Islamic Perspectives on Humanity: Insights from the Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal

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ABSTRACT

Islam is a complete code of life. It provides guidelines to make life better in this life and life hereinafter. Man is a social animal. All human societies depend on each other for survival and sustenance. This article consists of four main components that may strengthen the relations between human societies. These elements (human equality, human unity, human freedom, and humanitarian aid) are the real foundation of humanity. Human equality, human unity, human freedom, and humanitarian aid are the main facts causing a peaceful, progressive, and pluralistic society; human dignity and human supremacy are attained, which can uplift a nation and any society or nation. These human factors have been elaborated in the light of the Islamic teachings and thoughts of Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the national poet of Pakistan. Iqbal's philosophy always provokes human beings to adopt human characteristics. The main stress of Iqbal is upon the upliftment of humanity, which makes it superior through its actions rather than claims and slogans. The new generation needs such insights and thoughts to get rid of ideological and physical servitude. The methodology of this research is to discuss the main elements of humanity in accordance with Islamic thoughts and Iqbal's poetry. This research reflects how Iqbal's poetry makes a real comment on Qur'anic orders and the teachings of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). The article will enable the readers to understand the great thoughts of Allama Muhammad Iobal and their compatibility with Islamic teachings and competency to awaken the sleeping Muslim nation, especially its youth.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human beings are the crown among the creations of Allah Almighty. If they characterize themselves with the attributes of humanity, they become worthy of all creatures. This is the reason that the main subject of the Holy Qur'an is man, and the Qur'an has repeatedly addressed this man and educated him on the norms to lead a successful life here and attain ultimate success in the Hereafter. The ultimate and eternal life, which will begin after death, depends upon the actions done in this temporary world. To guide human beings on the means and actions for adorning his real residence and saving him from torment and ruin, Allah Almighty uses the word for "man" and its related words ninety times in the Holy Qur'an. "*Al-Insan*" has been used 65 times, "Ins" 18 times, "*Unas*" 5 times, "*Insiyya*" 1 time, and "*Anasi*" 1 time (Abd-al-Baqi, p.4-93). The purpose of the Qur'anic usage of such words is to make man aware of the means of his welfare and better future and the causes of his ruin and the distortion of his grave. Allah Almighty describes the brief sketch of human success as: "By the time. Verily, man is bound to lose himself. Unless he be of those who attain faith, and do good works, and enjoin upon one another the keeping to truth, and enjoin upon one another patience in adversity"(*Al Quran*,103:1-3)

The Holy Qur'an has provided four modes of ultimate success and these are: (a) Purification of believe, (b) good actions, (c)Perseverance of truth, and (d)to encourage and advise each other for patience in adversity. Whoever adopts these succeeds ultimately, and overcomes the harsh crises of the time and community. The most important element of human life is good action, standing for truth and keeping on efforts and tolerating the hardships of the time which are temporary. These are source for enjoyment of good time and lasting success. Allah Almighty declares the status of human beings as:

"Verily, we created man in the best confirmation"(Al Quran, 95:4)

This best confirmation is due to humans' sense of differentiation between good and bad. When a person ignores the purpose his life and his creation, he is pushed to humiliation and disgrace as Allah Almighty has clearly mentioned that:

"And thereafter we reduce him to the lowest of low"(Al Quran, 95:5)

Traditions narrated by Holy Prophets # exhibit some important factors for the glory of man as:

خير الناس من انفعهم للناس

(Al-Ţabarānī, v.6, p.58)

"The best of people are those who are most beneficial to people"

خياركم خياركم لنسائكم

(*Al-Bayhaqī*, 2003, v.1, p.128)

"The best of you are those who are best for their wives"

Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal was a great philosopher and a great Muslim thinker who presented Islamic approaches through his poetry in such a unique way that his thought-provoking verses entirely changed lives of the readers and they felt spiritual maturity and satisfaction through practicing his long living teachings which are actual concept of Islam. This research paper is a study of universal thoughts of this dynamic personality which awake the Muslim community and lead them to achieve the goals of their lives through struggle, obeying the divine teachings of Allah Almighty and His Prophet Muhammad ²⁸.

