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The Peaceful Coexistence of the Heavenly Religions in the Light of the Qur'an and the Prophetic Traditions.

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Abstract:

The inherent diversity among human beings, established by divine will, has led to differences in individuals and perspectives. However, this diversity does not necessitate a life of conflict and strife. The innate nature of human beings, upon which they are created, does not in itself create problems or distance between nations. The differences in beliefs, cultures and customs are a divine norm that cannot be eliminated. In order to achieve security and peace among nations, Islamic law has regulated this relationship and established solid principles that ensure coexistence, peace and security among peoples regardless of their religious differences.

This study aims to elucidate the principles on which Islam is based and the verses that support them, as derived from its primary sources, the Quran and the Sunnah (Prophetic traditions), with regard to its coexistence with the Abrahamic religions.

Keywords: Peaceful coexistence, Islam, Abrahamic religions, religious freedom, cooperation, interfaith understanding.

Introduction:

The issue of Muslims' relations with people of other religions has become a prominent issue in this era due to the increased connectivity through various social media platforms that have turned the world into a small village and transcended the differences in beliefs, practices, customs and cultures. It has transcended the boundaries of time, place and more.

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In the face of this openness, wars, conflicts and disputes stand as obstacles to coexistence and peace between nations and communities, and even between individuals within the same society.

Peaceful coexistence and a sense of security have always been and will remain a necessity without which the lives of individuals and communities striving for progress and prosperity cannot flourish. The Islamic Shari'ah in general, and the Qur'an and the Prophetic Traditions (Sunnah) in particular, have paid the utmost attention to this matter for more than fourteen centuries. They have provided a clear picture of all relationships: the relationship between man and his Lord, the relationship between Muslims as brothers and sisters, and the relationship between Muslims and people of other religions and beliefs.

Numerous texts address these relationships and serve as a framework to regulate them. They reflect the great importance attached to these relationships in achieving peaceful coexistence and social security. They do not differentiate between Muslims and non-Muslims in applying the principles of justice and equality in certain rights and duties. Coexistence is based on the principles of mutual support, mercy and the promotion of tolerance. These principles are among the primary objectives of building a cohesive society, bound together by the bonds of humanity, where everyone can come together.

And Islam urges Muslims to cooperate with everyone in goodness, righteousness, security and peace. It forbids cooperation in aggression, injustice, violence and infringement of rights. The ultimate goal is to build a humane society characterised by good relations. Islam emphasizes the preservation of neighbourly sanctity and the expansion of dialogue, starting from the circle of the Muslim Ummah (community) to include the People of the Book, such as Jews, Christians and others.

Therefore, Islam has established solid foundations that ensure the establishment of a fruitful relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book. These foundations include brotherhood, equality, freedom of belief, acquaintance, coexistence, mutual respect, righteousness, justice, and all these are essential principles that are required to create a common ground for convergence, coexistence and communication between Muslims and non-Muslims.

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It is from this perspective that the research question arises: What are the foundations laid by Islam to achieve the coexistence of Muslims with the People of the Book or other heavenly religions in the light of the Qur'an and the noble Prophetic traditions?

Since the study is based on reality and aims to elucidate the texts, the descriptive methodology, which relies on the mechanism of deducing and analysing texts to derive results, is the most appropriate for this study.

The research aims to achieve several objectives, including:

1.To reveal the foundations and principles laid down by Islam to regulate the relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book, based on what is mentioned in the Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions.

2.To show how Islam differs from other religions in its respect for human beings in their humanity, regardless of gender, creed, social status and other considerations.

3.To emphasise that Islam, with its inclusiveness, does not limit its scope to the People of the Book, but commands good treatment, justice, cooperation and more.In order to answer the research question and achieve its objectives, a plan has been outlined which includes the following major axes:

1. Islam's perspective on religious diversity.

2. Qur'anic and Prophetic foundations for the relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book.

In the conclusion, the research will present the main findings and recommendations.

We will now proceed with the details of the research according to the above plan:

First, Islam's view of religious diversity.

Second: Qur'anic and Prophetic foundations for the relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book.

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Conclusion: Main findings and recommendations.

