

## THE PROPHETIC APPROACH TO DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: A MODEL FOR MUSLIM MINORITIES

Ashker Aroos\*

Mohammed Ghous Mohammed Insaf\*\*

Mohamed Ashath\*\*\*

Tuan Rishan Razeen\*\*\*\*

### ABSTRACT

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) serves as a model of multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity, as demonstrated throughout various phases of his biography, including the *Makkah* period, the migration to Abyssinia (*Habasha*), the migration to *Medinah*, the establishment of the *Medinah* Charter, and the Treaty of *Hudaybiyah*. These historical moments provide profound insights into managing diversity, tolerance, and social harmony. In today's world, where multicultural and multi-religious dynamics are increasingly prominent, there is a pressing need for exemplary guidance to foster social cohesion. This study examines the lessons from the Prophet's (PBUH) life that are particularly pertinent to Muslim minorities, highlighting the significance of embracing cultural and religious diversity. This research uses content analysis to draw on primary sources such as the Quran, Hadith, and *Sirah* books, and secondary sources such as journal articles, and online publications. The findings indicate that, whether Muslims reside as a majority or minority, they are duty-bound to respect pluralistic social orders, accommodate individuals from diverse backgrounds, and recognize differences as an essential component of social harmony while firmly upholding Islamic theological foundations, ensuring both peaceful coexistence and unwavering commitment to faith.

**Keywords:** Inclusion, Diversity, Muslim Minority, Embracing Differences, Coexistence, Harmony, Prophetic *Sirah*

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\* PhD Student, Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), International Islamic University Malaysia.  
[ashker888@gmail.com](mailto:ashker888@gmail.com)

\*\* PhD Student, Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), International Islamic University Malaysia.  
[sheikh.insaf86@gmail.com](mailto:sheikh.insaf86@gmail.com)

\*\*\* PhD in Usul al-Din and Comparative Religion, International Islamic University Malaysia.  
[mmsaasath@gmail.com](mailto:mmsaasath@gmail.com)

\*\*\*\* M.A. in Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), International Islamic University Malaysia.  
[rishanrazeen@gmail.com](mailto:rishanrazeen@gmail.com)

## 01. Introduction

The contemporary world order, marked by unparalleled religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity within nation-states, demands frameworks that promote harmonious coexistence. Socioeconomic disparities, political instability, and migration patterns have forced communities with divergent identities to live together.<sup>1</sup> However, this pluralism can often heighten tensions, as evidenced by conflicts arising from sectarianism, ethnocentrism, or religious intolerance. Such realities highlight the urgent need for ethical and practical models encouraging unity amid diversity. Islam, as exemplified by the life of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), provides significant guidance in this context, grounded in Quranic principles of human equality and mutual respect.<sup>2</sup> The Quran states, “O mankind! We created you from a single [pair] of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other [not that ye may despise [each other]]. Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is [he who is] the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted [with all things].<sup>3</sup> This divine directive emphasizes the purpose of diversity: not as a source of division but as a means to cultivate mutual understanding and cooperation.

Navigating the challenges of inclusivity and diversity necessitates a balanced approach informed by the Prophetic Sirah for Muslim minorities living in non-Muslim-majority societies. Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life offers a comprehensive model of peaceful coexistence, social harmony, and interfaith dialogue that remains relevant in contemporary contexts.<sup>4</sup> His life and contribution to both *Makkah* and *Madina* and his leadership in *Medinah*, exemplified by the Constitution of *Medinah*, ensured that various religious and ethnic groups could coexist with mutual rights and responsibilities. This foundational document institutionalized principles of justice, religious freedom, and social solidarity—concepts that resonate with modern discussions on multiculturalism and minority rights.

In addition to legal frameworks, the Prophet's (PBUH) diplomatic engagements and ethical leadership further underscore the principles of inclusivity. His treaties with non-Muslim communities, such as the Treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*, as well as his open-door policy toward delegations from other faiths, demonstrate a commitment to peaceful cohabitation. His approach was neither passive assimilation nor rigid isolation; instead, it represented an active engagement that preserved religious identity while fostering mutual respect.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ngainun Naim, *Islam and Religious Pluralism: The Dynamics of Meaning Seize*, Tulungagung: SATU Press, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Fazlur Rahman Fareedi, *Living as a Muslim in a Plural Society*, Chennai: Islamic Foundation Trust, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> (al-Hujarat 49:13)

<sup>4</sup> Ahmad Riyadh Maulidi, Moderate Behavior of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a Role Model in Encountering Pluralism, *International Journal Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, Vol 23, No 2 (2021).

<sup>5</sup> 'Ali Jum'a, *al-Namādhij al-arba'ah min hady al-Nabī ṣallā Allāh 'alayhi wa-sallam fī al-ta'āyush ma'a al-ākhar: al-usus wa-al-maqāṣid*. (al-Jīzah: Dār al-Fārūq lil-Istithmārāt al-Thaqāfiyah, 2013).

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In an age characterized by Islamophobia, sectarian conflicts, and struggles for minority rights, lessons from the Prophetic *Sirah* offer valuable guidance for Muslim communities. The Prophet's (PBUH) example provides ethical solutions rooted in justice and compassion, addressing issues such as religious accommodation, political representation, and interfaith dialogue.<sup>6</sup> As contemporary societies navigate the complexities of integration and pluralism, adopting the Prophetic model can help promote peaceful and cooperative relations among diverse communities. This paper delves into these themes by analyzing the principles of inclusivity and diversity found in the Prophetic *Sirah*, drawing parallels with the contemporary challenges faced by Muslim minorities around the world.

