

# Qur'anic Perspectives on Humanity and Social Justice

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edu.pk**Abstract:**

This study explores the concept of humanity and social justice in the light of the Qur'an, highlighting the intrinsic dignity and honor granted to all human beings, irrespective of race, religion, or social status. It examines the Qur'anic principles of justice, fairness, and fulfillment of trusts as essential foundations for a stable and harmonious society. The research emphasizes the moral and ethical responsibilities of humans as Allah's vicegerents on earth, endowed with intellect, free will, and the capacity to choose between good and evil. Special attention is given to the protection of vulnerable groups, including women and orphans, and to the sanctity of human life through the law of *qiṣaṣ*. Additionally, the study underscores gentleness, compassion, and ethical conduct as exemplified by the Prophet ﷺ, demonstrating that mercy and fairness are central to Islamic social values. Overall, the Qur'an provides a comprehensive framework for establishing justice, equity, and moral responsibility, guiding humanity toward a peaceful and ethically sound society.

**Keywords:** Social Justice, Qur'anic Ethics, Human Dignity, Gentleness, Compassion.

## INTRODUCTION

Allah Almighty is the Creator of this universe and of all the creatures that dwell within it. When Allah created humankind, He said to the angels:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً

"And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority (khalifah)."

Allah Almighty appointed man as His vicegerent on earth. Furthermore, in honor of humankind, Allah the Exalted declares:

وَلَقَدْ كَرَمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

"And indeed, We have honored the children of Adam."

Allah Almighty is All-Wise, and none of His actions are devoid of wisdom. None of His creations are purposeless or without benefit; every being has been created for a specific reason. Human beings, in particular, have been created for the purpose of worship. As Allah the Exalted says:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّةَ وَالْإِنْسَانَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُو

"And I did not create the jinn and humankind except to worship Me."

Allah Almighty has established a divine code of conduct for all creatures in this world and has set each of them to act according to it. Among all creation, humankind was distinguished by being granted free will the choice to follow the path of obedience or to turn toward disobedience. Through obedience, a human being can attain a rank higher than that of angels, while through disobedience, he can fall to a level lower than that of animals.

For the guidance of humankind, Allah sent a series of prophets, and at various times, revealed divine scriptures to some of them, which served as guidance for their respective eras. This chain of prophethood concluded with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, upon whom the Qur'an was revealed a complete and eternal guidance for all of humanity until the Day of Judgment.

In the Qur'an, Allah Almighty laid down principles and laws for human life and gave special instructions concerning the weaker segments of society, such as

women and orphans. Moreover, the Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes justice in all matters and identifies those factors that commonly obstruct the path of justice.

Since Allah Almighty is the Creator of humankind and the Creator of the entire universe, the entire system of the cosmos operates according to His will and command. Therefore, the guidance and commandments that Allah has provided regarding human life and the order of this world are the best for mankind and contain the true essence of human survival and well-being. Hence, in every matter and issue of life, we can seek direction from Him.

Both humanity and social justice are essential for the survival of human society. Through them, a peaceful and harmonious community can be established where people's lives, wealth, and honor are safeguarded. Such a society enables human beings to fulfill their ultimate purpose the worship and servitude of Allah in the best possible manner.

Therefore, it is necessary for us to learn and implement the Qur'anic perspective on these matters. This article will discuss these aspects in detail.

## RESEARCH BACKGROUND

For the survival of human society, it is essential that peace prevails within it and that the lives, property, and honor of individuals are protected. The Qur'an, which is the divine word of Allah revealed to the Holy Prophet ﷺ for the guidance of humankind, provides a path for humans to live successfully in this world a path that ensures success and is indispensable for establishing a peaceful society

In the Qur'an, Allah repeatedly commands the believers to uphold justice, emphasizing its vital role in the preservation of human society. Indeed, the safety of people's lives, wealth, and dignity can only be guaranteed in a just society. The Qur'an contains numerous verses that outline principles and guidelines which, if implemented, can lead to the creation of such a balanced and harmonious community.

