

Test #2

Question #1

Rights of minorities in Islam and status of minorities in Pakistan

1- Introduction

"Whoever oppresses a dhimmi,
I will be his greatest
adversary on the Day of Judgment."
~ Holy Prophet (S.A.W)

Islam is a religion of equality, peace, and diversity. In addition to providing rights to Muslims, Islam also took into account the rights of minorities in the Islamic state. In fact, as a religion of tolerance and coexistence, Islam has provided a multitude of rights to minorities. These rights ranging from right to life to right to employment and from right to fair treatment to right to religious freedom, highlighted multiple times both in the Holy Quran and Sunnah. Besides, Islam has also ensured right of constitutional equality and right to education to minorities, thereby highlighting the paramount significance of minority rights in Islam. Following the

teachings of Islam, Pakistan - being a Muslim state - has also provided a prestigious importance and status to minorities and their rights through various constitutional provisions. In Pakistani constitution, the status of minorities is equal to rights of other citizens. For example, Pakistani constitution provides right of ~~freedom~~ and propagating one's religion freely, right to education, and right to equality before law. To sum up, Islam provides an unprecedented rights to minorities, and following these teachings, Pakistani constitution also provides profound status to the minorities by guaranteeing their rights through various provisions.

2- Rights of minorities in Islam

2.1, Right to life

To begin with, Islam provides right to life to every individual irrespective of their religion, race, and caste. For example, The Holy Quran states

من قاتل نفسا بغير نفس او فساد في الارض فكأنما
قتل الناس جميعا.....

"Whoever kills a man except for a

soul or corruption (done) in land is as if he had slain the mankind entirely."

~ Surah Maida #32

So, this verse clearly depicts the importance of life of every human, eventually providing right to life to every individual be it Muslim or non-muslim.

2.2) Right to religious freedom

Moreover, Islam as a religion of coexistence provides the right of religious freedom to all minorities. In this regard, the Holy Quran says,

لا إكراه في الدين
"There is no compulsion in religion."

~ Surah Baqara #256

In the light of this verse, Islam guarantees an important right of religious freedom to all and prohibits coercion.

2.3) Right to constitutional equality

Next, Islam also underscores the importance of providing significant right of constitutional equality to all

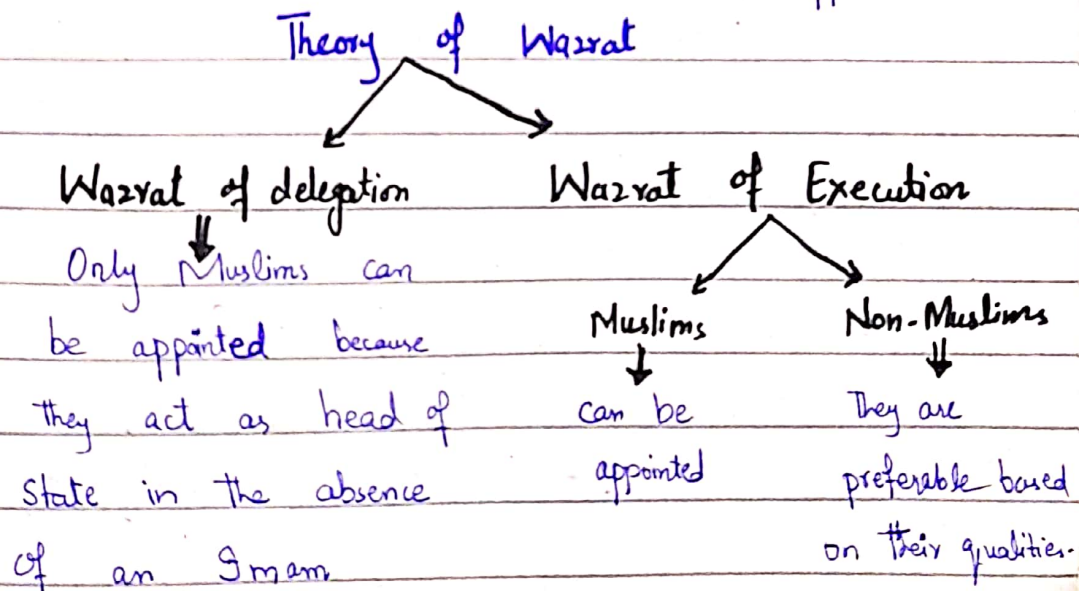
citizens of an Islamic state.

