

# Research Analysis of Tolerance in the Teachings of Revealed Religions

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## *Abstract*

*All the venerated prophets followed the religion Islam. Islam is a complete code of conduct which carries the complete and clear instructions about the individual and collective life of the man. Islam has provided the religious set of rules to upgrade and purify the social life of the human beings. We can become an ideal society after following this set of principles. Judaism and Christianity are the revealed religions, so they have resemblance with Islam. These religions unfold the concept of religious tolerance which is testified by the teachings of Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S), Hazrat Musa (A.S) and Hazrat Esa (A.S). The teachings of all these prophets were based on unity, justice, tolerance, peace and standard morals. The Holy Prophet's teachings also included unity in Ummah. This research article is an attempt to explore the fact that the concept of religious tolerance is found in all the revealed religions.*

## **Keywords:**

Revealed religions, revealed books, religious tolerance, unity of Ummah

## **Introduction:**

The natural prosperity of human beings lies in the unity of humanity. This social evolution is not possible without unity in the human society because it bases on. It is a fact that the basic values of humanity are common irrespective of their different cultures, colour and caste. For creating this unity in the human society the prophets' struggle is an important milestone. These prophets have decorated the natural teachings of the revealed religions keeping in view the universal principles for the betterment and unity of human society and they have eliminated differences, conflicts and different sects. Therefore it is needed to present the teachings of research analysis of tolerance in the revealed religions.

## **Discussion:**

Tolerance is the human power of forbearance which makes a human being tolerate some pain or problem with his own sweet will, which he doesn't like interfere in that matter.

The word tolerance means to bear. As a concept it means respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of the world's cultures, forms of expression and ways of being humans.

Its literal meaning is to bear something and to take care of others. In Arabic it is called *Tasamuh*, there are also other words that give similar meanings, such as *Hilm* (forbearance) or *Afu* (pardon, forgiveness) or *Safh* (overlooking disregarding).

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Sayyad Muhammad Murtaza Alhusaini defines *Hilm* in the following words:

ضبط النفس والطبع عن هيجان الغضب (1)

(Forbearance is to control oneself in the state of extreme anger).

In Oxford Dictionary tolerance is defined by the following words:

“It also means an attitude with the help of which we bear different problems of life with patience.” (2)

In English language the oft-used term is tolerance, which has been defined thus:

“It is an attitude of respectful sympathy to the opinions and beliefs as contribution to the progress of the human spirit”.(3)

Arthur S. Reber writes:

“Tolerance is an attitude of liberal acceptance of the behaviors, beliefs, and values of other”. (4)

Encyclopedia Britannica has explained its meanings in this fashion:

“Intellectual and practical acknowledgement of the right of others to live in accordance with religious beliefs that are not accepted as one’s own”. (5)

Arthur S. Reber writes while describing the figurative meaning of tolerance:

“The term (Tolerance) used by some with very positive connotations in the sense that tolerance embodies vigorous defense of others’ values and recognition of the worth of pluralism and that truly tolerant person will resist any attempt to inhibit their free expression”. (6)

According to the definition of Khawaja Abdul Hameed:

“Tolerance is to be accommodating”. (7)

According to Naseem Amroohi:

“Tolerance is to accommodate the opinion of others”. (8)

Muhazzib Lakhnawi defines tolerance in these words:

“It refers to broad-mindedness and open- heartedness in religious and social matters. It is to tolerate others point of view, to take care, to forebear and to treat all and sundry on the equal footing. It also points out treatment with kindness”.(9)

In the light of above mentioned dictionary meanings it has been concluded that the term signifies the importance of forbearance and to take care of others in minor and minute matters. It also shows that we should leave all those matters and ideas which can become bone of contention. Religious tolerance also means that followers of one religion should not be critical of the religious rites of the other religions. They should not assume aggressive behavior and should not use those words which prove discouraging for others. Tolerance is to leave points of discard and to agree on the points of accord. In the following lines the analysis of basic instructions for the spread of tolerant behaviors is given in the light of revealed religions.

