

The Importance of Tolerance in Islam Thoughts of Bahauddin Naqshband

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ABSTRACT

Tolerance in Islam is a complex act, based on two foundations, that is, the nature of reward and that of prophecy. Whilst it does not lead to indifference, it also rejects any retreatment from the main beliefs of Islam. On the other hand, it reconciles with the rule of commanding right and forbidding wrong which emphasises being responsible towards any true or wrong belief and any good or bad behaviour. Additionally, Sufism is a mystical form of Islam that has flourished in the Muslim world for centuries. The Sufi emphasis on love as a central attribute of a believer shifts the focus from institution and ritual to the diffusion of love for God and for others. Therefore, the Muslim path leads to a kind of openness to others that the institutional aspect of the faith cannot embrace. Thus, this article will discuss Islamic and Sufi teachings on the importance of religious tolerance and human perfection.

KEYWORDS: Tasawwuf, Principles of Naqshbandi Order, spiritual crisis, human spirituality, religious tolerance, freedom of faith, aqidah (belief), ibadah (worship), akhlaq (ethics), and shariah (laws).

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, people are facing mental and spiritual crisis due to the process of development in society. Social and economic pressure has been affecting people's mental wellness for several decades. Islam pays special attention to the principles of humanity, the high moral values, and the progress of society. In this context, there are many branches of Islamic science. One of such disciplines is Sufism or Tasawwuf, which focuses on cleansing aspects of human spirituality (Nasr, 1991). It refers to a spiritual path on which a person travels in order to purify his soul from sins and attain close relation to Allah. An individual can discover ways to self-clean, and appear as a self-controlling person, who can maintain the honesty, sincerity, and responsibility. The idea of tolerance is deeply embedded in the minds of many great Sufis who lived in the past. Religious tolerance has been the criterion of the pillars of Islam. The human perfection in Islam and the traditional tasks assigned to them have been raised on the same level of individual's self-esteem, patience, respect, and appreciation of others.

MAIN PART

"Tolerance" in Arabic is translated as "Halim", which is one of the 99 names of Allah. A great scholar Al-Bukhari narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) said: "Muslim is the person who does not hurt others". So, first and foremost to be

Muslim is not to hurt or abuse anybody in any way. The hurt must be not either physically or morally. It means that true Muslims should help others, and live in cooperation, mutual respect and support the people around them. Furthermore, they must be tolerant toward others.

Fadzil (2011) stated the Islamic conception of tolerance does not mean toleration of social injustice or weakening of one's views. It means accepting the fact that human beings possess the right to live in peace, regardless of their appearance, situation, values and behavior. This suggests that tolerance deals with the basic equality, dignity, universal rights, and fundamental freedom of thought of human beings. The basis for these issues is recognized in the Qur'an and acknowledged in Islamic shariah (law).

There are certain goals of Islam religion. Those to secure and develop human beings in five areas. They include the life, the freedom of faith, the mind, the family and children, and the rights of ownership (ex., private or public property). These Islamic elements are aqidah (belief), ibadah (worship), akhlaq (ethics) and shariah (laws). Aqidah and ibadah are not imposed on non-Muslims. The Qur'an verses "there is no compulsion in religion" (2:256) do not tolerate non-Muslims grudgingly, but welcome them to live in a Muslim society. Ethically, Islamic principles are no different from those of other religions. All religions emphasize on virtues such as justice, mercy, good deeds, love, bravery,

generosity, modesty, and disapprove injustice, deceit, and harshness to the weak.

It shows in the Qur'an that Islam believes in tolerance in the scene of belief. Tolerance in Islam does not arise from indifference towards religion and relativity in knowledge, which is one of the important foundations in contemporary age. It is grounded in Islam's understanding of the nature of reward and Prophecy. The Qur'an introduces humans as free creatures who enjoy sufficient knowledge to differentiate between right and wrong. Through this power of selection, humans will enjoy reward or punishment. It is described in the Qur'an that humans will receive whatever they have earned without any injustice on the resurrection day. "Today each soul will be rewarded for whatever it has earned. There will be no wrong [done] on that day; God is Swift in reckoning!" (Q40:17; Irving 2009). God could have created all humans in one faith, but he has not done so. It should be trial for humans, distinguishing their goodness and evilness to reward them accordingly. Imam Ali encourages the Muslims to feel responsible towards the right and the wrong, referring to this same verse as an evidence that the proceeding nations were annihilated because of being indifferent (Kulayni, 1986). The responsibility of different groups in society is not the same; those more knowledgeable and more powerful are more in charge and have more responsibility than those in lower levels as in the aforementioned verse, where rabbis and scholars representing the well-informed groups of society are criticised for their indifference about the ill practices in their community (Sadeqi Tehrani, 1985).

