Arab; nor is a Non-Arab superior to an Arab; a White is not superior to a Black, nor a Black is over the White. The only criteria for superiority is taqwa...it is righteousness, it is piety, it is God consciousness’ (Naik 20).

It nourishes a brotherhood of mankind. Nature dictates that brothers have one common meeting ground for exchange of love and affection. *Hajj* fulfils this object in a most effective way. Thinker Laner says about it in his *‘Religious System of the World’*: The demonstration of equality furnished on the occasion of *Hajj* is so complete that it is almost impossible to distinguish a servant from a master. The whole of humanity assumes one aspect and one attitude and thus the noblest sight of equality and brotherhood is witnessed in *Hajj*. There is in this cry a force which transcends the littleness and divisions of mankind (Karim Vol. III 555).

Zakat is a means of redistribution of wealth in a way that reduces the gap between various income groups. Thus, it makes a fair contribution to social security. *Zakat* purifies the property of the contributor and clears it from the shares which do not belong to it anymore, the share which must be distributed among the beneficiaries of *Zakat*. It purifies not only the property of the contributor but also his heart from selfishness and greediness. So, it is also a good example which reduces the gap between the poor and rich and ultimately creates the sense of brotherhood.

It is repeatedly said that Islam believes in human brotherhood. Islam expects its believers first to develop a strong brotherhood among them. It also stresses that there is a need to extend this social ideal to the whole humanity.

But in practice it is not the case. Actually, this ideal of brotherhood is limited to the Muslim community alone. For example, in the pilgrimage to Mecca, this brotherhood prevails among the Muslim community of the world. So, this type of religious ritual can create brotherhood among the devotees alone. But there is not such a platform which can assemble all the people irrespective of caste and creed and thereby create the feeling of brothers. So, this social value of Islam is limited to a particular group. Therefore, it cannot bind all the nations directly. But it is also true that other nations indirectly may be influenced by this international gathering.

The above study of the pillars of Islam shows that these are the means for the development of moral character. Those who perform the five pillars of Islam taking as obligatory duty can be morally sound. Islam is a religion that came to guide the high standard of morality to human race. Though these are religious duties of the followers of Islam yet it has social applicability. These five pillars are the backbone which creates strong brotherhood spirit among the followers of Islam.

The third chapter emphasises on economic justice which finally establishes brotherhood spirit among Muslims. There is great emphasis on justice both social and economic. The Quranic text is full of such verses which exhort believers and non-believers to avoid concentration of wealth. Islam wants to do away with all forms of oppression and establish a just society right on this earth.

There was great deal of concentration of wealth in few hands in Mecca and the poor were neglected and exploited. The Prophet of Islam was greatly disturbed by these conditions. He was greatly inclined towards a just society and no wonder Islam advised the Meccan rich not to exploit the poor and distribute wealth. It was distribution of wealth which could lead to establishment of just society (Engineer *Islam challenges* 138-39).

In the Islamic view values are so composite that Justice must include all of them, therefore Islam does not demand a compulsory economic equality in the narrow literal sense of the term. This is against nature, and conflicts with the essential fact, which is that of the differing native endowments of individuals.

Islam does, of course acknowledge a fundamental equality of all men, and a fundamental Justice among all. Over and above that, it leaves the door open for achievement of pre-eminence through hard work, just as it lays in the balance values other than the economic (Siddiqi Vol.9 49). Islam does not demand a literal equality of wealth, because the distribution of wealth depends on man's endowments, which are not uniform. Hence, absolute justice demands that men's rewards be similarly different, and that some have more than others so long as human justice is upheld by the provision of equal opportunity for all. Justice must be upheld also by the inclusion of all kinds of values in the reckoning, and by the freeing of the human mind completely from the tyranny of the purely economic values, and by the relegation of these to their true and reasonable place (Siddiqi Vol.9 50).