We will now proceed with the details of the research according to the above plan as follows:

First: Islam's View of Religious Diversity[1]

Islam has laid the foundations for coexistence, security and peace among diverse peoples and communities in terms of religion, language and ethnicity. This is achieved by providing Muslims with a set of conceptual frameworks that eliminate aversion, anger and narrow-mindedness towards non-Muslims. These frameworks promote good relations, kindness, fairness and justice towards them. Some of the key concepts derived from various Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions include

1. The honour of humanity in the Qur'an:

One of the important principles emphasised in the texts is the divine honour accorded to human beings regardless of their religion, gender or social status. This is clearly stated in the verse: "And We have honoured the children of Adam, and carried them on the land and on the sea, and provided for them of the good things, and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference" (Quran 17:70).

The verse affirms God's honour and perfect creation of human beings, giving them the faculties of hearing, sight, intellect, and the ability to understand and benefit from their surroundings. This honour entails respect, security and peaceful coexistence for each individual[2].

Islam forbids anything that diminishes human dignity, such as mockery, ridicule, slander and derogatory remarks. Allah says: "O you who have believed! let not one people ridicule another people; perhaps they are better than they are; nor let women ridicule other women; perhaps they are better than they are.And insult not one another, nor call one another by names. Miserable is

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[1]- "Foundations and Mechanisms of Coexistence with Followers of Religions" by Abdulhak Harsh, Journal of Islamic Civilization, Issue 1, May 201, Volume 20, p. 942.

[2]- (Exegesis of the Noble Quran) by Abu al-Fida' Ismail ibn Kathir al-Qurashi al-Dimashqi, edited by Sami bin Muhammad Al-Salama, Dar Taybah for Publishing and Distribution, 2nd edition, 1420 AH, volume 5, p. 79.

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the name of disobedience to the Faith.And those who do not repent are the ones who do wrong" (Qur'an 49:11)[1].

Therefore, in Islam, every individual has the right to respect, security and a dignified life. This applies to all people, regardless of their background, beliefs or cultures, including the People of the Book.

In the practical teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), there is a clear lesson about respecting the People of the Book and not demeaning or undermining their dignity, even after they have passed away. This is exemplified in the narration of Jabir ibn Abdullah (may Allah be pleased with him), who narrated that a funeral procession passed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) and he stood up out of respect. When it was said to him that it was the funeral of a Jew, he replied, "Is it not a soul?"[2].

The Prophet's actions and his justification for them were rooted in a deep respect for human life. Commenting on this narration, Raghib al-Sirjani said: "This attitude of the Prophet (peace be upon him) instilled in the hearts of Muslims an appreciation and respect for every human soul without exception, because he acted and commanded in this way even after knowing that the deceased was a Jew[3].

2. Islam recognises that religious differences are a divine decree.

Muslims believe that people differ in religion by the will of Allah, who has given His creation freedom and choice in their beliefs and actions. Allah says in the Qur'an, "And say: 'The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills, let him believe, and whoever wills, let him disbelieve'" (Qur'an 18:29). And He also says: "And if your Lord had willed, those on the earth would have believed - all of them. Would you then, O Muhammad, force people to believe? (Quran 10:99).

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[1]- Reported by Al-Bukhari in the Book of Funerals, chapter: "One who stands for the burial of a Jew", Hadith number (9124), Volume 1, p. 441.
[2]- "The Prophetic Approach in Dealing with Non-Muslims" by Ragheb El-Sergany, Egyptian Book House, Cairo, Egypt (2010), p. 24.
[3]- Reported by Al-Bukhari in the Book of Virtues, chapter: "The Seal of the Prophets, peace be upon him", hadith number 2433, volume 3, p. 300.

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Islam does not force anyone to accept Islam, and no one has the right to force anyone to become a Muslim. It is not the responsibility of anyone to bear the burden of those who reject the faith. Allah says: "So if they turn away, [O Muhammad], your duty is only to convey the message. If We make man taste of Our Mercy, he rejoices in it; but if evil befalls them because of what their hands have produced, man is indeed ungrateful" (Qur'an 42:48).

This does not mean that Allah the Exalted has not clarified the true religion and the creed in which individuals are obliged to believe with certainty, free from doubt or uncertainty. This creed is belief in the Oneness of God and following the one true religion in the sight of Allah, which is Islam. There are many explicit verses in the Qur'an which state that Islam is the religion chosen by Allah for all mankind and that it supersedes what came before it. Allah says: "Verily, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam" (Quran 3:19), which Allah accepts as no other. He also says, 'And whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and he will be among the losers in the Hereafter' (Quran 3:85).