### **Research Methodology**

This study utilizes a library-based content analysis approach, drawing on both primary and secondary sources to investigate the principles of inclusivity and diversity within the Prophetic *Sirah* and their relevance to Muslim minorities.

The primary sources examined include religious texts, specifically the Holy Qur'an and Hadiths, which underscore themes of diversity, coexistence, and social harmony as illustrated in Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life. These texts are analyzed to extract essential ethical and legal principles pertinent to the discussion. Secondary sources consist of a variety of scholarly materials, including biographies of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), journal articles, books, and other academic publications. These materials are critically assessed to gain insight into historical interpretations, contextual applications, and contemporary scholarly perspectives on inclusivity and diversity in Islam.

Employing a content analysis methodology, the study systematically reviews and interprets the textual data from these sources. This approach allows the researchers to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to the Prophet (PBUH)'s interactions with diverse communities, such as those exemplified by *Hilful Fuzul*, the principles embedded in the *Medinah* Charter, and the Treaty of *Hudaybiyyah*, alongside their implications for Muslim minorities today. The study adopts a qualitative, descriptive, and analytical framework to comprehensively understand the subject while ensuring academic rigor and objectivity.

### **Literature Review**

Inclusivity and diversity are essential principles in Islamic teachings, as demonstrated through the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). His governance in *Medinah*

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<sup>6</sup> Ashker Aroos, Mohamed Ashath & Fatmir Shehu, A Study on Reflections of Prophetic Sirah Discourse in Pluralistic Society: A Contextual Analysis, *Disrosat Journal of Education, Social Sciences & Humanities*, Vol. 2 No. 3 (2024).

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established a model for peaceful coexistence, religious freedom, and mutual respect among diverse communities. This review examines key scholarly works on the Prophetic model and its relevance for Muslim minorities today.

Muhammad Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi's *The Prophet Muhammad: A Role Model for Muslim Minorities* explores how the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) serve as a guiding framework for Muslims living in non-Muslim societies. The book examines the Prophet's (PBUH) interactions with diverse communities, highlighting his principles of coexistence, justice, and ethical conduct. Siddiqi argues that the Prophet's (PBUH) life provides essential lessons for Muslim minorities in fostering harmonious relationships while maintaining their religious identity. He emphasizes that while Islam encourages engagement with broader society, core beliefs, and religious obligations must remain uncompromised. Through historical analysis, the book presents the Prophet's (PBUH) approach as a model for balancing religious commitment and social integration.<sup>7</sup>

The *Medinah* Charter (*Methāq-e-Medīnah*) is widely regarded as a pioneering constitutional document promoting inclusivity. Riaz Ahmad Saeed's work on *Minorities' Rights from an Islamic socio-political perspective: Exploration of the Medīnah Charter and Constitution of Pakistan*, emphasizes the role of The *Medinah* Charter in facilitating peaceful coexistence among different ethnic and religious groups while ensuring their rights and freedoms.<sup>8</sup> Embong describes the Charter as an early framework for governance in multiethnic societies, advocating mutual respect and cooperation. Its emphasis on tolerance and justice remains pertinent for modern governance, especially in diverse societies seeking social harmony.<sup>9</sup> Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) united conflicting tribes and religious groups, setting a precedent for coexistence. Durotun Nafisah highlights that in *Medinah*, a multicultural society existed where Arabs and Jews coexisted peacefully under his leadership. His policies promoted tolerance and cooperation, reinforcing the importance of the *Medinah* Charter.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, Muheneid Hamad Ahmed Al-Karboly examines the Prophet's commitment to justice and the protection of rights, providing valuable lessons for Muslim minorities navigating diverse societies.<sup>11</sup> Moaath Okab Ahmed Awwad extends this discussion by emphasizing how Islamic teachings on pluralism and human rights contribute to inter-

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<sup>7</sup> Muḥammad Yāsīn Maẓhar Şiddīqī, *The Prophet Muhammad: A Role Model for Muslim Minorities* (Markfield: Islamic Foundation, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Riaz Ahmad Saeed, Muhammad Tahir, Naseem Akhter, and Hafiz Abdul Rashid, "Minorities' Rights from Islamic Socio-Political Perspective: Exploration of Madīnah Charter and Constitution of Pakistan," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 15, no. 2 (2020): 133–145, <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol15no2.10>.

<sup>9</sup> Zaleha Embong et al., 'Analysis of Ethnic Relations in the Medina Charter Analysis of Ethnic Relations in the Medina Charter' 1, no. 10 (2020): 22–31, <https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v10-i10/7895>.

<sup>10</sup> Durotun Nafisah and Khalid Mawardi, 'Islam and Multiculturalism in The Charter of Medina ( Socio-Historical Studies )', *International Journal of Social Sciences, Education, Communication and Economics* 2, no. 2 (2023): 249–56.

<sup>11</sup> Muheneid Hamad Ahmed Al-karboly, 'The Impact of Evoking Models of Peaceful Coexistence in The History of Islam , Achieving Moderation and Building Peace' 50, no. 6 (2023): 293–303.

community peace.<sup>12</sup> In “Islam and the Challenge of Diversity and Pluralism,” Osman Bakar highlights the Qur'anic emphasis on common humanity, advocating mutual respect as a basis for coexistence. His insights align with the Prophet’s (PBUH) inclusive governance and offer guidance for contemporary Muslim minorities.<sup>13</sup>

The principles reflect the Prophet’s (PBUH) inclusive leadership in *Medinah*, making it a valuable model for minority communities. Beyond governance, the Prophet’s (PBUH) inclusivity extended to social responsibilities.<sup>14</sup> Fazil analyzes how his teachings on justice, compassion, and community welfare remain relevant for addressing contemporary challenges. Their study highlights the importance of inclusivity in fostering harmonious societies.<sup>15</sup> While existing literature extensively discusses the *Medinah* Charter and Qur'anic principles there is a gap in exploring their practical application in contemporary socio-political contexts. Most studies focus on historical perspectives without examining how these principles can be implemented in governance, legal frameworks, and interfaith dialogue today. The scholarly literature affirms that Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) leadership, *Makkah* life, and the *Medinah* Charter offer invaluable lessons on inclusivity and diversity. However, there is no systematic work has been published analyzing the Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) approach to diversity and inclusion as a model for Muslim minorities.