Islamic social welfare is based on the economic upliftment of all people. For economic upliftment, Islam made charity obligatory. Islam asks people to spend their

wealth for the greater interest of the society. Both *Zakat* and *Sadaqah* are two important sources for establishing economic justice in society. *Zakat* is financial help to the needy and poor one. *Sadaqah* is too financial help. But it must be done to help the needy and only to please Allah alone.

Waqf resources are another means for uplifting the Muslim society and non-Muslim society's in the world. *Waqf* plays an important role to benefit the people in every sector i.e. education, health, rehabilitation of the poor and the destitute, orphans and physically challenged one. But in present days, it is seen that these *Waqf* resources are not utilized properly. Some resources are misused and ruling classes are not interested to revive these resources. In most cases, these institutions are politically guided to take the advantage from it.

Fitrana is also an important resource to make equality in economic side. This compulsory poor due is necessary means for enjoying Id- festival. A family, who is economically below poverty line, can also enjoy the religious festival from the amount obtained through *Fitrana*. Definitely it creates fellow-feeling between the rich and poor classes of the society.

Islam makes obligatory duty to donate money and food on *Id-al adha*. Muslims donate these by sacrificing the animals called *qurbani* on the occasion of *Id al- adha*. In one sense, Islam prescribes to sacrifice animals to please Allah and to help the poor indirectly by the money acquired from this act. But the act of animal sacrifice is not accepted by many religions and the worker on nature.

Some critiques say that regular alms and charity to the poor shall make people idle. People depending on alms and charity, may lose their work spirit and ultimately

society will suffer. But Islam strictly asks people to engage on hard work and honest trade. A person, who is not engaged in hard labour, will lose all his rights in an Islamic state.

From the above, it can be deduced that though Islam is positive in this respect but it is true from one angle that people depend on others. In reality some people who are not true followers of Islam want easy money from others. It is not a good sign for a modern society which may lead society to the backward position.

Among all these, law of inheritance (*Mirath*) occupy an important position in Islam. Islamic law of inheritance promotes economic justice by distributing wealth among all the members of the family. Law of inheritance is a tremendous and fruitful system which distribute wealth in a fair manner (after someone dies). This law justifies the private property system. Quran lays special emphasis on the rights of the orphans. This law is an appropriate means to maintain orphans rights in society.

One critical remark has been raised in support of male superiority over female in matters of inheritance. According to Islam, a male gets double share in inheritance to that of a female. The law of inheritance say that if the deceased has only one boy and one girl then the boy or the son will get two third ($2/3$) of the property and the daughter will get one third ($1/3$) of the same. Over and above, if there is no son but only daughter, then she will inherit the half of the total property and the rest will be divided among other heirs, such as, deceased's wife, parents etc. There is logic behind the principle of double shares of son and husband to that of their female counterparts. It is due to the financial burdens and responsibilities attributed to the male one. This law is not to lower the dignity of women. According to Islamic *Shariah*, it is the

compulsory duty of a man to shoulder the financial responsibilities of a family. He has to provide financial support to his wife and children and also to his parents, whereas a woman has been exempted from all such financial obligation.

According to Quran, hoarding food stuff and basic necessities, smuggling, artificial creation of shortages is a sin. Quran repeatedly reminds human beings against these. Specially, smuggling, artificial scarcities of commodities are against the social interest. These practices paralyse the normal life of the common masses.

Islam emphasises to establish good relations in business. The contract of business transactions should be in black and white. The business relations may be bad due to not keeping written document. In Surah *Al-Baqarah*, Allah has given a clear instruction regarding business transactions. It is imperative to keep written contract to run the business transaction smoothly. Most of the business transactions are broken by the dishonest measuring. In several verses of the Quran, Allah says for proper measurement and weight. Because proper weight may give confidence to the buyer and the seller and there by justice may be maintained.