In many verses, the Qur'an discusses the doctrinal deviations that have occurred among Jews and Christians and corrects them with rational and scriptural evidence. For example, Allah says: "Those who say that Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary, have indeed disbelieved. Say: "If Allah were to destroy the Messiah, the son of Mary, or his mother, or anyone on earth, who could prevent Him? To Allah belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein. He creates what He wills, and Allah has power over all things' (Qur'an 5:17). And in another verse, Allah says: "The Jews say, 'Ezra is the son of Allah,' and the Christians say, 'The Messiah is the son of Allah. This is what they say out of their own mouths: they imitate the words of those who disbelieved before them. May Allah destroy them; how are they deceived" (Quran 9:30)

Allah clarifies that the religion of all the prophets is one, and it is the religion that Jacob advised his children to follow, the religion of Abraham, Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, Noah, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad and others.

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It is one religion, which is Islam.Allah says: "And Moses said: 'O my people, if you have believed in Allah, then rely on Him if you are Muslims' (Quran 10:84).And Allah says, quoting Jesus 'alaihis-salâm': "But when Jesus felt disbelief from them, he said: 'Who are my supporters in the cause of Allah?' The disciples said: 'We are supporters of Allah.We have believed in Allah and testify that we are Muslims [who submit to Him]" (Quran 3:52).

Abu Hurayrah, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah be pleased with him, said: "Indeed, my example and the example of the Prophets before me is like that of a man who has built a house and made it perfect and beautiful, except for a missing brick in the corner. People went around it and admired it, saying, 'If only that brick were in place! He said, 'So I am that missing brick, and I am the seal of the prophets[1]. So religion is one, but the communications and the laws are many. For each of you We have appointed a law and a way. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one nation, but He has chosen to test you in what He has given you: so run ye to the best. To Allah is your return, all of you together, and He will inform you of what you used to disagree about. (Quran 5:48). Therefore, the message of Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, was the message with which Allah sealed the laws and completed the messages. Thus, Islam became universal and addressed to all people.

3. Accountability and punishment are in the hands of Allah alone:

One of the concepts established by Islam, which enables Muslims to co-exist and interact with the People of the Book or other non-Muslims despite their disbelief, is that Allah alone is responsible for the punishment and reckoning of individuals. It is not the responsibility of Muslims to hold the unbelievers accountable for their disbelief or to punish the misguided for their misguidance. Rather, they are accountable to Allah on the Day of Judgment. This puts a Muslim's conscience at ease and removes any internal conflict between believing in the disbelief of others and seeking justice and fairness towards them.

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[1]- "Refer to: Foundations and Mechanisms of Coexistence with Followers of Religions" by Abdulhak Harsh, Journal of Islamic Civilization, Issue 1, May 201, Volume 20, p. 942 et seq.

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Second: The Qur'anic and Prophetic Foundations of the Relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book[1]:

Islam has defined the foundations and mechanisms of the relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book, and Allah has specifically mentioned them in many places in the Qur'an. Jews and Christians were given special attention in terms of discourse and legislation. They were referred to as "the People of the Book" and "those to whom the Book was given". These terms imply honour and responsibility. It is a way of honouring them and reminding them that Allah revealed the Book to them, while at the same time making them responsible for the fact that belief is obligatory on them and that their burden is greater if they disbelieve despite their knowledge and recognition[2].

Sayed Tantawi explained the implications of the Quran's description of Jews and Christians as the People of the Book by saying, "This description 'the People of the Book' in itself acknowledges their past and present and distinguishes them from those who have not inherited what they have inherited from the divine books. The Qur'an has sometimes used this description to honour them and show kindness to them, and to praise those among them who deserve praise. At other times, it is used to rebuke them, criticise them, and condemn their ethics and vices"[3].

First: Coexistence[4]

1. Definition of coexistence:

Linguistically, "al-ta'ayush" (coexistence) means living together. Al-Qamus Al-Muhit (a comprehensive Arabic dictionary) states: "Living life, one lives a life and sustenance, livelihood, food, and what one lives with, and the living conditions in terms of food and drink, and what life

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[1]- "The Muslim's Relationship with the People of the Book in the Balance of the Quran" by Mansour Mahmoud Hassan Abu Zeina, Faculty of Sharia, Yarmouk University, Jordan, p. 438.
[2]- "Israel in the Noble Quran and the Sunnah" by Mohammed Sayed Tantawi, Dar Al-Shorouk, 2nd edition, 2000, Egypt, p. 123.
[3]- "Al-Muhit Dictionary" by Muhammad bin Ya'qub Al-Fayruzabadi, edited by the Heritage Research Office at Al-Risalah Foundation, Al-Risalah Foundation, 1st edition, 1426 AH/2005 AD, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 995.
[4]- "Dictionary of language measures" by Ibn Farris, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, Lebanon, vol. 2, p. 202.