For this, the research is structured to include an introduction, followed by an exploration of the pluralistic society in the Prophetic Sirah during the *Makkah* and *Madinah* phases. The second section examines how the Prophet (PBUH) exemplified models of inclusivity and diversity, emphasizing the practice of embracing differences in both *Makkah* and *Madinah*. Subsequently, the study presents an analytical review of inclusivity in the Prophetic *Sirah*, highlighting its uncompromising theological foundation and deriving lessons for minority communities. The conclusion outlines the parameters (*Dawābit*) for fostering inclusivity and diversity, providing a framework for embracing societal differences.

## 02. Pluralistic Society in Prophetic *Sīrah*

It is obvious that human beings not only exist alone without any assistance from others but also, he must rely on others. Allah (SWT) says, “O mankind! We created you from a single [pair] of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other [not that ye may despise [each other]]. Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of

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<sup>12</sup> Bilal Khalaf et al., ‘Treatment of Non-Muslim Minorities in Islamic Nations: Prophetic Principles’, *Evolutionary Studies in Imaginative Culture*, n.d.

<sup>13</sup> Osman Bakar, ‘Islam and the challenge of diversity and pluralism : must Islam reform itself?’, *Islam and Civilizational Renewal* 1, no. 1 (2009): 57–73, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.52282/icr.v1i1.13>.

<sup>14</sup> Kazeem Adekunle Adegoke, ‘Fiqh al-Aqalliyah and Muslim minorities in a Non-Muslim’, *Journal Syariah* 29, no. 1 (2021): 1–20.

<sup>15</sup> Tahmina Fazil et al., ‘Inclusive analysis of contemporary social responsibilities in the light of the Seerah of prophet Muhammad (Pbuh)’, *Russian Law Journal* XI, no. 3 (2023): 2117–21.

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Allah is [he who is] the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted [with all things].”<sup>16</sup>

The history of humanity demonstrates that humanitarian society encompasses various families, tribes, religions, races, languages, and so on. Throughout history, most of them have been diverse and multicultural. As a result, individuals of all ethnicities and religions had to coexist in one land under a single ruler. Therefore, to determine how the Prophet (PBUH) managed Islamic discourse, the context of his pluralistic society is considered in the following topics.

### **2.1. Makkah Phase of Prophetic *Sīrah***

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was born in 570 CE in *Makkah*, on the Arabian Peninsula, where there were several ethnic, tribal, religious, and other communities. His blessed life is the ideal model provided by Allah (SWT) to be evaluated by humanity for peace and blessing in this world and salvation in the hereafter. Though the Prophet (PBUH) lived only for 63 years, he had a profound impact on his environment and redirected the course of the globe to a new dimension.<sup>17</sup> Allah (SWT) selected him as a Prophet at forty, and he started inviting people to Islam in *Makkah* for 13 years, before migrating to *Medinah* around the age of fifty-three. Further, he lived for approximately 10 years in *Medinah*. Throughout his 23 years of *Da'wah* life, he dealt with various individuals and societies until he completed his mission.<sup>18</sup> In brief, it is mentioned that Islam began as a minority tradition in a non-Muslim setting<sup>19</sup> amid a pluralistic context.

*Makkah* society at the time of the Prophet's (PBUH) birth had enjoyed different faiths and ethnicities of people. The *Quraysh* constituted the majority of them. They were leading society and dominated its business and trade. However, they were divided among themselves into political, social, economic, religious, and cultural groups beset with enmity. The *Quraysh* families and other Arab tribes were essentially the adherents of the Abrahamic faith.<sup>20</sup> However, their faith had been corrupted by accretions. They had combined many innovations in their original faith. They had diverged much from the original path. Polytheism had become the main article of their faith.

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<sup>16</sup> (al-Hujarat 49: 13)

<sup>17</sup> Abual-Ḥasan al-Nadwī, *Madhā khasira al-'ālam bi-inhitāt al-Muslimīn*, (al-Mansura: Maktabat al-Iman, 1981), p. 102.

<sup>18</sup> Ibnu Hisham, *Sīrāt Ibnu Hisham Biography of The Prophet*, Abridged by: Abdus-Salam M. harun, (Egypt: Al-Falah Foundation for Translation and Distribution, 2000), Ibnu Ishaq, *The life of Muhammed*, Tr. A Guillaume, (Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 1967).

<sup>19</sup> Amir Hussain, *Islam, Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue, Progressive Muslims: on Justice, gender and Pluralism*, (England: One World Publications, 2008), p. 251.

<sup>20</sup> [Safiyyur Rahmān](#) Mubārakfūrī, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum [The Sealed Nectar]* (Riyadh: Dār al-salām Publishers, 1996), p. 18-22.