This study is an elaboration of Islamic thoughts related to human uplift, especially through Iqbal's poetry. This research paper is an elaboration of equality, human unity, human freedom, and humanitarian aid through Islamic teachings and Iqbal's thoughts.

2. HUMAN EQUALITY

The real ascension of humanity is its equality. To understand this idea in its true sense it is necessary to look the human being as human rather than his financial, social or physical status. If there is discrimination between rich and poor, officers and common men, rules and subjects then it will be a clear sign of destruction and ruin of any society, nation or civilization and it is the main reason of injury of human dignity. The nations which loose human dignity can be easily erased from the world surface. Hinduism has divided the humanity into four classes which are brahman, khatri, vesh and shuadr(Arshad Alī-Zī, p.44) and shudra is extremely in humiliating condition in Hindu society who cannot even touch the others(Arshad Alī-Zī, p.22).

Islam eliminated this sense of inequality and made the humanity equal in their legal, social

and other citizen ship rights. Islam considers all the citizens equal to law. as it punished respected Quraishi women who committed theft and some people approached the Holy Prophet st through Usma bin Zaid to ask him^{##} not to cut her hands due to her crime and he delivered a long address condemning this recommendation and declaring this attitude the main cause for the destruction of ancient nations who used to pardon and leave the strong and powerful people and punish the weaker ones (Bukhārī, v.4, p.175). Even he s severed that she was Fatima daughter of Muhammad and committed theft he must cut her hand(Bukhārī, v.4, p.175). History also observes the human equality examples on many oceans in Prophetic dealings with his companions such as trench battle where the companions of Holy prophet observed the severe hunger due to lack of sources but they preserved for truth and for Holy Prophet # even tying up stones on their bellies to prevent the back from getting crooked and companions complained him their hunger and told him their stone tying matter, he # removed the shirt from his belly and companions observed that he swas tying two stones on his belly due to severe hunger but did not mention the fact to anyone (al-Tirmidhi, 1975, v.4, p,585).

The main example of the human social equality is the marriage of Zaid Bin Thabit with his cousin Zainab Bint-e-Jahsh(Bīhaqī, 2003, v.7, p.221) who became the mother of all Muslims later on. This event is the great example of consideration of human status rather than the racial, fiscal, administrative or physical status. The Prophetic beloved companion Bilal was a non-Arab slave but Islam made him the most respectable personality of the society and awarded him unprecedented honor and respect amongst Muslim Community(al-Tirmidhi, 1975, v.5, p.620).

Allama Muhammad Iqbal preached, and propagated this Islamic philosophy of human equality in his poems. He clearly mentions that:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.196)

"Mahmood and Ayaz stood in the same line, there remain no distinction between slave and master. Slave, master, needy and rich came together and they made a unit in your government."

This is the Islamic philosophy which makes all the Muslims equal in their prays, pilgrim and other binding acts which erases every sign of discrimination in society. Rulers and subjects, the poor and powerful peoples, bosses and subordinates stand side by side in the same line and perform the same acts at the same time and at the same spot. All these Islamic norms highlight the collective dignity, holiness and honor of humanity. is makes this ummah strong, aweinspiring and powerful amongst other nations and communities.

3. HUMAN UNITY

Humanity is a unit in its reality and authenticity. The root of human is one only and the name which is the real cause of his proud is human while all other names and all other casts, tribal communities and other racial affiliations are identification marks neither these are the ultimate names nor the sign of respect or dignity. Respect and dignity in Islam depend upon the piousness and following divine actions. Islamic concept of human unity is that they all are sons and daughters of Adam and Eve Peace Be upon

Them, the first humans on this earth planet who caused the further production of human beings. The Qur'an Highlights this concept in its verses that:

"O, people! We created you from a male and a female, and we made you races and tribes, so that you may come to know one another. The best among you before Allah is the most righteous. Allah is Knowing and Aware"(*Al Quran*, 49:13).