From the discussion of the above points it can be concluded that Islam repeatedly emphasises to establish economic justice among the different sections of people of the society. By the fair distribution of wealth it tries to promote the spirit of communism in the society. Judging the Islamic economics it can be assumed that Islam refutes Capitalistic trend. It also refutes the Marxist Communism because it intends to solve the problem of poverty by neglecting the rich altogether. The Capitalist approach also creates some conflict between the poor and the rich. But Islam tries to destroy these class-conflicts. By destroying these class-conflicts Islam actually try to narrow the gap

between the poor and the rich and create brotherhood among different sections of people in the society. This brotherhood can be established by maintaining economic justice among human beings.

The chapter number four of the thesis endeavours to find out the various aspects of social morality.

After a detailed analysis of Islamic morality it can be summed up that Islam made peace and compassion central values so that Arabs give up violence and make peace and compassion as part of their day to day conduct. It is high time this centrality of compassion get much needed priority. The Sufis emphasized peace, love and compassion rather than power. They emphasized spiritual over material. Sufis like **Ibn Arabi** and **Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi** made love central to Islamic ethics and Muslim masses always followed them (Engineer *Islam* 53).

A.A.Engineer in his book “*Islam: Restructuring Theology*” tries to discuss the centrality of compassion from Islamic viewpoint. In fact, the Quran repeatedly describes Allah as compassionate and merciful and so those who worship Allah have to be merciful and compassionate. It is known to every Muslim that everyone has to begin any work with incantation of ‘*bismillahir rahmanir rahim*’ (I begin in the name of Allah who is compassionate and merciful) (52).

But there are also strict regulations in Islam to maintain good social atmosphere in society. In the surah *al-Maidah* Allah says:

“*As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands, a punishment by way of example, from Allah, for their crime and Allah is Exalted in power*” (Al-Quran 5:38).

This verse is a strict regulation from Allah who's another name is *Kahhar*. This is in vogue in Islamic countries to give exemplary punishment so that crimes are reduced and society remains safe from wicked people. It is the punishment of the action of theft, so that the thief and others may receive a lesson. But from a humanitarian angle it is criticised by many to take such drastic action.

Islam is very positive regarding *jihad*. The believers have been charged, by the Quran, with the important mission of spreading good and fighting evil. In this mission, the believer has to engage himself continuously, controlling his own desires, spreading justice, equality and compassion with wisdom.

A fight is not always with weapons-with sword or with guns. It could also be through moral and intellectual means-through persuasion, through wisdom, through spreading good word and setting good examples. It is for this reason that the Prophet has said that the ink of a writer's pen is more sacred than the blood of a martyr. The word written with ink is more lasting than a martyr's blood (Engineer *On Developing* 128).

In the preceding chapter the concept of *jihad* is discussed thoroughly. The misconception regarding *jihad* can be removed from the following Quranic *ayah*. The warfare is ordained by Allah in the characteristic term '*Jihadan Fi Sabilillah*' (Strife in the way of Allah) commanding-

'Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you' but begin not hostilities' (Al-Quran 2: 190, 216; 244; 2:75, 76).

'The believers should slay the disbelievers wherever they find them and should drive them out of the places. Whence they drove them out, as persecution is

worse than slaughter, but they must not fight at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack them. And if they desist from attacking, then leave them. The fighting for the safeguard of the religion should be until the persecution is no more, attacking them in the like manner as they attacked them' (Al-Quran 2:191-194).

These verses make three important points-

First, the fight must be only for Allah and not for personal reasons; *second*, one should not initiate the fight but should fight only if attacked and *third*, one should not persist in fighting and become aggressor once the other party lays down weapons and sues for peace. Allah does not love aggressors.

If one keeps this in mind it becomes clear that the Quran does not sanction violence but permits it for self-defence and in certain well defined circumstances. It nowhere sanctions violence for spread of religion or any other religious purposes (Al-Quran 9:13).

These verses from different surah are sufficient to evaluate the concept of *Jihad*. From studying the above Quranic verses it seems that the term *jihad* is misrepresented even by the Islamic fundamentalists. Probably, they think that fighting is the only meaning of *jihad*. So, they are inspired by the fundamentalist to fight against non-believers. It is also said that a man who dies in the path of Allah, is not dead but he is honoured as martyr. It may perhaps negatively influence the warriors to take the way of *jihad*. But they are not actually the Muslims, because a real Muslim is one who is committed to establish peace on earth.