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is based on or in"[1]. "Al-'aysh (life) is a correct root that indicates life and survival. Al-Khalil said: "Al-'aysh means life, and al-ma'ishah (livelihood) is a term used for what one lives on, and it is in a good and righteous state of living. "Al-'aysh is the comprehensive source, and al-ma'ash follows the pattern of al-'aysh. It is said: "He lived a good life". Whatever one lives with is considered "ma'ash" (livelihood). Allah Almighty said: "And We made the day for sustenance." (Surah An-Naba, 78:11) and "The earth as a dwelling place for creatures, where they seek their sustenance"[2].

In language, "al-'aysh" refers to life, including food and sustenance, as well as the love and affection one experiences. Coexistence, in its linguistic sense, refers to life and all that goes with it, such as food, shelter and relationships.

In technical terms, the scientific definition of coexistence refers to living together with others in peace and harmony[3].

Other definitions include: "The gathering of a group of people in a particular place, bound together by means of sustenance such as food and drink and the basic necessities of life, regardless of religion or other affiliations. Each individual recognises the rights of the others without assimilation or fusion"[4].

In the Encyclopaedia of Islamic Concepts: "A person who lives with others, shows them peace, treats them justly, and fulfils their rights, while presenting his religion to them in a good way"[5].

Coexistence of religions in technical terms:

When the concept of coexistence is applied to religions, Abdulaziz bin Othman Al-Tweijri defines it as follows: "The convergence of the will of the followers of different divine religions

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[1] - Article entitled "Concept of Coexistence in Islam" by Abbas Al-Jarari, Jarari Magazine, Islamic Organisation for Education, Science and Culture (ISESCO), Issue 14, 1417 AH, p. 27.
[2] - "Coexistence with Non-Muslims and Its Impact on Human Thought" by Ahmed Abbas, a thesis submitted for the Master's degree, Faculty of Usul Al-Din, p. 12.
[3] - "Encyclopaedia of Islamic Concepts" by the Egyptian Ministry of Awqaf, 2003, Vol. 1, p. 144.
[4] - "Islam and Coexistence Amongst Religions in the Horizon of the 21st Century" by Abdulaziz bin Othman Al-Tweijri, 1st edition, Arab Publishing House, Beirut, 174, p. 2.
[5] - The Problem of Freedom and Islam" by a group of professors from the Institute of Philosophy and the Academy of Sciences in the Soviet Union, translated by Shawqi Jalal and Saad Rakhmi, Dar Al-Thaqafah Al-Jadeedah, Egypt, (date unknown), p. 210.

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and civilisations in their actions, in order to establish peace and security in the world, and for humanity to live in an atmosphere of brotherhood, cooperation and mutual benefit, which brings goodness to all human beings without exception"[1].

Coexistence in this context refers to the interaction and engagement of people of different religions, beliefs, customs and cultures in various aspects of life, in an atmosphere of cooperation, solidarity, brotherhood and peace, with the aim of creating a society that flourishes with progress, development and tranquility.

The term "peaceful coexistence" as a political slogan denotes an alternative to hostile relations between countries with different social systems, as well as between followers of different religions, especially those living in the same country[2].

From this perspective, it becomes clear that the technical concept of coexistence is based on the linguistic definition. Peaceful coexistence means accepting others, treating them fairly and respecting their rights, regardless of differences in gender or beliefs. It involves working with them to promote security. It can be applied at the level of a single state, where communities live in harmony and security, regardless of their religious or political orientation. It can also extend to relations between nations, where they co-exist and co-operate, free from all forms of violence, terrorism and discrimination, and avoiding the creation of conflicts and disputes.

"The Islamic religion has promoted coexistence and made it the basis of relations between Muslims and others. Allah says: 'O you who have believed, enter into complete peace' (Quran, 2:208). Al-Razi explained that the origin of this word comes from 'submission'. Allah Almighty said: "When his Lord said to him, 'Submit,' he said, 'I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds'" (Qur'an, 2:131). Islam was named as such because of this meaning. Peace prevails

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[1]- "Keys to the Unseen" by Al-Razi, Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-Arabi, Beirut, 3rd edition, 1420 AH, vol. 5, p. 518.
[2]- "The Sealed Nectar" by Safiur Rahman Mubarakpuri, Dar Al-Hilal, 1st edition, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 173.

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over reconciliation and renunciation of war, and this also relates to this meaning, because in reconciliation each party submits to the other and does not dispute it[1].