Iqbal presents this Islamic concept of human unity as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.307)

"Break the rhetoric of colors, races and get lost in nation as there must not remain any identity as Turani, Iranian or Afghani"

Iqbal desires to find the whole humanity as one unit rather than its bloods, colors, races, territorial jurisdictions and country borders. These are the bones of contention amongst the humanity and if they feel others just as parts of their body, they will practically become one unit and will forget all types of contentions and conflicts. The above mentioned verse of Bang-e-Dara is true translation of the Prophetic words that "You all are from Adam and Adam is from soil"(Bīhaqī, 2003, v.10, p.392). If man will keep his origin in mind he will never dare to snatch, steel or robe other's belongings but he will always be in try to help the others and will feel their problems as his own acting upon the words of Holy Prophet that "example of whole Muslim community is just like one body. When any part of the body is in pain, the whole body suffers from wakefulness and fever"(Bukhārī, v.8, p.10). Iqbal elaborates the theme of this tradition in his words as:

"If any organ of human body is pain, eye is ready to cry. How sympathetic the eye is for the whole body."

This condition of whole community is only due to their strict relation and bindings ties to each other which does not let any Muslim to ignore the others in hard times Iqbal converted this Islamic message into his poetic words and said:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.265)

"Muslim be one from the shores of the Nile to land of the Kashgar"

All relation of brotherhood will never allow to leave the human being in hard times and this relation is not binding with the religious or territorial boundaries but its main root is humanity and only humanity. This is main factor that Islam accommodates all the followers of other religions in their troubles and anxieties and does not leave them helpless in any way and it is only due to its human status which is the highest rank amongst the whole creations. Iqbal elaborates the reality of human status in astonishing style that;

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.69)

"Your rank is great; your glory is great and you are hidden in the veil of light"

He expresses the status and glory of human being that he is enjoying the highest rank

and status of dignity and glory but he moves a few steps further and mentions the human status as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.152)

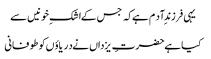
"He made the man a secret and then hid his secrets from him. Taste of awareness is impatient while the secret of life unopened"

He discusses the human anxiety and taste of exploring the secrets and get knowledge of his status and functions. At the end of this poem Allama Iqbal explains the human anxiety and his inner position as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.152)

"No one cares about human beings. What a bitter human occupation is? "

Here Allama Iqbal discusses the reality of human life and his dissatisfaction and helplessness among the crowed of the people. He wrote another poem with the title of "Hadhrat-e-Insan" and discussed its current scenario and dealings with others that:



(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.652)

"This is Adam's son due to his tears of blood Allah Almighty converted the rivers to storm"

This verse of Iqbal's poetry expresses the human attitude after man's landing on this earth planet as Qabeel the son of Adam, committed the murder of his brother Habeel. Quran(*Al Quran*, 5:24) narrates this event and Bible narrating this event names Qabeel as Qain(*Holy Bible*, 1:4:1), and this was the first murder on this earth(Ibn Mājah, 2009, v.2, p.874). This attitude destroys the peace and prosperity which results the ruin and decline of the nations and countries. Dr. Allama Iqbal discussed all these facts in his poems with the title of Insan, Hadhrat-e Iqbal, Insan aor Baz-e-Qudrat and Zamana-e-Hadhir Ka Insan and made the human being as subject of his discussion. In his poem titled: Azadi-e-Fikr he clearly mentions that:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.533)

"The people who are unaware of the manners of thought and deliberation they destroy themselves through the freedom of thought. If the thought is raw then the freedom of thought is the way to make man an animal."

Here Iqbal presents the actual philosophy of freedom of thought that it should be solid and mature and if it is immature then it will lead to destruction through its foolish results and the man will fall to the animal level. So, to make development and progress it is necessary that the national thinking style must be refined and mature.