For instance, Charter of Madina has provided equal constitutional rights to all citizens be it Muslims or Jews is the glaring example of right of constitutional equality.

Hence, the example of Charter of Madina has established a real life example that shows how beautifully Islam guarantees the right of constitutional equality to all -

2.4, Right to job and appointment

In addition, Islam also provides the right to job and appointment to minorities on various positions. Al-Mawardi through his "Theory of Wazrat" has shown that on which positions minorities in an Islamic states can be appointed.



2.5) Right to fair treatment

Besides, Islam as a religion of justice equality provides right to fair treatment to the minorities. Every person has right to be treated fair irrespective of their religion. For example, the Quran aptly puts,

"Allah does not forbid you from - those who do not fight you because of your religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous towards them and acting justly towards them."

~ Surah Muntahina #8

Thus, this verse perfectly elucidates the right of fair treatment that Islam has provided to the minorities.

2.6) Right to education

Likewise, Islam also provides the significant right to education to all the citizens equally. It never forbids anyone from seeking knowledge and education.

For instance, the Quran describes in Surah Alaq #1

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ

"Read in the name of your Lord who created."

So, this verse shows the importance of education and ensures everyone reads and acquire knowledge, ultimately providing right to education to minorities.

3) Status of minorities in Pakistan

In Pakistan, the status of minorities is equal to the other citizens of the country. Various constitutional provisions highlights this status. These provisions are discussed below:

3.1) Right to religious freedom

The constitution of Pakistan provides religious freedom to the minorities, highlighting their significant status.

For example, Article #20 of Pakistani constitution says, "Minorities have right to freely practice and propagate their religion."

3.2) Right to education

Along with religious freedom, constitution of Pakistan also provide right to education to the minorities.

For instance, Article 25(A) of Pakistani constitution says that the state will provide education to all citizens from age 10 - 16.

It shows that education is a fundamental right of every citizen of Pakistan, including minorities.

3.3, Right to equality before law

Furthermore, the Pakistani constitution also ensure equality before law of every citizens.

Such as, Article # 25(1) states that entitlement of equal protection of law would be provided to all citizens whether Muslims or non-muslims.

3.4, Right to non-discrimination

The status of minorities in Pakistan is also evident in the form of non-discriminatory treatment of them.

As an illustration, Article # 26 says,
"There shall be no discrimination against any citizens on the grounds of race, religion, caste, and sex."

3.5) Right of protection of legitimate rights and interests.

Last but not least, Pakistani constitutions also secure minorities status by providing protection to their legitimate rights and interests.

For example, Article # 36 states that the state shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities, including their due representation in federal and provincial service.

4) Examples of Covenant with minorities by Prophet (S.A.W) and Caliphs for protection of their rights

4.1) Covenant of Prophet (S.A.W) with Christian Monks } → Granted rights and securities to Christians

4.2) The Pact of Caliph Umar } → Granted civil and religious liberties and protection of life and properties of Christians in Jerusalem.

5) Critical analysis

In a robust analysis, Islam is a religion that honours and dignifies every individual and provided rights to all centuries before modern concept of human rights. In contemporary world, the rights of minorities are in a very depressing state and violated by those who are in majority. For example, the genocide of Palestinians and mass killing of Kashmiris clearly underscores how the current world are treating minorities. In comparison, Islam has provided unlimited rights to minorities and ensures its protection at all costs.

6) Conclusion

To conclude, Islam has bestowed upon highest standard of minority rights since fourteen millenia ago. These rights serves as a guide to the contemporary world. For example, from right to life and education to right of constitutional equality and religious freedom, Islam has guaranteed

profound rights to minorities. Adhering to the teachings of Islam regarding minority rights, the constitution of Pakistan also guarantees minority rights, including right to education, safeguard of their legitimate rights, and equality before law which underscores the status of minorities in Pakistan. Hence, Islam provides significant rights to the minorities, and Pakistan also follows the suit.

