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The Qur'anic Concept of the Ideal Human Society

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Abstract

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Most of the western philosophies dominant today treat man as animals. The famous views on man attributed to the modern disciplines, such as sociology and psychology, are “Man is a social animal”; “Man is an intellectual animal”. To equate man with animals amounts to his/her humiliation. The Qur'an names man as human (*insan*) {15:26}, describes him/her children of Adam (*bani Adam*) {7:26}, and informs that the children of Adam hold the most dignified position on earth (*mukarram*) {17:70}. The Qur'an seeks to inspire the mankind to establish human society based on and governed by some absolute principles: (1) Sincerity of Commitment to Allah and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.), (2) Dominance of Absolute Moral Values, (3) Caring Attitude towards the Animals, and (4) Sensitivity to the Ecosystem. This paper represents discussion on these four features of the society the Qur'an seeks to develop. The methodology applied to such discourse is in no uncertain term critical analysis. The conclusion arrived at in the paper is that the entire mankind needs to take the Qur'anic messages concerning ideal society to ensure peace and harmony on the surface of the earth.

Introduction

The Qur'an addresses the Jews (2:40), the Christians (5:72-77), the mankind in general (2:21), and the believers (2:104, 153, 172, 178, 183, 208, 254, 264, 267, 278, 282, etc.), inviting them all to heed the messages therein. These messages concern with all the dimensions of human life (21:10). The Qur'an talks about the significance of its messages. It assures the audience that the acceptance of its messages will surely lead to the bliss and the rejection of its messages will ravage the earth beyond recognition. It is quite advisable to define man and society from both western angle and the Qur'anic one. This paper will focus on four features of the Qur'anic scheme of the human society: (1) Sincerity of Commitment to Allah and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.), (2) Dominance of Absolute Moral Values, (3) Caring Attitude towards the Animals, and (4) Sensitivity to the Ecosystem.

Defining Man

Most of the scholars in both east and west seem to be somewhat confused over the precise definition of man. The Darwinian theory of origin of man and Aristotelian description of man as animal have greatly impacted the mind which in one way or another looks at man as animal. Charles Darwin (1809-1882) proposed the theories of evolution of species and natural selection. He claimed that humans had evolved over countless eons, just as other animals had; and that "man still bears in his bodily frame indelible stamp of his lowly origin".¹ Thus, Darwin imagined today's man as the climax of the long process of evolution and natural selection. Frankly speaking, Darwin miserably failed to produce any solid arguments. He merely prepared sketch of how possibly evolution and natural selection worked in his imagination.

Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC) is claimed to have defined man as rational animal.² The Greek words for rational animal probably are *zoon logon echon*.³ The first word *zoon* in Greek appears to have been translated into Latin as *animalis*. It seems this Latin version of the Greek word *zoon* which made its way into other European languages, including English as animal.⁴ One may justifiably raise a question as to what the Greek word *zoon* signifies in original Greek. It connotes, among other things, living being.⁵ It may, then, be confidently assumed that Aristotle in his definition of man did not mean "rational animal". It should rather have been "rational living being".

Darwinian theory as mentioned above represents only conjecture and conjecture cannot be the substitute of the truth, as the Qur'an elucidates: "*And most of the people follow but conjecture; surely, conjecture can be no substitute for truth. Allah is well-aware of whatever*

they do” (10:36). The intellectual world stands confused over whether Aristotle meant in his definition of man “rational animal or rational being”.

The Qur'anic concept of man is undoubtedly logical. For that matter, several Qur'anic statements need to be taken into consideration:

- 1) “They (jinn and men) have hearts, but they think not, they have eyes, but they see not, they have ears. but they hear not. They are like cattle, nay, they are worse in errors. It is they, they who are heedless” (7:179).
- 2) “Verily, the vilest of all creatures in the sight of Allah are those deaf, those dumb ones who do not use their reason” (8:22).
- 3) “And when I proportioned his (human) physical features and breathed into him of My spirit, they (the angels), then, fell down before him in prostration” (15:29).
- 4) “We have indeed conferred dignity on the children of Adam, and born them over land and sea, and provided for them sustenance out of good things, and favored them far above most of Our creation” (17:70).
- 5) “Does not man remember that We created him before, out of nothing” (19:67).
- 6) “He began the creation of man out of clay. Then He causes him to be begotten out of the essence of a humble fluid. And then He formed him in appropriate proportion and breathed into him of His spirit. And thus, He endows you with hearing, sight, and hearts. How seldom are you grateful” (32:9).
- 7) “Certainly, We created man in the best make” (95:4).