4. HUMAN FREEDOM

Islam stresses on human freedom and it has taken the steps to make the human society free from slave as it prescribes its first atonement in many of the violation that one must free a slave as punishment. As the freedom of believer slave is atonement of murder by mistake(*Al Quran*, 4:92), freedom of any kind of slavery has been prescribed in atonement of sever(Al Quran, 5:89) and the atonement of Zihar has been prescribed as freeing any slave before touching his wife(Al Quran, 58:3). There are many examples in the Seerah of Holy Prophet 31 that he 32 encouraged and motivated his respected companions to free the slaves and prescribed different rewards for this act of human grace. He announced the double reward for a person who cradled a slave girl and managed her marriage. There is no example in Qur'an or Sunnah for motivation to make slaves but many examples are available for motivation to free the slaves and condemnation to make the free people slaves. Igbal discusses the human freedom in his poetry as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.197)

"We have deleted the invalidity from this planet as we have liberated mankind from slavery"

He also presents the thought of freedom from slavery and prescribes its methodology as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.578)

"Eastern and west wisdom has taught me a point which is plenty for slaves that all of religion, philosophy, poverty and kingdom are built on strong beliefs"

All the above-mentioned categories depend upon the strong believes and this strong believe can make the alignment of philosophy, poverty and kingdom etc. and this can free the slaves and make their free psychology. Iqbal narrates about the human psychology in his poetry that:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.576)

"They make slaves agree to live in slavery and use the interpretation of issues as an excuse"

When any human makes compromise with dangerous situation, they defend their blunders with lame excuses and argue with severe situation. Iqbal through his poetry condemns the human consent on his slavery that some people don't want to change their status and just blame the existing problems. He condemns this bad situation and says:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.576)

"Swords and tactics are useless in slavery chains of servitude are cut with strong believe"

Here Iqbal provokes the humanity to live free rather than slaves. He considers that freedom is won through struggle as tyrant and exploiter will present it as a gift. If any nation targets its freedom and strives for it no one can restrain it from its objective and. Ultimately, it reaches its target and secures its status among the nations. Iqbal desires the human freedom rather than his slavery and requires him to work hard for his destination.

5. HUMANITARIAN AID

Islam insists on help especially of deprives classes. Respected companion of Holy Prophet #Jabir narrates that Holy Prophet # said that:

خيرالناس من نفع الناس

(Bīhaqī, n.d., v.10, p.115)

"The best amongst the people is the one who benefits the people"

Tabrani narrated the tradition that:

خيرالناس انفعهم للناس

(al-Tabarani, n.d., v.6, p.58)

"The best amongst the people is who is most beneficial to the people"

The reason of this stress has been elaborated in another tradition that:

الخلق كلهم عيال الله فاحبهم الى الله انفعهم لعيالم

(Ibne Husām-ul-Din)

"All the creatures are dependents to Allah and most beloved to Allah amongst all is the most beneficial to his dependents"

Bīhaqī has narrated Hadith of the same concept(Bīhaqī, v.9, v.521) through which it has been declared that Allah Almighty owes the deprived classes and insures their help and orders the wealthy class to help such persons through their wealth and other means. Allah Almighty clearly mentions in Holy Qur'an that:

وَفِيَ أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَقٌّ لَّلِسَّآئِل وَالْمَحْرُوْمِ

(Al Quran, 70, 24)

"Beggars and deprived people have right in their wealth"

Same order with some different words has been delivered in Qur'an stressing the help of needy people(*Al Quran*, 70, 24-25) and the habit of helping the needy person has been declared as the quality of true believers as mentioned in Qur'an that:

وَيُطْعِمُوْنَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ مِسْكِيْنًا وَّيَتِيْمًا وَّاسَيْراً. إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّلهِ لَا نُرِيْدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكُوْرًا

(Al Quran, 76, 8.)