The ulema and jurists in early Islam had divided the world into *darul harb* and *darul Islam*. The countries where Muslims could not enjoy freedom of their faith and were persecuted were declared as *darul harb*. However, it is important to note that the **Hanafi** jurists had also created a third category of *darul aman*, i.e. those countries where Muslims, though in minority, could enjoy freedom of religion. India is always considered as *darul aman* as Muslims here (Engineer *On Developing* 131) are not persecuted for their religious beliefs. In reality, here Muslims feel very safe than the other neighbouring Islamic countries.

Also, few individuals cannot get together and decide to wage *jihad*. The decision to do so can be taken only by a properly constituted Islamic Government, ensuring that there is no other way left but to declare *jihad*. It can be done after due deliberations and examining all possible consequences, including loss of human lives (Engineer *On Developing* 132).

In the long run, it may be concluded that Islam does not advocate policy of aggression. It also does not advocate, however, non-violence in absolute sense. The Quran, therefore, choose a middle path in this respect. It did not allow aggressive violence, but approved of defensive one. The permission for defensive violence also does not mean that Quran institutionalizes violence in any sense.

A thorough discussion of Islamic morality shows that the doctrine of peace has been prominent in the tradition of the Quran. In order to preserve the peace, two important injunctions have been laid down by Islam. One, at the individual level, stresses the exercise of patience, and the other, at the social level, forbids taking the offensive.

- 1) Negative reaction on the part of the individual is the greatest factor responsible for disrupting peace in daily life (Khan *Islam* 87). That is why Islam repeatedly enjoins us to tread the path of patience. The Quran says: *Surely the patient will be paid their wages in full without measure* (39:10).
- 2) The other injunction, designed to maintain peace in human society, forbids the waging of an offensive war. No one in Islam enjoins the right to wage war against another (Khan *Islam* 88).

It is necessary to remember that there is no relation between religion and violence, neither in Islam, nor in any religion. It is true that there is mention of war in scriptures like Ramayana, Mahabharata and the Quran. But this mention is not to establish any integral link between religion and violence, rather to portray certain social and political situation prevailed at that time (Engineer *On Developing* 92).

Islam is a religion which teaches non-violence. According to the Quran, God does not love *fasad*, (violence). What is meant here by *fasad* is clearly expressed in verse 205 of the second surah. Basically *fasad* is that action which results in disruption of the social system, causing huge losses in terms of lives and property (Khan *Islam* 169).

Conversely, it can be said with certainty that God loves non-violence. He dislikes violent activity being indulged in human society. This is supported by other statements in the Quran. For instance, it is said in the Quran that peace is one of God's names (59:23). Those who seek to please God are assured by verse 5 of the sixteen surah that they will be guided by Him to "the paths of peace." Paradise, which is the final destination of the society of God's choice, is referred to in the Quran as "the home of peace" (89:30), etc. (Husain *Islamic* 209).

Islam suggests to maintain peace and justice in the society. But today the Islamic world is far from this Quranic ideal. One hardly finds justice in Islamic societies. Even personal laws are no more just. What was just in the 8th and 9th centuries is no more just today when the concept of justice has greatly expanded. To be in the spirit of the Quran, they have to be rethought. Also, one hardly finds social or political justice in Muslim countries (Engineer *Islam* 128).

Islam laid equal emphasis on justice. Thus, justice and peace go together; there cannot be one without the other. Today there is no peace on earth as there is no justice. The Muslim world is also full of injustices and hence of violence. Islam did its best to emphasise justice and peace but a section of people, particularly Muslim rulers, remained obsessed with wealth and power. Hence, the blame for violence lay on the doors of these Muslims- not on Islam. As far as Islam is concerned, justice and peace are integral parts of its teachings (Engineer *On Developing* 102). By maintaining justice and peace among different sections of people, Islam actually tries to create brotherhood spirit. Definitely if the ideal of justice prevails in society the feeling of brothers will arise among human beings.

