

Q: Islam teaches the lesson of human respect & dignity irrespective of colour, race and creed. Discuss.

## I. INTRODUCTION

"Indeed in the messenger of Allah, you have the best example to follow---"

(Al-Quran)

Islam was introduced on this Earth as religion of peace and respect for creation. It brought a message of equality and rights for all human beings. This message is propagated not just in the Quran but also through the Sunnah of the Prophet. The Prophet himself practiced equality and spread the message of non-discrimination. The deen was a way to promote the idea of respect and dignity for all individuals, regardless of their colour, caste or creed.

## II. TEACHINGS THROUGH THE LENS OF QURAN AND SUNNAH

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

(a) Honour for the entire  
creation

"We have certainly honoured  
the children of Adam"

(Al-Quran)

This exemplifies equality in  
the life of each individual as each  
is bestowed by equal honour and  
respect.

(b) No discrimination on creed  
or colour

"You are all the children of  
Adam, and an Arab has no  
superiority over a Non-Arab  
and a non-Arab has no  
superiority over an Arab...."

(Al-Hadith)

The Prophet's message from  
his last khutbah entails that no  
discrimination be made on basis of  
caste, colour, or creed and that  
all believers were equal.

### (c) Rights of minorities

"Whoever harms a non-muslim (Dhimmi) under covenant, I shall be his adversary on the day of Judgement"

(Al-Hadith)

The Prophet gave equal rights to all minorities under Islam. They were free to worship and do their jobs without any discrimination.

### (d) Respect for women in society

"The best of you are those that are best to their wives"

(Al-Hadith)

The Prophet gave instructions on good behavior with women, especially with wives, and mothers. Islam grants equal, and even more respect to women compared to men. Thereby, no discrimination can be made in actions towards them.

DAY: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

(e) Distinction only on basis  
of Nobility - Taqwa

"Indeed, the most noble of  
you in sight of Allah is  
the most righteous of you  
(one with most taqwa)"

(Al-Quran)

Allah has barred all muslims  
from discriminatory actions. The only  
basis of differential treatment is  
on the grounds of Taqwa. Thus, no  
difference should be made otherwise in  
treatment of others.

(f) Equality and respect in  
matters of justice - Adl

Islam gives clear instructions on  
carrying out fair justice. Justice  
is blind of caste and creed and  
based on facts rather than the  
colour of one's skin. Therefore, there  
is a clear message of upholding  
the right and not making any  
discrimination in matters of justice.

### III. PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM LIFE OF PROPHET

#### (a) General amnesty at Makkah

The Prophet pardoned all the people of Makkah upon the conquest. Everyone was forgiven without any discrimination. The example is a lesson in the approach towards others with respect.

#### (b) ~~The~~ Peace with people of other faiths - Charter of Madinah

The charter of Madinah was the first constitutional document in history. It provided each individual in Madinah with equal rights and honour. No person could violate the rights under the charter and ensured security of all.

#### (c) Establishing of the rules of war

The Prophet was the first to establish the rules of war. Under this,

the prisoners of war were to be treated with respect. No indecent behaviour was allowed. Torture was forbidden. Every citizen of the conquered areas was given the right to live with dignity under the banner of Islam.

#### (d) No harsh treatment of slaves

The Prophet even gave instructions on the treatment of slaves. They had the right to dignity and no one was allowed to abuse or beat slaves. ~~They~~ They were treated with respect and given rights which was not the culture of ancient Arabia.

#### (e) Prophet's last Khutbah - Hujjatul Wida

The last Khutbah of the Prophet serves as one of the earliest sources that documents the provision of human rights. The Prophet, in his last message, urged all believers

to treat each other with respect and dignity. Life was called as sacred and no one had the right to violate another's given rights. Established the principles for the generations to come.

## VI. CONTEMPORARY IMPORTANCE

The muslim Ummah of the modern day is struggling with the concepts of honour and respect. There is blatant discrimination and divide among the lines of sects and castes. This is highly in contrast to the lessons of our deen. There is a strong will needed to reintroduce the concepts of equality and honour in the lives of muslims. The Prophet's Sunnah needs to be revived and put to practice, to achieve a just and respectable society.

## V. CONCLUSION