### **Judaism and Religious Tolerance:**

In Arabic *Yahodiyat* is used as a term for Judaism and that Arabic term is derived from the word '*Haad*'. In Arabic language '*Haad*' means to turn to some body. As it is said that (هَادِ الرَّجُلُ: اِى رَجَعَ وَ تَاب) (10) (Who ever has repented to Allah). This turn is according to the saying of Hazrat Musa (A.S) which is mentioned in the Holy Quran in the following words (اِنَّا هَدٰنَا لِيَك) (11) (We turn to You in repentance).

In *Muarif-e-Islamiya* encyclopedia, Judaism is introduced in the following words:

“The term Jew is either used for the residents of sultanate *Yahuda* or the descendents of *Yahuda* bin *Yaqoob* or for those people who follow the Jewish religion. And *Bani Israil* i.e descendents of *Yaqoob* (A.S), contains broader significance and means the descendents of all sons of *Yaqoob* (A.S) i.e *Israil*. However it generally means the people following the *Shariah* of Hazrat *Musa* (A.S) but as the teaching of Jewish religion are limited to the descendents of *Yaqoob* (A.S) so this term is used for a typical racial group”. (12)

The base of Jewish religion is of two beliefs, 1st the unitary state of Allah and secondly Allah's special relations with *Bani Israil*. The Jews also believe in this thing that a human being is responsible and answerable for his own deeds. They deem deeds more important than faith. Allama Shehristani declares Judaism as a racial religion and he writes about the racial pride of Jews in the following words:

(As Judaism is a racial religion so the Jews kept their knowledge of books to their race only and they delivered that knowledge only to the Jews which has caused racial pride and prejudice in the Jews. They were of the opinion that Hazrat *Musa* (A.S) is the greatest of all prophets and his whole knowledge is with the Jews. They do not give any opportunity to other races and nations to understand their creed and ideas nor they preach their religion. They think that no one is at par with them. It is due to this reason that they do not expose the teachings of their religious book *Talmud*. The Jews are Hazrat *Musa*'s Ummah, *Taurat* is their book which is the first authentic book revealed by Allah in the history of religions. Before this book manuscripts were revealed on Hazrat *Ibrahim* (A.S) and other prophets. As it is stated in a Hadith that no doubt Allah has created *Adam* (A.S) and *Eden* with his own hands and has written *Taurat* himself). (13)

*Taurat* is the revealed book of Jews. On Hazrat *Musa* (A.S) other manuscripts were revealed along with *Taurat* which has been mentioned in Holy Quran in the following words:

صَحْفِ اِبْرَاهِيْمِ وَ مُوسَىٰ (۱۴)

(The scripts of *Ibrahim* and *Musa*).

*Ehd Nama Ateeq* throws light on the social and the historical life of *Bani Israil*. It was compiled in the different periods which consist of the period after the death of Hazrat Musa (A.S). Lengthy period of slavery, attacks in different periods and destruction has emended and corrupted *Ehd Nama Ateeq* which includes *Taurat* and other books.

Mazhar-ud-Din Siddique comments on the historical facts about Jews in the following words:

(The Jews have forbidden the Christians entries in their synagogues. The ouster of Christians from the Jewish places of worship commenced from Intaqia and gradually spread towards other areas of the sultanate). (15)

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) through Madina Pact bound the Jews and gave them religious freedom but as per their habit they remained busy in the conspiracies and through their prejudicial intellect made plans to harm the Muslims so much so that they became ready to revolt even after the Pact and they utilized all the resources for the annihilation of Islamic State. This evil intention of Jews dawned upon the Muslims during the War of Trenches. The history bears it out that the Jews are never sincere to any one and they have proved scourge for the whole world due to their religious prejudice. It was due to this reason that they gave prejudice and disruption to human society. Not only the Jews created intolerance in the world but also they divided themselves into different sects due to their conspiracy nature and sapped their remaining power. Dr. Mubarak Ali describes the disruption in the Jewish society in the following words:

“At that time the Jewish society was rift a part due to different conflicting religious sects. However all of those sects are unanimous on one point and that is to keep the people of Palestine in subjugation by using military power and religious zeal. It is due to these religious differences that Israeli society is bound by the religious prejudice, intolerance and narrow mindedness”. (16)

In the Jews of different periods the religious narrow mindedness and intolerance is very much present, while mingling with other nations and religions is avoided. But on the contrary, in their religious book *Talmud* and in the teaching of their religious scholar's kindness and tolerance has been taught. As a model, Ribbi Mayor's statement is given in the following lines:

“The aim of Judaism is to unite humanity and not to separate them. Every one will have to be humble, tolerant not only with the people of his own religion but with all”. (17)

It is very important for Jews to adopt tolerance and to spread love in the society for the peace in the universe and for acting upon the teachings of *Taurat* and *Talmud*. Both their religious books give lessons of human respect, love and service of humanity. If the Jews act upon *Ehd Nama-e-Atique* and *Talmud*, they will easily mix up with the general public and they will breed sympathy and love in their own

minds and can create tolerance at the international level. Only then the world can become a cradle of peace for its residence.

Due to the reforms and revolutionary efforts of Hazrat Musa (A.S), *Bani Israil* became sovereign and independent with the passage of time. However they declined slowly and gradually and changed their ethics. They rejected the teachings of their own prophet and tortured their own prophets, even killed some of those. An Arab thinker Dr. Ahmad Shalbi writes about this state of Bani Israil in the following words:

حرف بنو اسرائيل شريعة موسى<sup>1</sup> وجعلوا همهم جمع المال وامتد هذا التكفير المادى الى العلماء والرهبات  
فاخذوا يحرصون العامة على تقديم القرابين والنذور للهيكل رجاء ان يحصلوا على الغفران وربطوا الغضب برضا  
الرهبات ودعائهم وتعمقوا في المادية وبعثوا عن الروحية فانكروا فريقتهم القيامة والحشر ومن هم انكروا الحساب  
والعقب. فانهمس الكثيرون منهم في متاع الحياة الدنيا غير خائفين عن عاقبة ولا متوقعين حسابا وفي كلمة واحدة لقد فسدت  
العقيدة وفسدت الاخلاق ولم يكن بد من منقذهم يحاول ان يردهم عن طغيانهم الذى كانوا فيه يعمهون (١٨)

(*Bani Israil* altered the *Shariah* of Hazrat Musa (A.S). They focused on the accumulation of wealth and this materialistic thinking penetrated to their ulema, priests and the leaders. They persuaded the common people to offer sacrifices so that they might not get any thing. They made it clear that God's forgiveness is based on the willingness of the Ulema, so they became too much materialistic and were removed from spiritualism. One of their sects denied Doomsday and the Day of Judgment. That is why they have denied judgment and remained engrossed in the revelry without any fear or terror and without the feelings that they would be judged after their death. It has corrupted both their creed and ethics so it was essential for these people that they should get their guide who can lead them on the right path and who should arrange matters in such a fashion as to take them out of their revelry).

### **Christianity and Religious Tolerance:**

Encyclopedia of Religious and Ethics defines Christianity in the following words:

“The religion which ascribes its origin to the inhabitants of *Nasirah* and recognizes him the chosen being of God”. (19)

Christianity depends on the three sources in collection with their history. Firstly, it is *Taurat* which is many times bulky than Bible and the Christians do not believe in some of its part. Secondly. *Anajeel-e-Arbaa* and thirdly, there are the letters and pamphlets which are remembered in the name of *Asfaar*, which is the explanatory part of *Anajeel-e-Arba*. The prevailing creeds of christians are four in number. Maulana Taqi Usmani has mentioned these in the following words:

“The beliefs of the Christians include the belief of Hazrat Esa (A.S) as a god or His son, the belief of crucifixion and the belief of rebirth of Hazrat Esa (A.S) after three days of crucifixion and then he kept roaming among his disciples for 40 days. Then Allah has raised him to the skies and made him sit on the throne beside him. Then there is the belief of penance which is about this fact that Hazrat Esa (A.S) was crucified for the sake of Christians' sins. Now all the Christians will go to heaven”. (20)