All the tribes in *Makkah* worshipped their various idols, and the idol called *Hubul* was the national idol among the idols installed in the *Ka'bah*, which included 360 idols. The other most important idols mentioned in the Quran are *al-Lāt*, *al-Manāt*, and *al-'Uzza*. It is clear from this that polytheism was rooted deep in the *Makkan* atmosphere. At the same time, there was a group of people known as the '*Hanīf*', '*Ahnaḥ*', or '*Hunaḥā*' gave left their ancestral faith because they were dissatisfied with it in this generalized polytheistic religious environment.<sup>21</sup> They abandoned idolatry and believed in monotheism. The most famous of them were *Zaid Bin 'Amr Bin Nufail*, *Waraqah Bin Naufal*, and *Uthman Bin Huwayrith*.<sup>22</sup>

Moreover, there were some individual Christians who lived in or near *Makkah* at that time. Most of the '*Hunaḥā*' also followed Christianity. Regarding the Christians, Karen Amstrong says, 'They had little impact on their contemporaries because they were mostly concerned with their self-salvation. They had no desire to reform the social or moral life of Arabia, and their theology was essentially negative. Instead of creating something new, they simply withdraw from the mainstream.'<sup>23</sup> However, Christians were few in *Makkah* as well as the majority of the ruling position in Abyssinia where the first migration of *Makkan* Muslims was held in the beginning period of Islam.

As for the Jews who were in the time of *Makkah*, historians differ regarding their presence. Some<sup>24</sup> claim that they did not exist in *Makkah* and some<sup>25</sup> claim that they did exist. However, according to Islamic sources, there is no record of the Jewish community living in the *Makkan* period. Amir Hussain says, "When the Prophet (PBUH) received first revelations in *Makkah*, the people around him were largely tribal and polytheistic. Even though the people of *Makkah* knew of Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and other religious traditions, large concentrations of Christians and Jews were only to be found in other cities in Arabia."<sup>26</sup>

Apart from the above mentioned, in another way, it is identified that *Makkah* was better known as a religious site than as a commercial hub. Non-Arabs, mainly Persians, Abyssinians, Iraqis, and Syrians visited *Makkah* for pilgrimage. Some of them had settled there, and some were slaves and therefore became members of the community. Although they were limited in number and were given a distinct color in that pluralistic and multicultural society, their existence did have its bearing on the local traditions, culture,

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<sup>21</sup> Tariq Ramadan, *In The Footsteps of The Prophet: Lessons From The Life of The Prophet*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.9.

<sup>22</sup> Ibnu Hisham, *Sīrāt Ibnu Hisham Biography of The Prophet*, Abridged by: Abdus-Salam M. harun, (Egypt: Al-Falah Foundation for Translation and Distribution, 2000), V.2, p. 242-243.

<sup>23</sup> Karen Amstrong, *Muhammad: Prophet for Our Time*, (London: Harper Perennial, 2007), p. 44.

<sup>24</sup> Barakat Ahmad, *Muhammad, and Jews: A Re-Examination*, (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1979), p. 32, William Montgomery Watt, *Muhammad At Mecca*, (Great Britain: OUP, 1953), p.5

<sup>25</sup> Muhammad Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi, *The Prophet Muhammad: A Role Model for Muslim Minorities*, (Markfield: The Islamic Foundation, 2006), p. 18.

<sup>26</sup> Amir Hussain, *Islam, Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue, Progressive Muslims: on Justice, Gender and Pluralism*, Edited by Omid Safi, (England: One World Publications, 2008), p.252.

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and religious life.<sup>27</sup> So, it is confirmed here that the context of Prophetic *Sīrah* in the *Makkan* Phase was a pluralistic and multi-faith society.

## 2.2. *Medinah* Phase of Prophetic *Sīrah*

The second phase of Prophetic time is the *Medinah* period which starts from the *Hijrah* in 622 CE. The Prophet's vision for diversity and pluralism could only be fully implemented after *Hijrah* when he was able to organize the social order according to Islamic principles. *Medinah* society was primarily split into three groups: the *Aws*, the *Khazraj*, and the *Jews*, as well as others who arrived in *Medinah* and temporarily settled there for social or business reasons. The Jews who lived in *Medinah* were divided into three major tribes, *Banu Nadir*, *Banu Qurayzah*, and *Banu Qaynuqah*.<sup>28</sup> Regarding religion, the Arabs of *Medinah* before *Hijrah* were subject to the dominant paganism in the region, which saw the rise of different expressions of polytheism, including the worship and praise of idols.

In *Medinah*, the pre-Islamic Arab society including tribes of *Aws* and *Hazraj* was highly violent. They had great hostility with each other. They had been fighting each other for more than four decades in a war. When they became Muslims after the migration of the Prophet (PBUH) to *Medinah* they were called '*Ansāri*' which means helpers to *Makkah* migrants those were called '*Muhājirin*'. The first population census counted by Prophet (PBUH.), once he migrated to *Medinah*, showed that 10,000 people lived in *Medinah*, of which 1500 were Muslims, 4000 Jews and 4500 were polytheist Arabs.<sup>29</sup>

However, the early Islamic society in *Medinah* comprised diverse religious sects and ethnic groups such as Persians, Abyssinians, and others who lived in the town. Divergent religious faiths such as Jews and Christianity also lived in *Medinah*.<sup>30</sup> The number of Christians who were inside the *Medinah* was almost insignificant.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, they were a minority society in *Najrān* and surrounding areas in South Arabia during the time. Scholars argue that in the year Islam arose, there were 15 million Christians among Eastern Arabs.<sup>32</sup> However, the main social groups in *Medinah* were Muslims, Jews, and polytheist Arabs.

It is clear here that the Arabian Peninsula during the time of the Prophet (PBUH) in *Makkah* and *Medinah* was a region in which various faiths were present. There were Christians,

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<sup>27</sup> Muhammad Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi, *The Prophet Muhammad: A Role Model for Muslim Minorities*, p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> Safvet Halilovic, *Sirah- A Biography of Muhammad the Last Messenger of Allah*, (Sarajevo: Publishing House: 2014), p. 246.