Islam ask humans to think about its arguments (Q4:82; 47:24). Thus, the way for spreading its cause is only by discussion, where the individual becomes convinced rationally and their heart submits to its teachings. Therefore, the only ideal way to confront with the other beliefs is through a wise dialogue and good advice. Invite [people] to your Lord's way with discretion and kindly instruction, and discuss [things] with them in the politest manner. Your Lord is quite aware as to who has strayed from His path, just as He is quite aware of those who have consented to be guided (Q16:125; Irving 2009).

BHAUDDIN NAQSHBAND AND HIS TEACHINGS

A popular Central Asian Sufi scholar, Khoja Bahauddin Naqshband advocated tolerance in his teachings. One of the pillars of his teaching called "Khalwat dar anjuman" promotes the idea of external cooperation and internal justice. As Naqshbandi said: "If a man greets you, prays for you in a good way, greet him in a better way". Moreover, to the question "What is faith?" Bahauddin responds as: "Avoiding and preserving from all the harms that can cause one harm is faith".

Sufis played an unbelievable role in the spiritual and moral development. The word Naqshbandi is interpreted as engraver (of heart). This way of Sufism is also known as "the sublime Sufi path" or "the way of the golden chain". There

are two basic principles of Sufism: "tawhid" (Nothing exists except Allah) and "tawakkul" (absolute trust in Allah). "Tawhid" refers to the interpretation that nothing truly exists except Allah. The God's love to man and Man's love to God is also a central theme of Islamic Sufism. Additionally, one of the greatest Sufi Masters of the Naqshbandi Sufi Order 'Abdul Khaliq al Ghujdawani' established eight systematic principles for spiritual development which are being considered "Principles of Naqshbandi Sufi Order". These principles are as follows:

1. Remembrance (Yad kard): Always orally and mentally repeating the dhikr.
2. Restraint (Baz gasht): Engaging in the heart repetition of the phrase "Al-kalimat at-tayyiba".
3. Watchfulness (Nigah dasht): Being conscientious over wandering thoughts while repeating the phrase "Al-kalimat at-tayyiba".
4. Recollection (Yad dasht): Concentration upon the Divine presence in a condition of dhawq (foretaste, intuitive anticipation or perceptiveness, not using external aids).
5. Awareness while breathing (Hosh dar dam): Controlling one's breathing by not exhaling or inhaling in the forgetfulness of the Divine.
6. Journeying in one's homeland (Safar dar watan): An internal journey that moves the person from having blameworthy to praiseworthy properties.
7. Watching one's step (Nazar bar qadam): Do not be distracted from purpose of the ultimate journey "Solitude in a crowd" (Khalwat dar anjuman).
8. Although journey is outwardly in this world, it is inwardly with God.

In Psychological context, these principles refined human thought, enhanced level of concentration, restrained from laziness; increased self-confident, developed skills, expertise and talent, enhanced level of competency and encouraged to take part actively in worldly affairs, developed good morals, promoted peace into the society. They became a source of removing doubts, getting rid of fear, despair, anxiety, worldly stress, depression and other complex mental disorders. They also blew the feelings of security, satisfaction, happiness, pleasure and contentment and provided an opportunity of living pure, healthy, satisfied, and beneficial life with no regrets. In spiritual context, these principles developed the behavior of forgiveness, pardon, kindness, sympathy, mercy, and softness by abstaining heart from bad inclinations, thoughts, wishes, desires, emotions and attitudes and encouraged to perform righteous actions with ease. They instigated to take care of inner and outer purification by removing the stains of spirit and enlighten the heart with faith and zikr. The result of following these principles appeared in the form of an increase in power of spirit and strength of insight.

DISCUSSIONS

Islam does not support forced conversion into the religion. The Qur'an declares: "There is no force in religion; the right direction is henceforth distinct from error" (Surat al-Baqara, 256). Muhammad (s.a.a.w) condemns aggression and aggressive actions in many Hadiths. For example, He says: "Do not wish a military conflict with the enemy, but ask for peace and tranquility from God". In another Hadith, He declares: "On the Day of Judgment you will be questioned about the blood you shed unjustly".

The religion of Islam is considered to be the religion of peace. Peace, harmony, stability, religious tolerance and cooperation are important features of the religion. Peace and harmony in the society, mobilization of the population to good and creative work, contribute to the prosperity of the Earth, showing compassion for all living things on earth and being merciful are promoted in the framework of the concept of religious tolerance in Islam.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, the religion has always been an important structure of the process of education and upbringing, and a participating organizer of the formation of the idea of religious tolerance and promotion of the ideas of the religious tolerance. Hence we have building a civil society and democratic state in our country, the young generation must comprehend and practice the true concept of both religious and secular tolerance with its close link to the world. The principles of tolerance are essential in teaching the relationship between the state and religion within the requirements of civilization.

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