This article seeks to explore the Qur'anic perspective on humanity and social justice, highlighting how Allah Almighty has guided mankind in achieving justice and peace within society.

## RESEARCH FOCUS

In the contemporary world, humanity faces serious challenges to social justice and equality. Despite global declarations of human rights, societies across the world are still marked by discrimination, exploitation, poverty, gender inequality, and class divisions. Modern systems of justice often remain materialistic and fail to address the moral and spiritual dimensions of human dignity and fairness.

The Qur'an, however, presents a comprehensive vision of humanity and social justice that integrates both moral and practical aspects of human life. It recognizes all humans as equal before God, emphasizes justice as a divine command, and upholds human dignity as a fundamental value.

The problem arises because modern societies, including many Muslim communities, have distanced themselves from the Qur'anic framework of justice. Social systems often prioritize power, wealth, and personal interests over ethical and divine principles. Consequently, the real essence of justice as envisioned in the Qur'an has been marginalized.

Therefore, this study seeks to explore the **Qur'anic concept of humanity and social justice**, to understand how these divine principles can be revived and applied in the modern context to ensure equality, compassion, and fairness in human society.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the Qur'anic concept of humanity and its moral foundations.
- To study the Qur'anic principles of justice and equality.
- To highlight the relevance of Qur'anic teachings in building a just society.

## RESEARCH METHOD

### A. Research Design

The study adopts a qualitative research design based on the descriptive and analytical method. It aims to interpret and explain Qur'anic principles concerning humanity and social justice.

### B. Sources of Data

- Primary Sources:

- The Qur'an
- Hadith (Authentic collections such as *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, etc.)
- Secondary Sources:
  - Classical *Tafsir* (e.g., *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, *al-Tabari*, *al-Baghawi*)
  - Contemporary Islamic literature and scholarly articles
  - Relevant books on Islamic ethics, justice, and social responsibility

### C. Data Analysis

The collected textual data are analyzed through thematic interpretation identifying recurring Qur'anic themes, ethical principles, and their implications for social justice and human conduct.

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

### Status Of Human In Qur'an

When Allah Almighty intended to create humankind, He expressed His will to the angels with the words:

"نَّيْ جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً"

"Indeed, I am going to place a vicegerent on the earth."

The concept of *Khilafah* (vicegerency) is not only an honor for humankind but also an indication that human beings have been entrusted with a greater and more responsible role than the rest of creation. Humans have been made accountable beings, obligated to obey Allah by their own free will. For this purpose, Allah granted them intellect and consciousness. As a result, those who use these faculties in obedience to Allah will become deserving of Paradise, while those who disobey will be subject to punishment. In other words, the eternal destiny of humankind depends upon their deeds.

Allah the Exalted says:

وَنَفْسٌ وَمَا سَوَّيْهَا ۝ فَآلَّهُمَّ هَا فُجُورُهَا وَتَقْوِيْهَا ۝ فَدَّ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ رَكَّهَا ۝ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّهَا

“By the soul and the One Who proportioned it; then inspired it with its wickedness and its righteousness. Successful indeed is the one who purifies it, and failed is the one who corrupts it.”

Allah created the human soul (*nafs*) in a balanced, upright, and natural state (*fitrah*). He then instilled within it the awareness of both good and evil righteousness and wickedness so that humankind may discern between right and wrong.

According to the commentary of Ibn Abbas (RA) and other renowned exegetes such as *Mujahid*, *Qatadah*, *Dahhak*, and *Thawri* (may Allah have mercy on them), Allah made both the paths of good and evil clear to humankind so that they may, through reason and understanding, choose the right path.

Thereafter, Allah laid down the eternal principle:

“He is indeed successful who purifies his soul, and he has failed who corrupts it.”

That is, the one who purifies his soul through obedience to Allah, piety, and virtuous character will attain success; whereas the one who allows his soul to be overwhelmed by sins, vices, and moral corruption will be among the losers.

Allah Almighty has granted dignity and honor to all the children of Adam in the Qur'an, without any distinction of race, nation, color, or religion.