<sup>29</sup> Ali Bulac, *The Medina Document, Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, Edited by Charles Kurzuman, (New York: OUP, 1998), p.169.

<sup>30</sup> Fazlur Rahman Faridi, *Living as a Muslim in a plural society*, (Chennai: Islamic Foundation Trust, 1998), p.2.

<sup>31</sup> Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Life and Work of the Prophet of Islam*, (New Delhi: Adam Publishers and Distributors, 2004), p. 142

<sup>32</sup> Seyfettin Ersahin, *Prophet Muhammad's Relations with Christians (an Islamic Perspective)*. *The Journal of Sirah Studies*, Special Issue. 11, p. 108.

Jews, Zoroastrians, polytheists, and others not affiliated with any religion. The Prophet (PBUH) who founded the classless and universal society of Islam brought various nations together and removed their tribal prejudices.<sup>33</sup> The following topics discuss how the Prophet (PBUH) managed Islamic discourse with the people of differences in the pluralistic society.

### **03. Models for Inclusivity and Diversity: Embracing Differences**

The Prophet (PBUH) has shown excellent sociological qualities for maintaining harmonious friendship among people in the world, when people live differently in terms of race, religion, place, and language, and has left beautiful examples. Whether the society he created was strong in terms of power or weak; whether his society ruled or was ruled by others, the examples of friendship they observed with other societies, finding unity in diversity, are preserved in the Prophetic *Sirah*. These are the best examples to be maintained with other societies, whether a Muslim lives as an individual or forms a state

#### **3.1- Pluralistic Society of Makkah**

*Makkah* was the birthplace of the Prophet (PBUH). It was a land where Muslims were not only weak as a minority but also weak in terms of their power and influence. Idolatry was rampant. The strong preyed on the weak. Alcohol and prostitution were rampant. High values such as truth, honesty, justice, and fairness have been corrupted. The practices followed by the Prophet (PBUH) before his prophethood and the examples he followed after his prophethood during this period are excellent examples of maintaining friendly relations between pluralistic communities.

#### **Before the Prophethood**

The fact that the Prophet (PBUH) had good relations with other communities even before he became a prophet is evidenced by the nicknames “*As-Sadiq*” and “*Al-Amin*”<sup>34</sup> given to him by that community. A man named ‘*Barrāz*’ from the tribe of *Kinānah* kidnapped and killed three people from ‘*Qays Aylan*’. The *Quraysh* fought against this, and this battle is known as ‘*Harb al-Fijar*’.<sup>35</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) participated in this battle on the side of the *Quraysh* for the sake of justice and to maintain relations. This shows his relationship with others and stand against injustice.

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<sup>33</sup> Farooq Hassan, Acceptance of Pluralism in Islam (A Myth or Truth). *European Journal of Scientific Research*, Vol. 69, No. 3, 2012, p. 476.

<sup>34</sup> Asghar Ali Engineer, The Prophet of Non-Violence: Spirit of Peace, Compassion & Universality in Islam, (New Delhi: Vitasta Publishing, ND) p, 6.

<sup>35</sup> [Safiyur Rahmān](#) Mubārakfūrī, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum* [The Sealed Nectar] (Riyadh: Dār al-salām Publishers, 1996), p. 54.

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Similarly, a man from the tribe of 'Jubayt' came to Makkah to trade. There he bought goods from 'Aas ibn Waail' and refused to pay the price for them. As a result, the wronged man sought help from his friendly tribes, but no one came to help him. Then some of the leaders of the *Quraysh* gathered at the house of 'Abdullah ibn Jad'an and agreed to protect the rights of the wronged. The Prophet (PBUH) also participated in this. This is called the '*Hilf al-Fuzul*'.<sup>36</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) later said, "If I am called upon to make such a treaty after the advent of Islam, I will respond to it."<sup>37</sup>

The Prophet (PBUH) never worshipped idols during the '*Jaahiliyyah*.' However, when the *Ka'ba*, which was the home of idols, was found in ruins, he maintained such good relations with his fellow human beings that people recognized him as a worthy person to rebuild it.<sup>38</sup> When the Prophet (PBUH) received his first revelation in the cave of *Hira*, his wife Khadija comforted him and said, "Peace be upon you! By Allaah, He will never abandon you. You keep company with your relatives. You tell the truth. You bear the burdens of the needy. You strive for the poor. You entertain guests. You truly help those who are caught in temptations."<sup>39</sup>

These demonstrate that the Prophet (B.B.U.H.) lived in harmony with all people in the pluralistic society he lived in. Despite differences such as tribe, race, and faith, he lived in unity with everyone and accepted their differences.

### After Receiving Prophethood

The Prophet (PBUH), who meditated in the cave of *Hira*, not knowing what to do for the betterment of humanity with social concern, received divine guidance at the age of forty. From that day on, he worked tirelessly for the welfare of humanity and a peaceful life. He drew up plans for this and gave guidance secretly and publicly, taking into account the time, the environment, the nature of people, and individual differences.

The Prophet (PBUH) faced many hardships and sorrows on this path. Despite facing many obstacles such as insults, words, torture, threats, and murder, he and his companions remained patient and advised them to live in tolerance with others. "O family of Yasir! Be patient. You have been promised Paradise."<sup>40</sup> The *Abu Talib* was the most important of those who worked for the development of Islam in *Makkah*. He embraced, cared for, and protected the Prophet (PBUH). When the *Quraysh* resistance subsided, *Abu Talib's* protection and social status stood as a protective wall in front of him. When all the

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<sup>36</sup> [Safiyur Rahmān](#) Mubārakfūrī, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, p.54

<sup>37</sup> al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, vol. 3, "Book of Oppressions (Kitab al-Mazalim)," Hadith No: 2366, (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997).