The first verse (7:179) states clearly that men (and jinn) are endowed with intellectual power to think, to observe, and to receive knowledge. If they suspend their intellectual power and prefer to remain non-intellectual being, they become at par with animals that do not have the capacity to obtain knowledge whereby develop themselves religiously, socially, politically, culturally, economically, educationally, and morally. In that case men do not deserve to be considered better than their cattle and they rather receive humiliating treatment due to their heedless attitude. Such men and jinn are fated to be consigned to hellfire on the Day of Judgment.

The second verse (8:22) equates men with deaf and dumb who do not apply their reason to discern the right and the wrong, the good and the bad, the useful and the harmful, the desirable and the undesirable, and the lawful and the unlawful. Such people as these are worthless in the sight of Allah.

The third verse (15:29) describes how the process of creation of the first man involved three stages, selection of the raw material (clay), formation of the physical features, and animation of the structure (through the breathing into it of the Creator's spirit). Thereupon, the angels fell down before the first man in prostration, which signifies (1) the respect of the man, and (2) subservience to man.

The fourth verse (17:70) places all descendants of Adam, the first man on an enviably highest position on the earth. This dignified status of man is by birth and natural. Here in the verse three extraordinarily distinct features of mankind are cited as the manifestation of honorable place of human beings in the divine scheme of life on the earth: (1) most of what is in the universe has been subjugated to mankind, (2) mankind has been provided what is considered good on the earth as sustenance, and (3) mankind has been favored far above most of the creation in the universe.

The fifth verse (19:67) rebuts the so-called scientific theory of human origin. It stresses that man, the first or the later ones, did not undergo the stages of evolution and natural selection. The first man, Adam was designed, shaped, and animated directly by the Creator, Allah. Had there been stages of evolution in the emergence of the first man the Qur'an would surely have stated them.

The sixth verse (32:9) refers to an honor which was not granted to any creature save man. That unparalleled honor is that the first man, Adam received somewhat essence of the divine spirit. The natural result of this honor is that man became intellectual being hence moral being. The intellectual power enables man to discern what is what.

The seventh verse (95:4) emphasizes that physical and the intellectual features of man are the most appropriate and precisely suitable for the task he/she has been assigned.

In the light of these facts as mentioned in the above verses (and many others) man may be defined "as the most honorable being endowed with most suitable physical and intellectual power who is morally responsible for his thoughts, choices, and actions on the surface of the earth".⁶ In this definition of man there is no room for equating him/her with animals.

Defining Society: Views of Sociologists:

As per Oxford English Dictionary, society literally, among other things, means "(1) people living together in an ordered community, and (2) a community of people living in a country or region, and having shared customs, laws and organizations".⁷ Scholars have variously defined society. By looking at a range of technical connotations of society as sociologists and anthropologists suggest, one may deduce that the experts

are not sure of what they come up with. It seems they merely play with words and nothing else. Few examples may suffice to substantiate the claim:

1-According to Franklin Henry Giddings (1855-1931), "Society is a number of like-minded individuals who know and enjoy their like-mindedness and are therefore able to work together for common ends".⁸

2-Moris Ginsberg (1889-1970) defines: "A society is a collection of individuals united by certain relations or modes of behavior which mark them off from others who do not enter into these relations or who differ from them in behavior".⁹

3-Kimball Young (1893-1972) says: "Society is a general term for persons living in social relations".¹⁰

It is evidently clear from the views of big names in the sociology that society can be defined only in an abstract manner. In the above-quoted three definitions of society there is nothing that could be considered specific and concrete. What is obvious from these assertions of sociologists is that society is constituted by individuals who know about what is common among them and who enjoy the social relations.