Allah the Exalted says:

وَلَقَدْ كَرَمْنَا بْنَيَّ عَادَمَ

“And indeed, We have honored the children of Adam.”

In the Qur'an, Allah Almighty attributes the creation of humankind to a man and a woman Prophet *Adam* (peace be upon him) and Lady *Hawwa* (Eve) indicating that all human beings are the children of the same parents. This implies that humanity is bound by ties of brotherhood and mutual kinship. Allah further states that He has divided people into different nations and tribes only so that they may recognize one another, not to discriminate or boast over each other. In the sight of Allah, the most honorable among people is the one who is most righteous.

Allah the Exalted says:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّنْ ذَكَرٍ وَّأُنْثَى وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَّقَبَائِلَ لِتَعْرِفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْرَبُكُمْ

“O mankind! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.”

Allah Almighty has made the human being responsible and sent him to this world as a test. He blessed him with the gift of knowledge through which he can understand the purpose and manner of life in this world. Because of this knowledge, mankind was granted a position of honor, even above the angels. However, if a person becomes heedless and neglectful of his purpose, he is described as being worse than the animals.

Allah the Exalted says:

أُولَئِنَّكُمْ كَالْأَنْعَامِ بَنِ هُنَّ أَضَلُّ أُولَئِنَّكُمْ هُمُ الْغَافِلُونَ

“They are like cattle; rather, they are even more astray. It is they who are the heedless ones.”

The verse “They are like cattle, rather they are even more astray” describes people who possess intellect and knowledge yet live heedlessly, ignoring divine guidance.

According to the commentary, these people resemble animals in that their only concern is eating, drinking, and fulfilling worldly desires. Their lives revolve around material pleasures just as animals are driven by instinctive needs.

However, the Qur'an declares that such people are worse than cattle, because:

- Animals can distinguish between what harms and what benefits them, and they naturally avoid harm.
- But these people knowingly choose actions that lead them to spiritual destruction and Hellfire, despite being aware of the consequences.

The verse concludes:

“They are the heedless ones.”

This means that their real problem is heedlessness (*ghaflah*) they neglect their inner consciousness and moral responsibility. Thus, when a person ignores

divine guidance and lives only for worldly satisfaction, he loses his true human dignity, falling below even the level of animals.

The essence of the Qur'anic view of human status is that Allah Almighty appointed humans as His vicegerents on earth, granting them intellect, consciousness, and free will, thereby entrusting them with the great responsibility of demonstrating obedience to Him through their actions. Humans were created with the ability to discern between good and evil so that they may choose the path of righteousness and achieve success, while falling into sin and corruption leads to failure. According to the Qur'an, all children of Adam have been honored, and human worth is based not on race, nation, or color but on piety. Whoever purifies their soul attains success, whereas those who allow it to be corrupted by sin are at a loss. If a person neglects this responsibility and becomes absorbed only in worldly desires, the Qur'an describes them as worse than cattle, for despite possessing intellect, they remain heedless of divine guidance.

### Concept Of Humanity In Qur'an

In the Qur'an, Allah Almighty commands good treatment toward all human beings without any racial, religious, or regional distinction. Allah says:

وَقُلُّوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا

"And speak to people good [words]."

Here, Allah mentions all humanity in general. At another place, He specifies that alongside worshiping Him alone, one must show kindness and good conduct toward various members of society individually. The Qur'an states:

وَاعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَنًا وَبِذِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْجَارِ ذِي  
الْقُرْبَى وَالْجَارِ الْجُنُبِ وَالصَّاحِبِ بِالْجَنْبِ وَأَبْنَ الْسَّبِيلِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَنُكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ مَنْ كَانَ مُخْتَلِّا  
فَخُورًا

"Worship Allah and do not associate anything with Him, and show kindness to parents, relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the distant neighbor, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like the arrogant, the boastful."

This emphasizes that good conduct is obligatory not only in general terms but also toward specific individuals in one's social environment.