<sup>38</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, vol. 1, "Book of Revelation (Kitab al-Wahi)," Hadith NO: 382, (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997).

<sup>39</sup> [Safiyur Rahmān](#) Mubārakfūrī, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, p. 69.

<sup>40</sup> [Safiyur Rahmān](#) Mubārakfūrī, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, p.74

conspiracies against the Prophet (PBUH) were in vain, the *Quraysh* decided to cut off economic and social ties, called 'social boycott'. This caused difficulties for the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions. This boycott continued for about three years. During this period, the Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslims were protected by the *Banu Muttalib*<sup>41</sup> family, who had not yet embraced Islam.

Following the year of anxiety, the Prophet (PBUH) began his journey towards *Ta'if* in search of safety. When the expected results did not come there either, he returned to Makkah. At that time, the Prophet (PBUH) was protected and sheltered by a polytheist named *Mu'tim ibn 'Adi*. Remembering this help, the Prophet (PBUH) said about the prisoners of Badr, "If *Mu'tim* had been alive and had interceded for them, I would have freed them all for him."<sup>42</sup>

The *Hijrah* is a major event in the Islamic journey. The fact that the Prophet (PBUH) took his non-Muslim brother '*Abdullah bin Uraiqat*<sup>43</sup> as his guide in the journey is a good example of the friendly relations he maintained with people of other religions. Before the Prophet (PBUH) migrated to *Medinah*, he appointed Ali (may Allaah be pleased with him) as the responsible one to return the property of the Makkahns that had been entrusted to him as a trust to the rightful owners. This shows the Prophet's concern that even if he was wronged, he should not harm others - even if they were members of his religion.

All the above events illustrate how the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) approached all people living in the pluralistic society, accepted their differences, and maintained good relations with them. These are role models for Muslims to live in a pluralistic society, accepting differences and maintaining good relations with others.

### 3.2- Pluralistic Society of *Medinah*

*Medinah* was the land that gave refuge to the Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslims. It was a land where Muslims not only lived in the majority but also in a land where they were influential in terms of power. There were Jews, Christians, polytheists, and other religious people living alongside the Muslims. There were also hypocrites. Among the Muslims, there were two distinct groups, the *Ansar* and the *Muhajirin*, and among the *Ansar*, there were the *Aws* and *Khazraj* tribes. The Prophet (PBUH) lived in *Medinah* and set excellent examples of the friendly relations that the powerful majority should maintain with the different ethnic and religious minorities living under them. It is sufficient to elaborate and cite only a few of them.

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<sup>41</sup> Akram Diyā' al-'Umarī, al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah al-Saḥīḥah: Muḥāwalah li-Taṭbīq Qawā'id al-Muḥaddithīn fī Naqd Riwāyat al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah, (al-Madīnah: Maktabat al-'Ulūm wa-al-Ḥikam, 1992), Vol.01, P. 182.

<sup>42</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, vol. 5, "Book of Military Expeditions (Kitab al-Maghazi)," Hadith 4023 (Riyadh: Darussalam, 1997)

<sup>43</sup> [Safiyur Rahmān](#) Mubārakfūrī, [Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum](#), p.144.

## 1. Establishing brotherhood among Muslims

When the Prophet (PBUH) migrated to *Medinah*, he first united the Muslims of *Medinah*, who were ethnically identified as *Aws* and *Khazraj*. He established the Islamic brotherhood among the *Ansar* and the *Muhajirin*. For this, he built a mosque. In that community, there was an Arab named Ja'far. There was a Pharisee named Salman. There was a Ghifari named Abu Dhar. There was an Abyssinian named Bilal. There was a Yemeni named Hudhayfah. Although they were different in terms of region, race, and language, they were brothers. Islamic History indicates that this brotherhood remained among them until the end.<sup>44</sup>

## 2. *Medinah* Covenant - With the Jews

The Prophet (PBUH) made a pact with the multi-ethnic and religious people living in *Medinah* as 'citizens of *Medinah*'. This agreement paved the way for peaceful coexistence with the Jews, who were the next largest population in *Medinah* at that time. This is known as the '*Medinah* Covenant'. The conditions contained in it have been recorded by Muhammad Hamidullah based on several primary sources.<sup>45</sup> Analyzing this, Ali Juma states that the *Medinah* Charter was based on four major principles:

- (a) Guaranteeing security for all citizens of *Medinah* and harmony among them
- (b) Freedom to follow the religion of their choice
- (c) Providing equal opportunities for all citizens to participate in social, political and military affairs
- (d) Affirming the principle of individual responsibility<sup>46</sup>

As a result, friendship was sown between different religions in *Medinah*. Humanity was practiced there. Equality and brotherhood were maintained. Freedom of belief and worship were recognized. Justice was established and injustice was eradicated regardless of one's religion or ethnicity. The community to which an individual belongs would not be punished for the crime of an individual. The principle that a person is responsible for his actions was affirmed.

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<sup>44</sup> [‘Alī](#) Jum‘ah, *al-Namādhij al-arba‘ah min hady al-Nabī ṣallā Allāh ‘alayhi wa-sallam fī al-ta‘āyush ma‘a al-ākhar: al-usus wa-al-maqāsid*, (al-Jizah : Dār al-Fārūq lil-Istithmārāt al-Thaqāfiyah, 2013), p. 35.

<sup>45</sup> Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, *Majmū‘at al-wathā’iq al-siyāsīya li al-‘ahd al-nabawīyah wa al-Khilafah al-Rāshidah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Nafayis, 1985), p. 59-62.