Defining Society: the Qur'anic View:

One can find in the Qur'an four terms which appear very close to the term society:

- (1) *Ummah*: "And thus We have made you a community (ummah) of the middle way" (2:143); "You are the best community (ummah) brought forth for mankind" (3:110).
- (2) *'Aalamin*: "Blessed is He who revealed the Criterion (the Qur'an) to His Servant (the Last Prophet) to be a warner to communities {'aalamin} (25:1); "It (the Qur'an) is nothing but a reminder to the communities {'aalamin} (81:27).
- (3) *Shu'uban*: "O mankind, surely We have created you of a male and a female and made you into communities (shu'uban) and tribes so that you may know each other" (49:13).
- (4) *Qaba'il*: "O mankind, surely We have created you of a male and a female and made you into communities (shu'uban) and tribes (qaba'il) so that you may know each other" (49:13).

Ummah (2:143; 3:110) signifies well-knit community. This word is derived from *umm* which means mother, so *ummah* means the people who enjoy living with others due to the same root. The word *'aalamin* is literally plural of *'alam* which means world/region. The context of the message in the verses (25:1; 81:27) shows that the word *'aalamin* stands for societies, communities, and nations. The word *shu'uban* as used in the verse (49:13) is plural of *sha'b* which means community. The word

qaba'il as occurred in the verse (49:13) is plural of *qabilah* which means tribe or community in which individuals are united with one another due to several common factors, such as culture, language, history etc. These four terms (*ummah*, *'aalamīn*, *shu'uban*, *qaba'il*) denote in one way or another community of people who live together owing to common culture and traditions. The Qur'an seeks to develop society whose individuals share similar faith, moral values, devotional rituals, cultural traditions, economic principles, political directions, intellectual attitudes with a view to achieving peace on the earth, on the one hand, and earning pleasure of Allah, on the other.

It is noteworthy that the verse in *Surah al-Baqarah:143* (as quoted above) uses the term *wasatan* as an adjective of *ummah*, thus putting the term as *ummatan wasatan*. The first word *ummatan* means community (society) and its adjective *wasatan* is translated as middle (nature). Literally, the term *ummatan wasatan* means society of the middle nature. What could middle natured society technically denote? It would surely mean the society free from all kinds of extreme thoughts, beliefs, approaches, practices, manifestations, and actions. Logically, *ummatan wasatan*, then, refers to the society where its members subscribe to the right belief, right approaches, right practices, right manifestations, and right actions. Here one may raise a question as to how to consider something right and something wrong. Its answer is very simple yet rational. Man is unaware of his/her reality. But, Allah, the Creator of the universe knows very well who the man is and what could be the right or the wrong for him/her. Myriads of dimensions in the beliefs and practices available on the earth today speak volumes of the inability of human being to discover the truth on his/her own. The human beings indeed stand in need of the divine help without which they will miserably fail to find what is the right what is the wrong. It may then be claimed that human intellect suffices to guide human beings to the right and wrong. Undoubtedly, human intellect works wonder as regards the physical world. Man can after experiences, deliberations, observations, and thorough study reach the conclusion whether a particular thing (for consumption as food, drink, shelter, clothes, tool, machine etc.) is useful or harmful. As for human behavior directed to the Supreme Being, his/her own self, the people around him/her, the environment, the other creatures like animals, human intellect can never discover through experiences and empirical methods the right and the wrong. Historically, man whenever left on his/her own develops the philosophies like hedonism which teach the man that what brings maximum pleasure to human taste is right. According to most of the human philosophies developed in the modern times, something that is

found right today might be deemed wrong tomorrow. Human behavioral pattern must be absolute in nature, not relative. Human intellect is never as powerful as to discover the right principles of behavior. There is only one way for the human intellect to work in this regard miraculously. Allah reveals the principles of behavior to the mankind through a particular system known as Apostleship (*risalah* or *nubuwwah*). Here the human intellect can work and decide whether the revealed messages are acceptable as right.