Allah Almighty has described gentleness as a manifestation of His mercy and informed His Prophet ﷺ that His soft and kind nature is a mercy upon him. Allah says:

فِيمَا رَحْمَةٌ مِّنَ اللَّهِ لِنَتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَطْنَةً غَلِيلَةً لَّا تَنْفَضُوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

"So by mercy from Allah, you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you."

Similarly, when Prophet *Musa* (Moses) and Prophet *Harun* (Aaron), peace be upon them, were sent to Pharaoh a tyrannical ruler who claimed, "I am your most high lord" Allah instructed them to speak to him with gentleness, despite his arrogance and oppression. The Qur'an states:

فَقُولُوا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيْتَ

"So speak to him with gentle speech."

This emphasizes that softness and kindness are central to conveying the message of Allah, even in the face of hostility and oppression.

From the study of the life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, we learn that he never displayed harshness or cruelty toward anyone throughout his entire life. Even when he was attacked and wounded during his journey to *Ta'if*, he did not curse his persecutors but prayed for their guidance instead. Likewise, his attitude toward the chiefs of Makkah and others whether they were Muslims, hypocrites, or polytheists was always compassionate and merciful.

It is narrated from 'A'ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), the wife of the Prophet ﷺ, that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

عن عائشة، زوج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم؛ أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم قال "يا عائشة! إن الله رفيق يحب الرفق، ويعطي على الرفق ما لا يعطي على العنف. وما لا يعطي على ما سواه

"O 'Ā'ishah! Indeed, Allah is gentle and loves gentleness. He grants through gentleness what He does not grant through harshness, and what He does not grant through anything else."

This hadith beautifully highlights that gentleness is a divine quality beloved to Allah, and those who adopt it are granted blessings and success that cannot be attained through harshness or severity.

The Qur'an gives special attention to the vulnerable members of society, particularly women and orphans, by outlining specific rulings concerning their rights and protection. It addresses issues related to their property, marriage, inheritance shares, fairness among wives, the obligation of giving dowry (*mahr*) to wives, and the requirement of kind treatment in the event of divorce. The Qur'an discusses all these matters in detail, emphasizing justice, compassion, and the safeguarding of their dignity and rights.

To ensure the protection of human life, the Qur'an prescribes the law of *qisas* (retribution). Allah Almighty says:

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصاصِ حَيَاةٌ يَأْوِي إِلَيْهِ الْأَلَبَابُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقَوْنَ

"And there is for you in legal retribution [qisas] life, O people of understanding."

Retribution is not only prescribed for taking a life but also in cases of bodily injury and wounds. Allah the Exalted says:

وَالْجُرُوحَ قِصاصٌ

"And for wounds is retribution."

The Qur'an further emphasizes the sanctity and inestimable value of human life, regardless of religion, race, or nationality. Allah says:

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِقَيْرَنَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ أَنَّ الْأَنْسَأَ جَمِيعاً

"Whoever kills a soul—unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land—it is as if he had slain all mankind; and whoever saves one—it is as if he had saved all mankind."

This demonstrates that in Islam, every human life is sacred, and its unjust destruction is viewed as the destruction of all humanity, while saving a single life is regarded as saving all of humankind.

The Qur'an presents a comprehensive vision of humanity based on mercy, justice, and compassion. It commands kindness toward all people without distinction of race, religion, or region and emphasizes good treatment of parents,

relatives, orphans, neighbors, and the needy. Gentleness is described as a divine mercy, exemplified in the Prophet's ﷺ character he was always kind, forgiving, and patient, even toward his enemies. The Qur'an also instructs believers to show mercy and fairness, as seen in Allah's command to Prophet Musa and Prophet Harun to speak gently even to Pharaoh. Furthermore, it safeguards the rights of vulnerable groups such as women and orphans, providing detailed guidance on inheritance, marriage, and social justice. To protect human life, Islam enforces the law of *qisas* (retribution) and declares that killing one innocent person is like killing all of humanity, while saving one life is like saving all humankind. Thus, the Qur'an upholds human dignity, equality, and the sanctity of life for all.