<sup>46</sup> [‘Alī](#) Jum‘ah, *al-Namādhij al-arba‘ah min hady al-Nabī ṣallā Allāh ‘alayhi wa-sallam fī al-ta‘āyush ma‘a al-ākhar: al-usus wa-al-maqāsid*, (al-Jizah : Dār al-Fārūq lil-Istithmārāt al-Thaqāfiyah, 2013), p. 44.

### 3. *Medinah* - With the Hypocrites

Hypocrisy means doing one thing inside and another thing outside. In the eyes of a nation, this is considered treason. The Prophet (PBUH) lived with such hypocrites with tolerance and justice. Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul, who is considered the leader of the hypocrites who lived in *Medinah*, was causing great trouble for the Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslims. Once, during the battle of *Banu Mustalah*, he mocked the Prophet (PBUH) by saying, "If we return to *Medinah*, the superior among us will drive out the inferior." Hearing this, Umar angrily shouted, "O Messenger of Allah! Give me permission to cut off his head and bring it back." The Prophet (PBUH) replied, "No if I do that, the people will say that Muhammad is killing his companions." When his son Abdullah (PBUH) heard this news, he became angry and said, "O Messenger of Allah! If it is to kill my father, permit me. I will cut off his head and bring it back..." When he asked, the Prophet (PBUH) replied, "We will treat him kindly and gently as long as he is with us."<sup>47</sup>

Similarly, after a while, when Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul died, his son came to the Prophet (PBUH) and said, "O Messenger of Allaah! Give me your cloak. I want to shroud my father with it. You should pray for him and seek forgiveness for his sins." The Prophet (PBUH) gave him his cloak to shroud him with. He said, "Permit me to pray for him." Permission was granted.<sup>48</sup> These incidents testify to the kind of coexistence the Prophet (PBUH) accepted differences and maintained even with the treacherous traitors who lived under his authority.

### 4. *Hudaybiyah* Treaty- With the *Quraysh* infidels

The Prophet's life in *Medinah* testifies to the tolerance and coexistence that the Prophet (PBUH) and his companions maintained with the *Quraysh* of *Makkah*, who not only persecuted him and drove him out of his own country but also threatened him with struggles in *Medinah*. The Prophet's behavior during the '*Hudaybiyah* Treaty', where the Muslims were subjected to injustice, and during the '*Conquest of Makkah*', where power was gained through a bloody revolution, are excellent examples that a Muslim should follow in a pluralistic social order.

It would not be wrong to say that the conquest of *Makkah* was the harvest of the tolerance that the Muslims practiced in *Hudaybiyah*. The Prophet (PBUH) attended *Hudaybiyah* with 1400 companions. Ibn Hisham states that he had 10,000 companions with him in the conquest of *Makkah*.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, vol. 6, "Book of Tafsir (Kitab al-Tafsir)," Hadith 4905.

<sup>48</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, vol. 2, "Book of Funerals (Kitab al-Jana'iz)," Hadith 1269.

<sup>49</sup> Ibnu Hisham, *Sirāt Ibnu Hisham Biography of The Prophet*, Abridged by: Abdus-Salam M. Harun, Vol. 2, p. 322.

Although the conditions of the Treaty of *Hudaybiyah* angered the companions, the Prophet (PBUH) accepted them with foresight. When the *Quraysh* insisted on deleting the words 'Messenger of Allah' in the treaty and writing 'Muhammad ibn Abdullah', the Prophet (PBUH) gave in to that too. On the other hand, when one of the Prophet's companions Abu Jandal came from *Makkah* to seek refuge with the Prophet (PBUH), the conditions of the treaty were respected, and he was returned to the infidels.<sup>50</sup> These are manifestations of the Prophet's tolerance for accepting differences.

The history of the world is that the victors always take revenge on the vanquished. From the beginning of the mission to the end, the *Quraysh* were the ones who wronged and wronged the Prophet and his companions. The Prophet (PBUH), who defeated them and conquered *Makkah*, asked, 'O *Quraysh*! How do you think I will treat you?' They replied, 'You will treat me well. You are the best brother to us and the son of the best brother among us.' The Prophet (PBUH) said, 'I will tell you as Prophet Yusuf told his brother, 'You will not be avenged in any way. I have forgiven you. You are free.'<sup>51</sup>

## 5. With the Christians of Najran

After the Treaty of *Hudaybiyah*, the Prophet (PBUH) started to spread Islam to the people outside *Medinah*. He made treaties of friendship with many tribes living near *Medinah*. Among them, the treaty he made with the Christians of Najran is a good example of friendship regardless of religion, race, or region.

The Christians of Najran came to meet the Prophet (PBUH) wearing silk clothes and gold rings.<sup>52</sup> Even though these clothes and ornaments were forbidden for a man to wear in Islam, the Prophet (PBUH) welcomed them warmly and seated them in the Prophet's Mosque. When their prayer time arrived, he allowed them to perform their rituals in the mosque. Then he signed a treaty with them for social harmony and coexistence. Imara summarizes the terms of this agreement, and states as follows:

"It can be observed in depth that all the values of a plural society are included in this agreement, such as religious freedom, cultural freedom, spiritual freedom, support for the social formation and construction, recognition of social participation, brotherhood, cooperation, social support, social harmony, integration, mutual respect, security, economic and political security, tolerance, and cultural uniqueness."<sup>53</sup> Thus, despite the many different opinions, positions, and forms of worship between Islam and other religions,

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<sup>50</sup> Muhammad al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, trans. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, vol. 3, "Book of Conditions (Kitab al-Shurut)," Hadith 2770.

<sup>51</sup> Safiyur Rahmān Mubārakfūrī, *Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum*, p.348.