Question #2

Status of mankind in Islam

1- Introduction

Islam as a holistic religion has provided a prestigious status to the whole mankind through teachings of the Quran and divinely-guided Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W). In fact, it is Islam that provided the status of Ashraf ul Makhluqat (the noblest of creatures). Before the advent of Islam, mankind has no status and value and only those who were powerful had all the privilege. However, with the onset of

Islam, the status of the mankind has reached to the zenith of glory. Islam has elevated the status of mankind by providing dignity and honor, placing high value of human life, and providing a status of vicegerant to humans. In addition, Islam gives freedom of religion, right of inheritance, and security of blood and property. To conclude, it is apt to say that Islam has placed mankind to the highest status that the humanity has ever-witnessed. In this regard, renowned Orientalist Karen Armstrong says, "Islam's approach towards granting status to mankind is revolutionary, providing rights to human centuries before modern societies began to do so."

2) Status of mankind before advent of Islam

Historically, the status of mankind before Islam was in a depressing state. In primitive ages, only the privileged ones used to enjoy all favours of life and the vulnerables were exploited at their hands. Moreover, there was

no concept of justice and equality and has no value of human life. All in all, before Islam, mankind has no status and dignity.

3, Status of mankind in Islam

3.1, Islam gives honor and dignity to mankind

To begin, Islam has given honor and dignity to the mankind, which elevated their status in the world. The Quran says,

لَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

"Certainly, We have honoured the children of Adam."

~ Surah Bani-Israel # 70

The verse shows the honour and dignity of mankind in Islam.

3.2, Value of human life

Moreover, the status of mankind in Islam can also be gauged by the favour of Islam in the form of valuing human life. Islam guarantees equal

protection of every human life. The Quran states,

من قاتل نفسا بغير نفس او فساد في الارض فكأنما قتل الناس جميعا

'Whoever kills a man except for a soul or corruption (done) in land is as if he had killed the mankind entirely.'

So, the verse underscores the status of mankind by valuing the human life and its importance.

3.3, Status of vicegerent

Additionally, Islam has elevated the status of mankind by declaring human as a vicegerent (Khalifa) of Allah on earth. In this regard, the Quran says, Surah Baqara #30

"I am going to place a successive (human) authority on Earth."

Hence, human is placed on the prestigious status of Khalifa on earth, ultimately depicting their status in Islam.

3.4) Scarcity of blood and property

Moreover, the status of mankind in Islam is shown by the scarcity of blood and property of humans. The Holy Prophet (SAW) in the farewell sermon has said,

"Your blood and property are as scared as this day and this month (9th Zil Haj)." 

So, the status of mankind in Islam is clearly shown by ^{providing} their scarcity of blood and property.

3.5) Equality for all

To add, the status of mankind in Islam is affirmed by its principle of providing equality to all irrespective of their religion, caste, race, and creed. The Quran says,

"Who have created you from a single soul."

~ Surah Nisa # 1

The verse of the holy Quran highlights that all mankind is created from a single soul. That undermines all inequalities, thereby providing equal status to all.

3.6, Freedom of religion

In addition, the mankind as per teachings of Islam are free to practice their religion without coercion and force, eventually providing religious freedom to all. The Quran elucidates,

لَكَ دِينُكَ وَرِيَ الدِّينِ

"For you is your religion and for me is my religion."

~ Surah Al-Kafirun #6

3.7, Inheritance for both men and women

Last but not least, Islam gives the right of inheritance to both men and women equally, ultimately placing them on equal status. The Holy Quran in Surah Nisa #7 states,

"For men is the share what parents and close relatives leave, and for women is the share what parents and close relatives leave."

Hence, it depicts that both men and women are equally liable of inheritance.

4, Critical analysis

Critically, Islam is the only religion that provided unparalleled status to the mankind. Due to lack of knowledge and understanding, people have misunderstood this status of mankind. As a result, humanity has advanced on the darkest path of treating mankind based on religion, caste, race, creed, and gender. However, Islam abolished all these discriminated way and placed mankind on the status of greatness.

5) Conclusion

In conclusion, Islam has given mankind an unparalleled and unmatched status that the humanity has ever witnessed. The status of mankind in Islam is evident from its honor and dignity, human as Allah's vicegerent on Earth, and equality to all. Adding more, the status of mankind is further elevated by providing religion freedom and valuing human life. All these shows the profound status of mankind in Islam that the other religions has failed to provide. So, status of mankind in Islam is highly prestigious, based on all the rights it has provided to humans.