In fact, Islam is derived from the word 'salam' (peace), which is one of the names of Allah Almighty. Muslims greet each other by saying 'As-salamu alaykum' (peace be upon you), which is the greeting of the faithful to their Prophet in prayer and the slogan of Muslims when they finish their prayers by turning to the right and left.

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, left a remarkable example of coexistence with the People of the Book (Jews and Christians). After migrating to Madinah, he concluded a covenant of mutual cooperation and coexistence with the neighbouring Jewish tribes, known as the 'Madinah Charter'. The charter contained three different categories, each with different conditions, and the Prophet, peace be upon him, addressed each category with different matters directed at the other. He presented them with a covenant that granted them absolute freedom of religion and property without resorting to policies of exclusion, confiscation or conflict[2].

It was based on cooperation between them and the Muslims, averting harm and establishing justice. The Prophet, peace be upon him, also made treaties with Arab tribes to promote human cooperation and uphold humanitarian values. He encouraged all cooperation for good and prohibited all cooperation for evil.

The Qur'an contained verses that reached the pinnacle of tolerance with the People of the Book when Allah allowed Muslims to marry their wives and eat their lawful food[3].

Allah says: "This day [all] good food has been made lawful, and the food of those to whom the Book has been revealed is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them" (Quran, 5:5).

As for the People of the Book, they were originally monotheistic (believers in one God). However, some polytheistic beliefs infiltrated their religion through those who adopted

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[1]- "Global Tolerance and Peaceful Coexistence in the Islamic Perspective" by Reda Ibrahim El-Said, Journal of the College of Islamic Da'wah, Cairo, Issue 32, 2020, Vol. 2, p. 368.
[2]- (Interpretation of the Noble Quran) by Reda Muhammad Rashid, Dar Al-Manar, 2nd edition, 1367 AH, Egypt, Vol. 6, p. 147.

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polytheism. They did not make a firm distinction between themselves and their former beliefs. This lack of distinction was the reason why strictness was emphasised in eating with the People of the Book and marrying them, just as it was emphasised in eating the offerings of the polytheistic Arabs and marrying their wives. Allah made it clear to us in this verse that we should not treat the People of the Book in the same way as polytheists in this regard. So He made it permissible for us to eat their food and marry their women[1].

The effect of this is to strengthen the relationship between Muslims and the People of the Book and to close all avenues of conflict and confrontation.

The Prophet, peace be upon him, did not use harshness and severity in inviting the People of the Book or others to Islam. Rather, he was gentle, even when they spoke ill of him. Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, narrated that a group of Jews approached the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and greeted him by cursing him. She understood their words and responded with a similar curse. But the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Wait, Aisha. Verily, Allah, the Almighty, loves meekness in all things. She asked, "O Messenger of Allah, did you not hear what they said?" The Prophet 'peace be upon him' replied, "I have already answered them[2].

In this hadith there is a kind of praiseworthy disregard on the part of virtuous people for the foolishness of the misguided, as long as it does not lead to harm[3].

Ibn al-Qayyim distinguishes between "al-mudarah" (gentleness) and "al-mudahana" (flattery).

He says: "Al-mudarah is a praiseworthy quality, while al-mudahana is a blameworthy quality.

The difference between them is that al-mudari treats the other person kindly in order to extract the truth from him or to dissuade him from falsehood.Al-mudahin treats the other person kindly in order to please him in his falsehood and leave him in his desires"[1].

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[1]- Reported by Al-Bukhari in the Book of Manners, chapter: Gentleness in All Matters, Hadith number 6024, Volume 12.

[2]- Reported in Sahih Muslim by Al-Nawawi, Al-Nawawi, Dar Ihya' Al-Turath Al-Arabi, Beirut, 7291, vol. 14, p. 398.

[3]- "The Soul" by Ibn Qayyim, chapter: Cultivating the Image of Sincerity with Allah, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, Lebanon, 7591, vol. 1, p. 231.

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Count Henri de Castries, a scholar of Islam who made extensive studies and wrote valuable books about it, says: "...they (Muslims) did not kill a nation that refused to embrace Islam, nor did they force anyone to embrace Islam by the sword or by the tongue.Rather, Islam entered hearts out of longing and choice, as a result of the talents of influence and persuasion deposited in the Qur'an"[2].