### Social Justice In The Light Of Qur'an

The importance of justice and fairness in human society cannot be denied, as they are the foundations of a peaceful and secure community. Through justice, the protection of life and property becomes possible, and humans can fulfill the commands of Allah Almighty properly. For this reason, the Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes the establishment of justice and urges believers to uphold it.

Several verses of the Qur'an lay down comprehensive principles related to justice, some of which are mentioned below. Allah Almighty says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَا عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ

"Indeed, Allah commands justice, good conduct, and giving to relatives, and forbids immorality, bad conduct, and oppression."

In another place, the Qur'an instructs the believers to uphold justice and identifies factors that often become obstacles to fairness. Allah says:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا كُوئُوا قَوْمٌ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهْدَاءَ اللَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَوْ الْوَالِدَيْنَ وَالْأَقْرَبَيْنَ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَيْرًا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَشْبُعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا وَإِنْ تَلْوُ أَوْ تُعَرِّضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

"O you who believe! Be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or your parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor, Allah is more worthy of both. So do not follow [your own] desires, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, fully aware."

Here, believers are commanded to uphold justice even if it goes against their own interests, their parents, or close relatives. Neither personal desires nor

worldly or financial gains should influence their decisions, for Allah commands fairness in all situations, and He is fully aware of every action.

In another verse, the Qur'an warns that enmity toward a nation or group should not lead to injustice, as hatred and bias are among the main causes of unfairness. Allah says:

وَلَا يَجِدْنَكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَا تَعْدِلُواٰ أَعْدَلُواٰ هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ

“And let not the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness(*taqwā*).”

Thus, the Qur'an establishes that justice must be maintained in all circumstances whether in favor of or against one's own interests and that true piety lies in being fair, even toward one's enemies.

Another verse that has a deep connection with social justice highlights two fundamental aspects of it. Allah Almighty says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤْدُوا الْأَمْنَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعُدْلِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُعِظِّمُ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا  
بَصِيرًا

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever Hearing and Seeing.”

This verse mentions two essential principles vital for the establishment and stability of society:

1. **Fulfillment of Trusts:** This includes every type of responsibility entrusted to a person. Every member of society regardless of their position or authority is commanded to fulfill their duties with honesty and sincerity. It also includes *huquq Allah* (the rights of Allah), meaning that a person must obey Allah's commands in the manner demonstrated by the Prophet ﷺ.
2. **Judging with Justice:** The verse clearly commands that all judgments and decisions must be based on justice, irrespective of a person's religion, ethnicity, or social status. Neither kinship, personal interest, friendship, nor enmity should influence the fairness of a decision.

Thus, this verse lays the foundation of social justice by linking it to two key moral duties: honest responsibility and impartial judgment.

Justice and fairness are fundamental for a peaceful and secure human society. The Qur'an emphasizes that through justice, life and property are protected, and humans can fulfill Allah's commands correctly. Believers are urged to uphold justice even against their own interests, family, or wealth, and to avoid letting personal desires, enmity, or bias affect their decisions. Social justice in the Qur'an also involves two key principles: fulfilling trusts and judging with fairness, regardless of a person's religion, status, or relationships. These principles ensure societal stability, ethical responsibility, and equity for all members of the community.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Qur'an presents a comprehensive and balanced framework for humanity and social justice, emphasizing the dignity, honor, and equality of all human beings regardless of race, religion, or social status. It establishes that humans are Allah's vicegerents on earth, endowed with intellect, free will, and moral responsibility, and that their eternal success depends on their obedience, righteousness, and ethical conduct. The Qur'an repeatedly stresses the importance of justice, fairness, and the fulfillment of trusts as foundational principles for a stable and harmonious society. It also highlights the protection of vulnerable members, such as women and orphans, and the sanctity of human life through the law of *qisas*. Furthermore, gentleness, compassion, and ethical treatment of others, as exemplified by the Prophet ﷺ, are central to Islamic social values. Overall, this study demonstrates that the Qur'anic vision of social justice integrates moral responsibility, equity, and mercy, providing a timeless guide for the establishment of a just and humane society.

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