Islam gives equal emphasis on education and knowledge. Islam made it obligatory on every Muslim male and female to get education, acquire learning and search for knowledge. The woman has got, therefore, equal rights with the man to acquire education and learning. There should be no discrimination between boys and girls in matters of quality and extent of education (Khan *Tall Islam* 83).

Ibn Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah said:

A learned theologian is stronger than thousand pious worshipers (Karim Vol.1 353).

Islam has made education obligatory (*faridatun*) for male and female. Islam emphasised teaching and learning process and gives importance to a learned person. This message is put forward by Islam to whole humanity. From this message it can be assumed how Islam gives so much importance on knowledge and education.

Unfortunately, for some Muslims 'ilm in the Quran has come to mean only theological and other worldly knowledge and not 'ilm about worldly matters. Some Muslim emphasizes ilm in the sense of other worldly knowledge only. In the Quran there is an invitation for believers to think about Allah's wonderful creation, about nature, about earth and whole universe. In the 21st century the Islamic world has to consider it its duty and commitment to the Quran to develop as centre of excellence in knowledge and come out of its obsession with theological controversies. Its commitment to the Quran has to be much deeper and wider than theology, tafsir and Hadith (Engineer *Islam* 169).

The Madrassas were solely meant for promoting and encouraging the study of Arabic and Persian languages. However, special care was taken to educate the students in the *Muhammadan* law. Besides, the syllabi included Astronomy, Geometry, Logic, Arithmetic, Philosophy, Theology and Grammar. Other secular sciences also received much importance including the medicine. Most probably regarding information and technology the traditional Islamic education system was silent. But in the present day situation, Islam emphasizes on the knowledge of other sciences. Islam says that it is

the obligatory duty of human being to learn other sciences and do practice in real life.
(Khan *History* 45-46)

Education for enlightenment, for exaltation of personality, for emancipation of women, for acquisition of professional and vocational skills and excellence, for eradication of illiteracy, for abolition of slavery, and for better and more satisfying and fruitful community-living came to be accepted as a principle of life and a policy of the state. And this single and most revolutionary change in the human outlook was the direct outgrowth of the teachings of Islam and its emphasis on education as a liberating and humanising force (Alam 83).

Regarding the environmental issues, Islam is sincere. Prophet Muhammad is considered a pioneer of environmentalism for his teachings on environmental preservation. His Hadiths on agriculture and environmental philosophy were compiled in the “*Book of Agriculture*” of the Sahih Bukhari. Muhammad came with rational views on nature. He made the study of nature an act of worship. He said: “*One hour’s meditation on the works of the Creator (in a devout spirit) is better than seventy years of prayers*” (Abdullah 7-8). He stressed his faithful followers to reflect upon the wonderful creations and marvels as exhibited in the universe. This shows how Islam asks people to worship Mother Nature.

One should learn to contemplate the world of nature a mirror reflecting the Divine God, who is both transcendent and immanent. Trees are not only necessary to maintain life, they are a recurring symbol. The Quran compares the cosmos to a tree whose roots are firm in the heavens and whose branches spread to the whole of the universe, symbolizing the participation of the whole cosmos in prayer. In Islamic tradition, it is

a blessed act to plant a tree even one day before the end of the world. Water has a fundamental reality which symbolizes Divine mercy. In Islamic law, to pollute water is a sin, and according to certain jurists, the person who does so can ever be called a *kafir*, a condemnatory term for someone outside the pale of religion (Ali Islam 152).

Prophet Muhammad often asked man to reflect upon nature, to use his thinking faculty. How far Muhammad loved the study of Nature can be understood from his prayer: “*God! Grant me knowledge of the ultimate nature of things*” (Abdullah 10).