Hazrat Esa (A.S) preached love and removed the worries of the people and healed their wounds. His message was packed with love and tolerance. One of his aims in this world was to throw away hatred, enmity and malice from the hearts of *Bani Israil*. He wanted to proliferate tolerance among those people who could not tolerate one another. For this purpose he again and again addressed his companions in order to reform them. His teachings are based on tolerance and grand manners. According to the verses of *Injeel-e-Mati*, God has ordered the Christians through Hazrat Esa (A.S):

“Do not find faults in others so that others may not seek faults in you. The measure you use for others will be used for your measurement. Why do you perceive your brother's minor fault while overlooking your own blunders”.(21)

*Anajeel* points out tolerance, equality, brotherhood and righteousness which are contained in the teaching of Hazrat Esa (A.S). The teachings of Hazrat Esa (A.S) reflect compromise and love among the people. Hazrat Esa (A.S) instructed his companions to follow these things. It is said in *Injeel-e-Mati*:

“Those people are the blessed who make compromise because they are the sons of God”. (22)

Hazrat Esa As knew this thing that the people will turn against him as soon as he will preach them the words of Allah that is why he advised his companions to bear torture with smiling face and not to retaliate against the people who do injustice. It is said in *Injeel-e-Mati*:

“When the people will curse you and will tease you and will commit injustices against you, all for my sake, you deserve congratulations but I point it out to you that whoever shows anger for his brother, he will deserve punishment, whoever declares his brother lunatic he will deserve harsher punishment and whoever deems his brother stupid and foolish he will deserve tortures of hell. I say to you that don't retaliate against the deeds of naughty people and if any one of those strike you in the right cheek, offer him your left one and if any deprives you of your minor belonging give him your major one as well and if any one takes you for a long distance without any purpose, keep his company for the longer distance and if any one requests you some thing,

place it at his disposal immediately and if any one wants loan, do not disappoint him". (23)

The sacred book of the Christians *Injeel-e-Mati* has always instructed the people to develop love among the members of society even when other people are friends or foes. It has guided the Christians to avoid hatred, prejudice and harshness in manners. Hazrat Esa (A.S) has imparted the same teachings that the people should not blame one another on their defects and they should have the attitude of forgiveness and passions. He wants love and brotherhood in the lives of his followers. Life is granted once in this world and it should be led in such a fashion that other people may not get tired of us. According to author of *Kitab e Muqaddas (Purana aur Naya Ehd Nama)* Hazrat Esa (A.S) addresses his followers in the following words:

"Tolerate one another showing complete passions and love and try to make spiritually strong link by the help of compromise. You should love your enemies, do him good and give him loan without any disappointment so that you should be paid back heavily". (24)

But during the heydays of Christianity the treatment meted out to the followers of other religion is some thing which is irreparable.

#### **Islam and Religious Tolerance:**

Islam is that perfect religion. as the Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SAWW) said:

الخلق عيال الله (٢٥)

(The whole humanity is created and supervised by Allah).

Islam has declared all the human beings as family of God irrespective of their religion and nation. All those dictates which are for the betterment of the human beings do not differentiate between Muslims and non-muslims. Allah is not only the Lord of the Muslims but Lord of both the worlds. Similarly, the prophet of the Muslims is not blessing for the Muslims only but blessing for all persons in the world. When a Muslim is follower of Lord and the same Prophet then how Muslims can deviate from the path of kindness and tolerance by adopting intolerant behavior and persecution of other human beings.