The Qur'anic term *ummatan wasatan* may be translated as ideal human society. It should be born in mind that ideal here means perfect and practical. Thus, "the ideal human society may be defined as a perfect organization of human individuals whether homogenous or heterogenous who subscribe to the right beliefs, the right practices, the right manifestations, and the right actions which will ultimately lead to the peace on the earth and the pleasure of Allah".¹¹

The Features of Ideal Human Society"

The ideal human society as envisaged in the Qur'an features four principles: (1) Sincerity of Commitment to Allah and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.), (2) Dominance of Absolute Moral Values, (3) Caring Attitude towards the Animals, and (4) Sensitivity to the Ecosystem.

Sincerity of Commitment to Allah and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.): Every human being is either sincerely or hypocritically committed to either his/her Creator, the Sovereign or to himself/herself or to any other person or to any object/s as deity/deities. No human mind and heart can ever remain void of such commitment. Some people commit themselves to Allah, the Creator, the Sustainer, the Provider, the Controller of the universe (3:191); some bow down to deities of their own making (6:74); some obey unconditionally religious priests and saints (9:31), and some submit to their own selves (45:23). Generally, the world considers religious freedom one of the human rights. Religious freedom is surely a human right as the Qur'an itself does not advocate use of force in conversion of the people to another faith (2:256). The submission to any other than Allah goes against the dignity of man. The entire mankind holds the highest rank on the earth (17:70). This highest rank and dignity of man can remain intact only when he/she submits to his/her Creator the One who conferred on the mankind the most honorable position.

Even rationally, man does not need to submit to someone and something that are powerless. Idols, images, natural forces, saints, priests, and leaders hold no power to benefit or harm any human being. Allah is the only One who is to be worshipped and obeyed. It is because He is All-Powerful. And none-else is besides Allah powerful. Should the man

worship Allah the Almighty or any creation which is too weak to act and react?

Psychologically, all men and women, whether young or old, whether black or white are prone to beseech someone or something to satisfy their unfulfilled dreams. How can the creations who are implored grant their prayers? Only Allah has the power to fulfil their wishes: *“And when My servants ask you (O Muhammad!), concerning Me. Indeed, I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he/she calls upon Me...”* (2:186). Thus, honorable position of the entire mankind, All-Powerfulness of Allah, and divine inspiration to human beings to invoke Him alone-all demand that man should commit sincerely and wholeheartedly to Allah alone, and to none-else.

The sincere and wholehearted commitment to Allah and His Last Apostle (s.a.w.) means unconditional obedience to Allah and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.). The Qur'an time and again reiterates this message concerning obedience to Allah and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.):

- 1) “O you who have attained to faith, obey Allah, and obey the Apostle and those in authority from among you. If you develop any controversy in a matter, refer it to Allah and the Apostle, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is good and excellent in the end” (4:59).
- 2) “And obey Allah and obey the Apostle and be cautious. If you turn back, then know that only a clear deliverance is on Our Apostle” (5:92).
- 3) “Say: Obey Allah and Obey the Apostle, but if you turn back, then on him rests what is imposed on him and on you rests what is imposed on you. And if you obey him, you will be on the right path, and nothing rests on the Apostle but clear delivery of the message” (24:54).
- 4) “On that Day when their faces shall be turned around in the fire, they will say: Would that we had obeyed Allah and obeyed the Messenger” (33:66).
- 5) “O you who have attained to faith, obey Allah and obey the Apostle, and do not invalidate your deeds” (47:33).
- 6) “And obey Allah and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away, remember, then, Our Messenger has no other duty than to clearly convey the truth” (64:12).

Human society needs to always remain free from any kinds of chaos and mischief. Disobedience to Allah and His Last Prophet (s.a.w.) is by itself manifestation of mischief which continues multiplying it on the earth and appears in the form of sheer injustice. Individuals in the society who

commit to Allah and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.) indeed identify themselves with the entire universe which invariably submit to Allah:

“Have you not seen that all those who are in the heavens and all those who are on the earth prostrate themselves before Allah; and so do the sun and the moon, and the stars and the mountains, and the trees, and the beasts, and so do many human beings, and even many of those who are condemned to chastisement. And anyone whom Allah humiliates, non can give him/her honor. Verily, Allah does whatever He wills” (22:18).