In Islam the individual link between humans and nature and between religion and the sciences lies in the Quran itself, the *Logos* or *Word of God*. “*By refusing to separate man and nature completely, Islam has preserved an integral view of the universe and sees in the arteries of the cosmic and natural world order the flow of divine grace, or barakah...Man can learn to contemplate it, not as an independent domain of reality but as a mirror reflecting a higher reality*” (Ali Islam 151).

Hunting and fishing for food is permitted in Islam; however, the Prophet cursed anyone who uses a living creature as a target, taking a life for mere sport. Like plants, animals are accorded special regard in Islam. God expects a similar society for other creature, as like human society. God sent Prophet as ‘a mercy to all beings’ (Al-Quran 21:107). Animals should also be treated in a good manner. Inhuman behaviour towards animal is punishable act in the laws of Allah. It is prohibited to use animals for fans and sports. Animals have rights which have to be accorded by man so that there will not be any conflict with these creatures.

This is really an important topic of Islam that animals deserve mercy and justice from the people. But even today it is the usual practice to kill animals as a recreation

on the occasion of sports, celebrations and national festivals. To some extent, Islam also no exception to it. The universe is not created only for man. Man as supreme animal has the responsibility of protecting nature and various species in the universe. Because of so many manmade problems the conflicts between man and animals are going on earth in a high degree.

Another important finding of Islamic morality is that Islam is the religion of action. Although Islam is the religion of peace and although Islam means submission to the will of Allah, nevertheless action is the very essence of Islam. Mere recognition by mental affirmation of the laws established by God throughout the universe is not enough for true Muslim; he must also act in accordance and in harmony with those laws. His belief must be the well-spring and motive power of action. From belief spring up action, and from true belief is manifested the true life.

So, it is seen that Islam is the religion of active and ardent striving. It is not enough to dwell upon the beauty and majesty of sublime truths; but, for mankind upon this earth, Islam inculcates a practical well-doing as an essential part of righteous life (Pickard 24). Obviously, all actions of a Muslim must be in accordance with the teaching of the Quran and must be a progression upon the path of submission to the Will of God, as marked out by the Quran and the Hadith (Pickard 25).

There are two voices calling: Firstly, *Iyyaka* (the worship of God), and secondly, *hayat-ud-dunya* (worldly affairs); and the true Muslim life is in harmonious answer to both calls; neither apart from the world, concerned only with religious life, as a monk, nor apart from God, concerned only with mundane material affairs, as some unbeliever (Pickard 26).

The Quran says in this regard:

“O man, thou must strive to attain to thy Lord a hard striving, until thou meet Him” (Al-Quran, 84:6) and again passage: “I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being from the other” (Al-Quran, 3:194).

By Islamic action, there is a possibility for the achievement of world-wide happiness for humanity. Ascetism is rejected in Islamic ethics. Prophet Muhammad said: *“The best of you are those not who, for the sake of the heavenly, neglect the terrestrial. The best of you take both.”* Following this spirit, Islam does not accept celibacy, raising marriage to the level of a religious responsibility and calling for the pleasures of family life. According to Prophet: *“When spouses care each other, God looks at them with a gaze full of kindness”* (Taufik 189-90).

Sufism also is against monasticism (*rahbaniyyah*). Rejection of the world is not the purpose of *Sufism*. It calls for active life mainly in three areas, love and devotion to God, service to humanity and development of good character. Ghazali is never for retreat or renunciation, disheartened spirit or helplessness. He divides good conduct into two categories, one active and the other passive. Active conduct is courage, action, initiative, freedom etc. and so on. The passive conduct is patience, poverty, renunciation meditation etc. and so on. Ghazali said both these categories are essential and both to be blended to make good character. He never separated secular from spiritual but so blended them as to evolve a moral personality (Ali *Imam* 25).