For this reason, Islam prohibits the use of all forms of violence and intimidation and advocates peace and tolerance. Allah commanded to argue with the People of the Book in the best way, as He says in the Qur'an: "And do not argue with the People of the Book except in the best way, except with those who do wrong among them and say: 'We believe in what has been revealed to us and to you. And our God and your God is one, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him. (Surah Al-Ankabut, 29:46)

In fact, there were debates and arguments in the Qur'an with the four misguided groups: the polytheists, the Jews, the Christians and the hypocrites. The nature of these debates and arguments can be categorised into two approaches: the first is to mention the wrong beliefs and emphasise their wickedness and corruption, and the second is to identify the doubts that these groups fell into and present their solutions and answers using rational or textual evidence[3].

Through these guidelines and concepts, as well as others that cannot be mentioned here, it becomes clear that Islam provides a comprehensive intellectual framework for coexistence between Muslims and the People of the Book. It provides a basis for rapprochement, understanding and living with them in an atmosphere of peace and security.

Second, Justice:[4]

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[1]- "Islam: Reflections and Experiences" by Henry de Castries, translated by Ahmed Fathi, Al-Nafidha Library, 8200, p. 35.
[2]- "The Great Triumph in the Principles of Interpretation" by Al-Dhahabi, Dar Al-Sahwa, 2nd edition, 1407 AH, Cairo, p. 33.
[3]- "Foundations and Mechanisms of Coexistence with Followers of Religions" - Previous reference, p. 843.
[4]- "Dictionary of Language Standards" by Ibn Farris, Kitab al-Ayn, entry (Adl), p. 871, "The Arabic Language" by Ibn Manzur, Dar Sader, Beirut, Lebanon, 3rd edition, 1414 AH, vol. 4, p. 153.

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Definition of justice: Linguistically, it is the opposite of oppression and means fairness and balance[1].

Technically, justice refers to treating people equally in determining their rights and giving each person his or her due. It is about empowering every deserving individual with their rights[4]. It can also be defined as the middle ground between excess and neglect[2].

A Muslim's belief is that Allah commands and desires justice, for He explicitly states that He loves fairness and calls for noble ethics, even among polytheists. He does not love injustice and punishes the wrongdoers. If an injustice is committed by a Muslim against a non-Muslim, it motivates the Muslim to live justly with others. Allah says in the Qur'an: "O you who have believed, be steadfast in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it is against yourselves or parents and relatives" (Surah An-Nisa, 4:135).

Islam works to protect the rights of non-Muslims, whether they are People of the Book or not. It protects their lives, property, honour and dignity. Anyone who transgresses against them is punished in a similar way to those who transgress against Muslims. Islam grants them freedom of belief and worship, as everyone has the right to practice their own religion and beliefs without being forced to abandon or change them.

Islamic law prohibits injustice in several places in the Qur'an. For example, Allah says: "And We have set up the scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so that no soul shall be treated unjustly. And if there is the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it forth. And We are sufficient as accountants" (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:47).

Since justice is the criterion of fairness by which Muslims have established their state internally and externally, and on which they have built effective governance, it applies practically in times of peace and war, without being subject to violations or personal or collective whims[1].

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[1]- "Tafsir al-Tahrir wa al-Tanwir" by Ibn Ashur, Institute of History, 1st edition, Beirut, Lebanon, vol. 4, p. 162.
[2]- "The Definitions" by Al-Jurjani, edited by Muhammad Al-Mara'ashli, Dar Al-Nafa'is, 2nd edition, Beirut, Lebanon, 2007, p. 224.

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The Qur'an says: "Say: 'O People of the Book! come to a word that is just between us and you - that we will worship nothing but Allah, and will associate nothing with Him, and will not take each other as lords instead of Allah. But if they turn away, then say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims [who submit to Him]'" (Surah Al-Imran, 3:64).

The term "just word" refers to the just and upright word that does not deviate from the truth. It means following what Allah has permitted and avoiding what He has forbidden. Even if they refuse, Muslims are still obliged to follow the rules of Islam, along with the blessings and favours that Allah has bestowed on us.

Allah also says: "Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you on the grounds of religion and do not drive you out of your homes, to be righteous towards them and to act justly towards them[2]. For Allah loves those who do right. (Surah Al-Mumtahanah, 60:8).

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) treated the Jewish tribe of Khuzayah with kindness and fulfilled his obligations towards them. He ordered them to be treated with kindness, fulfilled their rights, and gave them a fair share of his wealth. Justice was not withheld, for justice is an obligation in all circumstances. What he intended was kindness and honour towards them as people under the protection of the Islamic state[3].