One may not disagree to the sincerity of commitment to Allah but may disagree to the need of commitment to the Last Prophet (s.a.w.). This view is consequent upon ones' ignorance of the significance of the Last Prophet (s.a.w.). It should never be ignored that the Apostle of Allah is the one who receive message from Allah through revelation and he is the one who rehearses the revealed messages to the mankind (62:2). If the Last Prophet (s.a.w.) is removed from the demand of commitment of Allah, how could the mankind learn the right way to commit sincerely to Allah. One might suggest here that sincerity to other Prophets like Moses and Jesus would replace to that of the Last Prophet (s.a.w.), It is but a miscalculated suggestion. The teachings of all the previous Prophets including Moses and Jesus are lost beyond recognition. For this suggestion to be practical previous Prophets' teachings should remain available with complete pristine purity. The Last Prophet's (s.a.w.) teachings are all fully preserved until today through the process of historical continuity in memorizing them, reading them, documenting them, authenticating them, and communicating them to the posterity. Any claim to obey Allah without obeying the Last Prophet will be unreliable.

Dominance of Absolute Moral Values:

Both spheres of the globe, the East and the West know and subscribe to the idea of moral values, but this knowledge and subscription have lost their gravity in relation to human life. Even the universally appreciated moral values have been cruelly subjected to alteration as to their scope of implementation. The moral values are now looked at from the philosophical and political spectacles. The most dominant moral philosophies today are hedonism and individualism. Hedonism literally means the pursuit of pleasure and self-indulgence. Its philosophical connotation that pleasure is the highest good and proper aim of human life.¹² Individualism may be defined as a social and political philosophy of self-reliance and personal freedom of action.¹³ According to this philosophy, every individual is of prime value and the society is a means of satisfying his/her ends.¹⁴

The Qur'an seeks to strike balance between individuals and the society. In the Qur'anic scheme of society, individuals need to contribute to the development of society which in return honor the individuals' human rights. As a matter of fact, individuals are valuable only when they remain attached with the society. They become valueless in isolation of the society. Individuals' life must demonstrate moral values as promulgated by the Qur'an. The moral values as enunciated in the Last and the Final Scripture for the mankind may be classified into three categories: (1) moral inspirations, (2) moral denominations, and (3) moral prohibitions.

Moral Inspirations:

The Qur'an mentions many moral virtues that are required to be applied in actions and interactions, such as sincerity, honesty, justice, excellence, generosity, charity, sweet words, moderation, utmost struggle, patience, humility, purity etc. These descriptions are in the form of instructions, prescriptions, and inspirations. Concrete examples from the Qur'an will surely suffice to bring the idea home.

- 1) **Sincerity to Allah:** "O you who have attained to faith! Be sincere to Allah with utmost sincerity and die not save in the state of total submission" (3:102). This instruction very precisely occurs in the Qur'an at several other places (viz. 2:278; 4:131; 5:35; 5:112; 9:119; 33:70; 57:28; 59:18). The original Qur'anic statement is "ittaqu Allah" which is generally rendered into English as "fear Allah" or be "conscious of Allah". Fearing Allah and being conscious of Him denote sincerity to Him. If the individuals are sincere to Allah, they will certainly obey Him and abide by His rules as promulgated in the Qur'an. As a corollary, sincerity to Allah makes one sincere to human individuals in the society.
- 2) **Justice, Generosity, and Charity:** "Verily, Allah commands to uphold justice, to interact generously, and giving financial succor to the next of the kin" (16:90); "And be generous to the parents, the relatives, the orphans, the needy, the neighbor from among your relatives, the neighbor who is strange, the companion, the wayfarer, those who are under your care" (4:36). In fact, sincerity to Allah, justice, generosity, and charity constitute cardinal virtues in the Qur'anic scheme of morality.
- 3) **Moderation:** Extreme thoughts and actions are abhorred by most of the people. The Qur'an inspires individuals to opt for moderation in every act of life, including the mode of walking: "And be moderate in your pace, and lower your voice; for the harshest of the sounds without doubt the braying of ass" (31:19). The Qur'an admires the