"And the feed the poor, orphans and captives just in love of Allah (and say that) we just feed for the sake of Allah, we don't desire any kind of reward or thanks".

The study of Qur'an and Sunnah makes it clear that humanity must always be ready for

the help of other humans and must not ignore them at any cost. Allama Iqbal also endorse Islamic motto of helping the deprived, depressed and oppressed human classes to provide them the opportunity to live fearlessly and enjoy the means of life. He declares his slogan and desire in his prayer for children that:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.44)

"My desire becomes a prayer on my lips that O God may my life be like a candle. May my job be to support the poor, to love the afflicted and the weak".

Here Iqbal desires his life to be just like candle which burns itself and enlightens the others especially its surroundings. His desire is to support the poor and love the compassionate and weak ones is for the whole humanity not for any special human class and he express his passion of human service as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.45)

"The best people in the world are those who help others"

The volunteer service of the humanity is the real worship as Islam desires to provide livelihood to all the human community without considering color, race, territory, religion, nationality and casts. If someone sleeps at night by fulfilling his body needs and his neighbor remains hunger, he will never claim to be the believer as per prophetic preaching. If someone denies lending his daily usage belongings to any needy person Quran declares the rejection of his prayers.(*Al Quran*, 107, 7) Iqbal, while

elaborating the Qur'anic message doesn't specify any class of human being but relates it to whole human beings and it is the true interpretation of Qur'anic order. If someone exploits any human class and deprives it from its basic needs and deals them crucially then Iqbal awakens this deprived class and provokes them for struggle and try get rid of this crucial situation, he says:

کاخ امراءکے درود یوار ہلادو

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p. 426)

"Arise, wake up the poor of my world and shake up the door and walls of the aristocracy"

The Iqbal's poetry styles create courage and enthusiasm in poor class to raise up for their rights and snub killing and snobbish attitudes of the powerful class of any nation. He awakes the labor class and makes them aware of the wickedness and cunning behavior of the capitalists and industrialists who are leading luxurious lives because of hardship and tireless efforts of the labor. He clearly mentions that:

> مسکر کی حپالوں سے بازی لے گیا مسرمایہ کار انتہائی سادگی سے کھ اگیامز دورمات

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.300)

"The capitalist won the game through his cunning tricks as the laborer was very simply defeated"

Here Iqbal mentions the labor exploitation and stresses them to struggle for their better future rather than remaining the slaves of these cruel figures of the societies. Islam also stresses for more struggles and hard works to change their fate and future. Allah Almighty clearly states in His Holy saying that:

اِنَّ اللهَ لاَ يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوْا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ (Al Quran, 13, 11)

"Allah Almighty does change the condition of any nation unless they change it themselves"

Zafar Ali Khan, the great dynamic personality of Pakistan movement and famous poet has translated this Qur'anic verse that:

"Allah Almighty doesn't change the condition of any nation who doesn't think to change it"

Allama Iqbal explains this thought in his words that:

نغاں یہی ہے زمانے مسیں زندہ قوموں کا کہ صبح وشام بدلتی ہیں ان کی نقت دیریں

(Muhammad Iqbāl, . 684)

"This is the only sign of live nations in the world that their destiny changes every morning and evening"

How this stage of changing the destiny can be achieved Allama Iqbal puts it in another stanza as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p. 674)

"It is futile to complain the destiny of God, why you don't become His destiny?"

If a man acts according to the will of Allah Almighty, he fulfills all his wishes and meets all his needs of the life. He doesn't need to pray for the fulfillment of his necessities and such kind of human remains always in eyes of Allah Almighty and in His blessings. Iqbal demands from the human being to achieve this stage through the obedience of Allah and His Holy Prophet Peace Be upon Him.