Therefore, if a non-Muslim does not initiate war, does not expel Muslims from their homes, and does not show any outward hostility, then it is incumbent upon Muslims to treat them with kindness and justice. This will undoubtedly help to build strong relationships with them and may incline them to become supporters of Islam in the future.

Third: Intercultural understanding

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[1]- "The Virtue of Islam in Dealing with Non-Muslims" by Khalafan bin Sinan bin Khalafan Al-Shuaili, (date unknown), p. 12.
[2]- "The comprehensive compilation of rulings of the Quran" by Al-Qurtubi, edited by Salem Mustafa Al-Badri, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyyah, Beirut, Lebanon, vol. 4, p. 86.
[3]- Previous source, vol. 81, p. 95.

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In language, Ibn Faris says: "The letters '(Ayn-Ra-Fa') are two valid and correct roots, one of which means continuity and connection of things, while the other means calm and serenity... From this comes knowledge and cognition"[1].

"Ta'aruf" is the verbal noun derived from the root ("Ayn-Ra-Fa") and it has two meanings as mentioned by Ibn Farris. The first means continuity and connection, while the second means tranquillity and serenity.

In technical terms, as an Islamic principle and a strategy for the future of humanity, "ta'aruf" occupies an important place. We fully understand the role of the humanitarian Islamic message, a role that has not ceased, will not cease, and continues to be derived from the spirit of the Noble Qur'an, the administration of the Creator of this universe and all universes, and the call of the Noble Qur'an for "ta'aruf" means the complete exploration of the commonalities among human beings. This call is a clear warning to this creature to realise first his intellectual and psychological nature, then his comprehensive human nature, and then his role in the succession and construction on earth[2].

The bond of humanity and the unity of the human race is what unites people regardless of their colour and religion... The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "O mankind! your Lord is one, and your Father is one. Indeed, there is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, nor of a non-Arab over an Arab, nor of a white over a black, nor of a black over a white, except through taqwa (piety). Did I not teach this?" They said: "Surely you have conveyed the message of Allah, O Messenger of Allah"[3].

Diversity among human beings is a divine decree that exists by the will of Allah, who has given human beings the freedom to choose their actions and beliefs. Allah says in the Qur'an: "And if your Lord had wished, He could have made mankind one community, but they will not cease to differ" (Qur'an 11:118). (Quran 11:118). Allah's will is absolute, and He wills nothing but what

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[1]- "Dictionary of Language Standards" - Previous source, vol. 4, p. 214.
[2]- "Approach to Understanding in Islam: Towards Common Ground among People" by Al-Bash Hassan, published by the General Islamic State Jamahiriya, Tripoli, 2005, 1st edition, p. 5.
[3]- Reported by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad, Remaining Musnad al-Ansar, hadith number 22978, volume 5, p. 411.

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is good and wise. This diversity does not hinder the process of understanding and communication; rather, it is an invitation to it.

Allah says in the Qur'an: "O mankind! We created you from male and female, and made you peoples and tribes, that you might know each other. The most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. For Allah is Knowing and Knowing. (Qur'an 49:13).

Getting to know and interacting with each other is therefore a means of opening up to others, embracing their talents, experiences and diverse potentials. Undoubtedly, this has a significant impact on personal growth, the maturity of ideas, the refinement of talents and experiences. It is an avenue for development, change, broadening of horizons, inclusivity, renewal and innovation.

It is a means of coexistence beyond nationalism, colour or ethnicity, and it affirms that no one has superiority over another except through piety[1].

Indeed, Islam calls for knowledge and communication. Allah did not make us nations and tribes for conflict and discord, but to know each other and live in harmony. The diversity of languages, colours, temperaments, ethics and talents does not call for conflict and division, but for cooperation[2], integration and harnessing. By getting to know each other, these nations can work together and exchange benefits and experiences. No nation can do without the others, and history proves this. Europeans were able to achieve the modern industrial revolution and tremendous scientific progress in the modern era by engaging with Muslims and learning about their different knowledge, sciences and arts.

Fourth: Cooperation

Definition of cooperation:

Linguistically, cooperation refers to giving and seeking help.

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[1]- "Coexistence between Muslims and Non-Muslims in Africa from a Sharia Perspective" by Al-Murtada Al-Zain Ahmed, Journal of Sharia and Islamic Studies, Issue Nine, Muharram 8142 AH, February 2007, p. 15.
[2]- "Jurisprudence of Coexistence and Its Impact on Strengthening Security and Enhancing Intellectual Communication" by Mustafa Al-Hakim, Morocco. [Link: https://platform.almanhal.com/Files/2/100955], Friday, 28 May 2021, at 10:35.