- approach of moderation in economic life: “(The true servants of Allah are they) who in their spending are neither extravagant nor niggardly but are between these two extremes, moderate” (25:67).
- 4) **Sweet Words:** In conversation the people do not like harsh words or the manifestation of anger. The Qur'an inspires the individuals to speak sweet words: “And speak sweet words to the people” (2:83).
 - 5) **Humility:** Arrogance and haughtiness are never admirable attitudes: “Do not turn your face in contempt away from people, nor tread haughtily upon earth” (31:18).
 - 6) **Patience:** The key to success in life is patience individually as well as collectively: “O you who believe! Observe patience, excel in patience, remain determined, and be sincere to Allah so that you might attain to bliss” (3:200).
 - 7) **Purity:** Keeping oneself clean inwardly and outwardly ensures purity of heart and mind. The Last Prophet (s.a.w.) was instructed by Allah in the very initial stages of his mission: “And keep your garments free from every filth and impurity” (74:4). The maintaining of outer purity reflects the purity of both inner and outer self.
 - 8) **Honesty:** Being honest and upright in life is one of the most fundamental qualities the Qur'an seeks to inculcate the people: “And successful are those who are truthful to their trusts and promises” (23:8). It is well-known that distrust and dishonesty render the society worse than the hell.
 - 9) **Excellence:** Thinking the best, selecting the best, and doing the best constitute the best policy and are most suited to human dignity. The Qur'an invites the mankind individually and socially to opt for the excellence in life: “But seek with which Allah has bestowed on you the abode in the hereafter, nor forget you share in this world, and be excellent as Allah has been excellent to you and seek not mischief in the land for Allah does not love those who do mischief” (28:77). It flows from this verse that doing excellent leads to peace and doing the things haphazardly brings chaos and mischief on the earth.
 - 10) **Utmost Struggle:** This is English rendering of a Qur'anic principle, “jihad”. This is the most praiseworthy principle underlying every aspect of life. The Qur'an emphasizes the significance of utmost struggle: “And whosoever makes utmost struggle, he/she does so for his/her own good. Verily, Allah is altogether independent of all the creations” (29:6).

Moral Denominations:

The Qur'an describes and praises the morally upright individuals by using some titles/names that are indeed moral denominations. These titles

include *mu'minin* (believers), *muttaqin* (conscious of Allah), *muhsinin* (the doers of good), *salihin* (the nobles), *tawwabin* (those who repent), *mutatahhirin* (those who are sensitive to purity), *khashi'in* (the fearful), *qanitin* (the devoted). These moral titles suggest that individuals in the society need to be equipped with the required qualities. One can find in the Qur'an so many verses on these dimensions of moral denominations. Only few quotations may suffice to highlight the message:

- 1- **Muttaqin (Conscious of Allah):** "Such are the truthful ones; such are conscious of Allah" (2:177).
- 2- **Muhsinin (Good Doers):** "They are those who donate in prosperity and adversity, control their anger, and pardon other. And Allah loves the good doers" (3:134).
- 3- **Qanitin (the Devoted Ones):** "Guard strictly your prayers, especially the middle one, and stand before Allah as the devoted ones" (2:238).

Moral Prohibitions:

The attribute of moral uprightness entails total abstinence from all that is undesirable and condemnable. Both uprightness and wickedness cannot go together hand in hand. The Qur'an cautions individuals of what they should abstain from. Few examples concerning moral prohibitions are quoted here below to make the issue clear:

- 1) **Sexual Anarchy:** "*And do not approach sexual act. It is outrageous act and evil way*" (17:32).
- 2) **Indulgence in Non-Issues:** "*And do not pursue that about which you have no knowledge. Surely, the hearing, the sight, the heart-each of these shall be called to account*" (17:36); "*And the successful are those who avoid whatever is frivolous*" (23:3).
- 3) **Incest:** "*And do not marry the women whom your fathers married, although what past is past. This is indeed a shameful deed, a disgusting act, and an evil way*" (4:22).
- 4) **Economic Injustice:** "*Behold, those who wrongfully devour the orphans' properties fill their bellies with fire. They will soon burn in the blazing flame*" (4:10).