Islam, on the other hand, keeps a healthy balance between this world and the next, between spirit and matter, between individualism and collectivism. It stands, not for

life-denial, but for life-fulfilment. It says that the soul cannot grow by crushing the body. This world has a meaning and purpose, and it is only by leading a normal and fruitful life in this world, and by appreciating and enjoying the beautiful gifts of God, that man can come closer to God. While, on the one hand, Islam makes the development of the personality of each individual as one of the prime objectives of its socio-ethical code (Samad 139) on the other hand, it awakens in man a sense of social responsibility, organises human beings in a society and enjoins on the individual to subscribe to the social good.

The Prophet said:

“All mankind is a fold, every member of which shall be a keeper or shepherd unto every other, and be accountable for the welfare of the entire fold.” He also said: “A Muslim who lives in the midst of the society and bears inconveniences for the sake of others is better than one who shuns society and does not bear inconveniences for others” (Samad 140).

Islam favours the middle path and is against asceticism and renunciation of the world. The Prophet declared that there is no monasticism in Islam.

After a thorough study of Islamic concept of morality from various standpoints it is seen that religion is the mainstay of morality. The central point of Islamic morality is Allah’s commandments. What scientific ethics call the search for the ideal; Islam calls the search for God. What Plato calls the “good” Islam calls “God”. According to Islam, all ends must converge in the ultimate end- God. This is because life originates in the unity of existence which is a manifestation of the unity of God.

Prophet Muhammad held that the moral laws are the reflection of the attributes of the Almighty God. The morals consist in following His attributes as far as possible. According to Islam, ethics is rooted in the Being of God, and in belief in Him. It is belief in God from which all knowledge and all virtues follow as corollaries. Belief in God is really a belief in the moral order, and the objectivity of the moral values. According to Islam, all good is from God, and all evil is because of man's own conduct.

This shows that Islamic morality has a distinctly religious background. It is the most powerful and useful instrument for transforming the character of the believers. Islamic morality plays a great role for the common good and happiness of all. Gandhi also accepted the similar views regarding morality and said it must be for common good and happiness of all. Gandhi did not believe in mere utilitarian formula of "the greatest good of the greatest number" (Dutta 110). He advocated the good and welfare of all. He said, "I do not believe in the 'greatest good of the greatest number', nor can I agree that might is right. For human beings, the object in view should be the good for all, with the weak being served first'. This view is almost similar to Islam regarding morality. From the above thorough study of Islamic ethics, it can be concluded that Islam is full of morality. Islamic morality has a universal applicability which is beneficial for humanity.

Notes:

1. Rumi, Jalal ad-din (604/1207-672/1273)- influential Persian mystic and poet, whose poem the Mathnawi, has achieved almost cultic status among Persian speakers and many New Age mystics in North America. He was called by many Maulana, “Our Master,” which has given rise to the Mevlevi Sufi Tariqah (P-209).
2. Ibn al-Arabi, Muhiuddin (560/1165-638/1240)- a famous Sufi writer and master, dubbed ash-shaykh al-akbar (the great shaykh), he is best known for his doctrine of the oneness of being (Wahdat al-Wujud) (P-209).
3. Hanafi or Hanafiyah (one of the four main schools of law in Sunni Islam, named after Abu Hanifah. The school (Madhhab) was chiefly the product of two of Abu Hanifah’s students, Abu Yusuf and ash Shaybani, who built the system on the traditions of the Iraqi towns of Basrah and Kufah (P-211).
4. Sufism- it is in fact a way of life, a form of deep spiritual sensitivity of perception and not a theoretical speculation. There is always a tendency among the scholar of Sufism to decry Sufism as a phenomenon which is unislamic. This is far from true. Sufism has its roots in the Quran (P-219)
5. Ruhbaniyyah (Arabic: monasticism) This term occurs one in the Quran (57:27) in a passage that has given rise to numerous interpretations. Several Hadiths attribute to Muhammad the statement that there is no monasticism in Islam. According to a tradition quoted by Ahmad B. Hanbal, Islam has replaced monasticism with jihad: “every Prophet has some kind of ruhbaniiyah; the ruhbaniiyah of this community is jihad” (P-219).

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