Iqbal through his poetry leaves lessons for human equality, human unity, human freedom and humanitarian aid which are the main topics of this research paper. This discussion was in light of Islamic teachings and Iqbal's poetry. The conclusion of the research is that Iqal has narrated Qur'anic message and Islamic teachings in his poetry. The sequence of the words of his poetry highlights his unique style of preaching Islam. Manners of humanity are the main requirements of human identity and Iqbal has discussed this topic in great and wonderful style. Islam has stressed to refine the ethical behavior rather than believe as Allah Almighty orders the humanity that:

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيْثَاقَ بَنِىَ إِسْرَآئِيْلَ لَا تَعْبُدُوْنَ إِلَّا اللَّلَهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا وَذِى الْقُرْبِى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِيْنِ وَقُوْلُوْا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْئًا وَاقَيْمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَتُوا الزَّكَاةَ^{لِي}ْتُمَ تَوَلَّيْتُمْ إِلَّا قَلِيْلًا مِنْكُمْ وَاَنْتُمْ مُعْرِضُوْنَ.

 $(Al\ Quran, 2\,, 83)$

This Qur'anic order is clear-cut Islamic mode of dealing which must be polite, soft and caring behavior. The human community considers all types of dealings and remembers it for quitting it in future which will be considered the community evidence regarding the behavior of that very person, whether it's right or wrong, good or bad, exemplary or avoiding one. Islam leaves lessons for good dealing and respect for human. Holy Prophet sonce upon a time was sitting and a funeral procession passed by, he stood up in respect. He was told that it's a Jewish dead body. Holy Prophet said is it not the human figure? (Bukhārī, v. 2, p 85) This response elaborates Prophetic vision about the humanity which stands on human respect and dignity. Iqbal condemns the ethical fall down of humanity rather than the world development. He highlights the living human attitudes as:

(Muhammad Iqbāl, p.529)

"The explorer of stars passages could not travel the world of his thoughts and the one who captured the sun's rays could not enlighten the dark night of life"

Iqbal presents his vision not to explore the hidden world but to refine human character and to adopt good behavior and humane manners. The real beauty of human being is its good dealings, and polite, helping and caring attitude. Iqbal's thought reflects the Islamic teachings. It is the real demand and need of the day to follow Iqbal's thought. Poetry of Iqbal refines the human behavior and spreads the Islamic universal and eternal teachings. Humanity has to have human equality, unity, love and service just for the sake of Allah Almighty to make this wold cradle of peace and order.

6. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Following are the main findings of this research:

- The study of the Seerah of Holy Prophet
 and the theory of Iqbal declares that all the human beings are equal rather than the difference of their races, colors, social status and territorial jurisdictions. The practice of the marrying the slaves with Hashmis is the best example of human equality in Prophetic period and this lesson has been stressed in Iqbal's poetry also.
- Teachings of Holy Prophet and Iqbal's philosophy declare the whole humanity as one unit because whole humanity feels the troubles of others as their own and due to this unity approach, they are found 46

ever ready if they feel the others in trouble and danger.

- Islamic teachings and Iqbal's theory stress on the human freedom. Islam righty speaks and manages for human freedom and Iqbal desires to make the humanity free physically, mentally and ideologically and this approach is the main theme of Iqbal's philosophy as he frequently condemns the slavery thoughts and behavior.
- Islam provokes its followers to serve the humanity and adopt the strategies for its uplift and welfare and obeying the Islamic goal and philosophy. Iqbal also stresses for the same in his thoughts and writings.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study leads the community to follow the following recommendations for the uplift and betterment of the human societies:

- The society must prefer the community needs on the personal and individual needs as the deprivation of the majority from their basic needs will lead the destruction and decline of the society.
- Islamic teachings of the human service and the uplift of mankind must be acted upon to get the rid from the contemporary human crises.
- Iqbal's poetry must be studied along with the Islamic teachings as it is the true commentary of Islamic thought in verses and poetry and his ideology may be implemented to avoid from the clashes and conflicts of the countries, societies, cultures and civilizations.
- Thought of humanity rather than the territories, races, status and even the religion for the time being will definitely minimize the conflicts, contentions and wars between the human countries and societies.

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