Caring Attitude towards the Animals:

Non-human creatures, birds, cattle, domesticated animals, and wild animals add to the extraordinary beauty of the earth. The Qur'an reminds the man of the significance of cattle: "And He created the cattle for you, and you derive from them warm clothing, and numerous other benefits and of their meat you eat. And you have a sense of pride and beauty in them when you drive them home in the evening and when you lead them forth

to pasture in the morning. And they carry your heavy loads to lands that you could not reach except with many difficulties. Verily, your Lord is Most Kind, Most Merciful. And horses, mules, donkeys for you to ride and use for decoration. And He has created other things of which you have no knowledge” (16:5-8); “And most surely there is a lesson for you in the cattle. We give you to drink of what is in their bellies—from betwixt the feces and the blood-pure milk, sweet and palatable to those who drink” (16:66). The Qur’an invites mankind to take care of, as much as possible, the non-human creatures: “(My Lord is the One) who made the earth for you in expanse and made for you therein paths and sent down the rainwater from the cloud, then thereby We have brought forth species of various herbs. Eat, then, and pasture your cattle. Most surely there are messages in this for those endowed with power of understanding” (20:53-54). In Surah al-Nazi‘at (79) the verses 27-32 describe the blessings of Allah on the earth and then in the next verse the Qur’an declares: “These constitute provision for you and for your cattle” (79:33).

Sensitivity to the Ecosystem:

“An ecosystem is a geographic area where plants, animals, and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life”.¹⁵ It is the environment surrounding mankind where every human individual live and derive countless of benefits. Human individuals receive oxygen, water, plants, trees, herbs, vegetables, fruits, and so on so forth from the ecosystem. Naturally, the polluted ecosystem will adversely affect the quality of the human life. For maintaining high quality of human life on the earth the ecosystem is to be safeguarded. The Qur’an at several places describes ecosystem blessings. For instance, *Surah al-Naba’* (78) reads: “*Have We not made the earth an even expanse? And the mountains as projections? And We created you in pairs, and We made your sleep source of rest, and We made the night as covering, and We made the day for seeking livelihood, and We made above you seven strong (heavens), and We made a shining lamp (sun), And We send down from the sky water pouring forth abundantly, so that We may bring forth thereby corn and herbs, and gardens dense and luxuriant*” (78:6-16).

The Qur’an uses a term, *fasad* (corruption, mischief, chaos) to denounce misdeeds either in human behavior or directed to ecosystem. The Qur’an vehemently condemns corruption in the ecosystem: “*And recall when Moses prayed for water for his people and We replied:*

“Strike the rock with your staff”, and there gushed out from it twelve springs and each tribe knew its drinking place. (Then you were directed): Eat and drink of the sustenance provided by Allah, and do not go about acting wickedly on the earth, spreading mischief” (2:60). Undoubtedly, damage to the ecosystem is *fasad* which is a heinous crime to the humanity. Allah, therefore, does not like those who spread *fasad* on the surface of the earth: “Verily, Allah does not love those who spread mischief” (28:77). The term *fasad fi al-ard* denotes mischief on the earth behaviorally as well as ecologically.

Conclusion:

Man is an intellectual being. The entire mankind holds the most dignified status on the earth, as Allah favored them far above most of the creations. By nature, the mankind love to form and live in society which is a well-knit organization where individuals act towards peace and development. They are advised by the Qur'an to develop an environment on the earth where the individuals submit sincerely and wholeheartedly to their Creator, Allah the Almighty and the Last Prophet (s.a.w.), govern their public and private life in accordance with the moral virtues, whether in the form of inspirations, or denominations, or prohibitions, try to honor the rights of other creatures including animals, and put their effort in protecting the physical environment around them. This is the ideal society the Qur'an, the Word of Allah envisages.

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