Tolerance is a moral characteristic having undeniable practical advantages. If it is generated in every individual of society, the society would become ideal. All the prophets of Allah have tried to perpetuate this quality in this society and they themselves exhibited it. That's why various verses of the Holy Quran teach tolerance. The Holy Quran directs its followers to tolerate so that the Muslims of this world should be united and turn the society into paradise. If the followers of one religion or creed cannot show tolerance, sympathy and fraternity, how can they be tolerant towards other communities or religions? That is why Quran teaches Muslims brotherhood and tolerance in the following words:

يا ايها الذين امنوا اتقوا الله حق تقاته ولا تموتن الا وانتم مسلمون - واعتصموا بحبل الله جميعا ولا تفرقوا  
واذكروا نعمته اليكم اذ كنتم اعداء فالف بين قلوبكم فاصبحتم بنعمته اخوانا وكنتم على شفا حفرة من النار فانقذكم منها  
كذلك يبين الله لكم اياته لعلكم تهتدون (٢٦)

(O you who believe, fear Allah, as He should be feared, and let not yourself die save as Muslims. Hold fast, all of you, to the cord of Allah, and be not divided. Remember the blessing of Allah upon you: When you were enemies to each other, and He brought your hearts together, so that, you became brothers through His blessing. You were at the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it. This is how Allah makes His signs clear to you, so that you may take the right path).

The above mentioned verse clearly mentions that Allah loves unity and dislikes disunity. In the above quoted verse Allah very clearly states that we should adopt the religion of Islam which is the only cord of Allah and abhors sectarianism, prejudice, hatred and baseless criticism. Allah wants Muslims to show tolerance like a single being.

In the holy Quran on Eighteen occasions the words “ياايها الناس” are used to address the whole humanity irrespective of there cast, colour, creed and religion. The Holy Quran addresses all the human beings including Muslims and non-muslims and lifts the curtain from the secrets of this universe. Eminent scholar Raees Ahmad Jafri says:

“The deep study of Holy Quran makes this fact clearer that Islam believes in compromise. The focus of this religion is on the winning of hearts and not of bodies”. (27)

The Holy Quran directs in clear words that there should be no use of force in the acceptance of religion. Allah says:

لا اكراه في الدين قد تبين الرشد من الغي (٢٨)

(There is no compulsion in Faith, The correct way has become distinct from the erroneous).

A great religious Arab scholar Dr. Wahba Zuhaili writes in his book while throwing light on the concept of tolerance in the Holy Quran:

لا تكروهوا احدا على الدخول في الاسلام فان دلائل صحته لا تحتاج بعدها الى اكراه ولا ان الايها يقوم على  
الاقتناع والحجة والبرهان فلا يفيد فيه الالجا او القسر او الازام او الاكراه كقوله تعالى “ افانت تكره الناس حتى يكونوا

مؤمنين - (٢٩)

“No one should be forcefully made to accept Islam. That is why after giving sound arguments about the authenticity of Islam, there should be no use of force. Secondly the base of faith is on the contentment and the comfort of heart. There is no advantage of using force. As the dictates of Allah are



clear, “Whether you can force them so that they may be believers”.

Explaining this point of the Holy verse the same author writes:

الاية قاعدة من القواعد الاسلام الكبرى<sup>١</sup> وركن العظیم من اركان سياسة و منهجه۔ (۲۰)

(This verse is one of the greatest principles and it is one of the great principles of Islamic life).

In this context the well known religious scholar Mufti Muhammad Shafi says:

“Islam does not compel people to accept the Islamic teachings. If it had been so then the infidels would not have been given protection of property, honour and body by taking compensation (*Jizya*). It is for the prevention of scuffle because Allah does not like disruption for which the infidels remain active. Therefore Allah says:

ويسعون في الارض فسادا والله لا يحب المفسدين۔ (۳۱)

(They run about on the earth spreading mischief, and Allah does not like the mischief-makers).” (32)

In fact for the acceptance of faith force is not possible. The relation of faith is not only with the body but with the heart and the relation of force is with the outer parts of body. Therefore it is not possible to make people accept faith through killing and *Jihad*. Quran denies force and coercion in following religious creeds prevailing in a society.

Islam has framed such a society which is based on justice, tolerance and fairness. Here every one is the guardian of the rights of others. Quran wants a society which is free from religious, political and economic differences and where every individual can worship according to his own belief, where places of worship of all religion should be safe and every individual of a society should play his role in the moral, spiritual, educational and cultural development.