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To help means to assist someone in his affairs and to help him in a matter, to seek help from a specific person[1].

Cooperation can be understood as "helping in what is right and seeking reward from Allah Almighty"[2].

Islam encourages cooperation between Muslims and different communities, including the People of the Book. Allah says in the Qur'an: "And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. (Quran 5:2)

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) spoke about the Hilf al-Fudul (League of Virtue) that took place during the pre-Islamic era of ignorance (Jahiliyyah). The chiefs and leaders of the Quraysh tribe gathered together and pledged to help the weak, the oppressed and the needy, and to uphold noble moral values. The Prophet 'alaihis-salâm' witnessed this event and later said in Islam: "I witnessed a covenant in the house of Abdullah bin Jad'an, and if I were called upon to do it in Islam, I would do it. They made a pact to help the wronged and to prevent the wrong-doer from oppressing others"[3]. Thus, the Prophet encouraged cooperation for good deeds, even if they involved non-Muslims, as he approved of the Hilf al-Fudul alliance, which was established in pre-Islamic times but was considered praiseworthy.

Therefore, the criterion for cooperation is not merely the parties involved, but rather the content of the alliance itself, whether it is for good or evil.

Indeed, both in the pre-Islamic era and in Islam, people are distinguished by their goodness, whether they are Muslims, People of the Book, or others. Cooperation and doing good deeds for all people is the foundation of the faith that is accepted by Allah, and through it people distinguish themselves in the sight of their Lord.

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[1]- "Lisan al-Arab" (the tongue of the Arabs) - Previous source, Vol. 13, p. 982.
[2]- "Encyclopaedia of Ethics" by Khalid Al-Kharraz, Ahl Al-Athar Library, Kuwait, 1st edition, 1430 AH - 2009, vol. 1, p. 441.
[3]- "The Great Sunan" by Al-Bayhaqi, Book of Distribution of Booty and Spoils, Chapter on Giving booty to the Diwan and those who start with it, Hadith number 12719, Vol. 6, p. 367.

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Cooperation has implications for achieving coexistence between Muslims and the People of the Book, as well as for building strong and cohesive social relationships. As Sayyid Qutb said: "Thus, all causes of conflict and dispute on earth disappear, and all values for which people compete become insignificant, and a clear and immense reason for unity and cooperation emerges: the divine nature of Allah for everyone and their creation from a single source. Just as a single flag is raised under which everyone rushes to stand: the flag of piety in the shadow of Allah. This is the flag that Islam has raised to save humanity from the tribalism of race, the tribalism of clan, and the tribalism of home"[1].

It is on these and other foundations that social relations are built between Muslims and the People of the Book, leading to peace and an end to the violence and conflicts that exist between many nations and societies today.

Conclusion:

From these discussions we can draw the following conclusions:

* The care of Muslims includes all those who live under their shadow, and the relationship between Muslims and people of other religions is ideal.

* Islam is a religion that rejects hatred, chaos, intolerance and racism. It calls upon all people to engage and communicate with other nations in a positive manner, with the aim of exchanging knowledge and experience.

* Islam establishes principles and concepts that eliminate enmity, violence and hatred among human beings and replace them with brotherhood, cooperation and justice.

* Islam specifically mentions the People of the Book in numerous verses of the Qur'an and in various Prophetic traditions. It directs Muslims to coexist with them, requiring Muslims to treat them with justice and kindness, to provide them with security, to permit marriage with them, and to prohibit oppression.

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[1]- "In the Shadow of the Quran",Sayyid Qutb ,Dar Al-Shorouk,2nd edition,Vol: 6 (Page: 834)

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* The Sunnah (traditions) of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, serves as a practical application of the principles advocated by Islam in dealing with non-Muslims from the People of the Book.

* The current promotion through media channels of accusing Islam of terrorism and violence is in fact a war against the Islamic faith as a whole, with the intention of eliminating it and undermining its tolerant teachings in the hearts of believers. However, this is a futile and losing war, as it often leads to an increased interest in embracing Islam, and reality serves as a testament to this.

Recommendations: In conclusion, we recommend the following:

- It is essential to activate the foundations and principles established by Islam in the context of relations between Muslims and the People of the Book. Researchers should direct their efforts towards highlighting the virtues of Islam and responding to its critics through various means, especially through the use of social media platforms. This will help increase global interest in Islam and contribute to a better understanding of the faith as a religion of peace and security.

May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Master and Beloved, Muhammad.

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