The history of Islam is packed with the events of tolerance, forbearance and broad mindedness. It is Islamic trend that it throws to the winds all the differences between religions, sects, casts and has granted humanity a code of life which treats all human beings on the same footing. No one is superior or supreme. There is no room for regional and racial differences. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) has taught tolerance and has practiced it as well.

The life of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) is decorated with the examples of tolerance and kind heartedness. After attaining Prophethood, numerous blames were leveled against the Holy Prophet (S.A.W), But the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) remained calm and patient along with his companions in the face of these odds. He captivated the hearts of the people due to his forgiving temperament in Mecca as well as in

Madina. In Mecca with the infidels (*Kuffar*) and in Madina with the Jews and Christians he signed agreements of compromise which show his tolerance. Following are some of the Hadiths which prove that the nature of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) was tolerant and he did not like revenge.

ولا يجزى بالسيئة السيئة (٣٣)

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) never retaliated evil for evil.

وما انتقم رسول الله ﷺ لنفسه (٣٤)

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) never avenged on any person.

After *Hijra*, in the supervision of Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.W) the Muslims have laid foundation of the first tolerant state which has treated all the human beings on equal footing indiscriminately. One of the principles which we get in the light of Holy Prophets' (SAW) life with respect to tolerance is to recognize the existence of all groups and to grant them religious freedom which is a luminous example of tolerance. It has commenced with the Madina Charter. The Madina Charter is an agreement which is a living example of tolerance and which explains this fact that both the religious communities, Muslims and Jews, can follow their respective religions. Ibn-e-Hasham writes:

وان يهود بني عوف امة مع المؤمنين لليهود دينهم ومواليهم وانفسهم الا من ظلم واثر فانه لا يوبق الا نفسه واهل بيته

وان يهود بني النجار مثل ما ليهود بني عوف وان يهود بني الحارث مثل ما ليهود بني عوف (٣٥)

In the tribe of *Bannu Auf* the Muslims and Jews lived together but followed their own religions. The Muslims were guardian of the Jews' slaves and animals but the doer of a sin or injustice were accorded justice irrespective of his cast or his family. The Jews of *Bannu Najjar* have the same rights as were enjoyed the *Bannu Auf*.

Dr. Hamidullah comments on the Madina Charter in these words:

"If we go through history we can never observe practical demonstration of compromise between religions except in Islam". (36)

Whereas Muhammad Husain Haikal makes analysis of different sections of the Madina Charter and writes:

"It is a written agreement due to which the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) has granted a code of life of human society 1400 years ago, which has granted the right of religious freedom to every individual and every group and it has sanctified human life". (37)

The above mentioned charter provides sound foundation for grand society which can not be denied in any age. Islam has diverted its followers to grant rights to the deserving person and not to commit injustices and cruelty to any one. These teachings are not confined to words spoken or written but after the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) all his companions and the elders acted upon those teachings.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W) has not only set the standards of love, sympathy and kindness for the human beings but also has prepared a team who are the right descendants of the Holy Prophet who could act upon his dictates. After the Holy Prophet (S.A.W), his companions have set a standard model of tolerance which can never be presented by any other team of this world. The holy companions faithfully acted upon the teachings of the holy prophet (S.A.W).

Allah has sent prophets to inform mankind about their lives' aim. Islam was the religion of all prophets. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the last prophet in the series of prophet hood. The concept of religious tolerance is the core of teaching of all prophets. Therefore the concept of tolerance was also present in the teachings of prophet Musa and Esa (AS) and the instruction related to religious tolerance is also present in the altered versions of *Taurat* and Bible.

### **Conclusion:**

The teachings of the all holy prophets (A.S) carried the concept of revealed tolerance but Jews and Christians have abandoned them. It has become the main reason to eliminate the religious tolerance and this has affected the peace in the world very badly. While the concept of religious tolerance is very clear and practical in Islam, and fulfills the need of all the ages. Therefore it is needed that Muslims present the practical examples of this tolerance, so the people of other religions know the idea of tolerance taught by Islam.

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