<sup>52</sup> 'Alī Jum'ah, *al-Namādhij al-arba'ah min hady al-Nabī ṣallā Allāh 'alayhi wa-sallam fī al-ta'āyush ma'a al-ākhar: al-usus wa-al-maqāsid*, p. 104.

<sup>53</sup> 'Imarah, *al-Islam wa al-Ta'ddudiyyah*, (al-Qahirah: Maktabat al-Shuruq al-Duwaliyyah, ND) p. 35-37.

the Najran Agreement is very clear proof that Islam respects other religions and religious people.

#### **04. Analytical Review: Inclusivity in Prophetic *Sirah* with an Uncompromising Theological Foundation, Lessons for Minorities**

It is not only inevitable but also divinely ordained that humans live with different identities due to many reasons such as race, color, language, and place. When people of different races and religions live in the same country, in the same town, or in the same village, a Muslim can never be isolated from them and live alone. The Prophet (PBUH) said: “A believer who lives among people and is patient in the face of harm will have a greater reward than a believer who does not live among them and is not patient in the face of harm.”<sup>54</sup> This hadith uses the word ‘*al-Nas*’, which means people. It refers to all Muslims and non-Muslims.

Islam expects Muslims to live in harmony with the society in which they live, whether they are in the majority or in the minority, with or without ruling, and to live in harmony with the society in which they live and to benefit the country and society. However, it is a very important condition that they preserve their Islamic identity and uniqueness while living in harmony. Islam never approves of losing one’s individuality like a ‘Melting Pot Model’ by blending into other social and cultural customs in the name of coexistence and tolerance. Like a ‘Salad Bowl Model’ in a multi-ethnic society, Islam requires Muslims to preserve their identity.<sup>55</sup> Although a Salad is a mixture of different types of vegetables and fruits, each of them stands alone, retaining its colour, aroma, and taste. Even after becoming a part of a Salad, the uniqueness, colour, and taste of any fruit do not change; they do not disappear. Thus, when Muslims mix with multi-ethnic communities and maintain friendly relations, they are obliged to maintain their individuality and not live apart from them or dissolve in them.

In this way, a Muslim living among multi-ethnic communities has two challenges. First, is Maintaining Islamic identity in both policy and practice. Second, is Living in harmony with other communities and participating in national life. The main points that a Muslim living in this way should keep in mind can be summarized as follows. These are guidelines derived from Prophetic *Sirah* that should be followed by Muslims in the majority, ruling countries like *Medinah* in general, and by minorities living peacefully like *Habsha* or in crisis like *Makkah* in particular.

#### **1. Respecting freedom of Religion**

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<sup>54</sup> al-Bukhari, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, No: 388, (Beirut: Al-Saadawi Publications, 1997).

<sup>55</sup> Seyyid Sa’adatullah Husayni, *Responsibilities of Muslims Living in the Pluralistic Society*, (Chennai: Islamic Foundation Trust, 2019), p: 32-38.

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The unique nature of Islam is its freedom of thought. The Quran states that accepting or rejecting it is a matter of human choice. There is no compulsion in freedom of belief and freedom of worship. “O Prophet, will you compel them until they believe in Allah? (Of course, not).”<sup>56</sup> This verse was revealed in the *Makkan* environment. Similarly, the Quran further confirmed this in the *Medinah* environment where government authority was obtained. “There is no compulsion in religion.”<sup>57</sup> Therefore, in a multi-ethnic society, the freedom of religion, freedom of belief, and worship of every person must be respected. No restriction or force can ever be used in it.

There is no doubt that the uniqueness of a Muslim is Islam. In this religion, there are fundamental laws, and branches which are considered flexible laws. Among them, a Muslim can never compromise on fundamentals and rigid matters. For example, *Aqeedah*, *Ibadah*, *Halal-Haram* matters, clothing, etc. can be mentioned. On the contrary, the strategy of religion is to compromise on flexible matters and to be tolerant when necessary. The *Hudaybiyah* Treaty is a good example of this.<sup>58</sup>

However, the inclusivity does not imply that Islam compromises its theological core. The belief in *Tawhid* (oneness of God), the finality of prophethood, and the fundamentals of worship (*Ibadah*) remain inviolable. While Islam allows individuals to follow their faith, Muslims themselves are bound by religious obligations such as prayer, fasting, and adherence to *Halal-Haram* principles. This structured flexibility demonstrates Islam’s ability to coexist with pluralistic societies without diluting its theological identity.

## 2. Expressing Islamic Ethics

The international language of human society is ethics. One point is that all religions that have emerged in the world agree on this. The Messenger of Islam (PBUH) stated the purpose of his visit as ‘I have been sent to perfect the good manners’. By displaying the values of Islam at all times, whether at home, on the road, in school, in the hospital, or at work, we can strengthen the bonds of friendship between others. In particular, when an approach based on values such as love, compassion, peace, harmony, mutual assistance, brotherhood, humanity, and justice is adopted in a multi-racial society, coexistence can be achieved to a high degree. This can be observed in the life of the Prophet (PBUH) in Makkah and *Medinah*.

When living in a multi-racial society, it is necessary to maintain and live in positive relationships with others. Whether they are neighbors, friends, teachers, students, employers, or workers, one should maintain strong social ties with them. This can be done by sharing in their joys and sorrows. One can attend weddings. One can visit the homes of

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<sup>56</sup> Al-Quran Yunus: 99.

<sup>57</sup> Al-Quran 2:256.

<sup>58</sup> [Safiyur Rahmān](#) Mubārakfūrī, [Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtum](#) [*The Sealed Nectar*], p. 180.

the deceased and console family members. One can visit their homes when they are sick and seek their well-being. Similarly, one can exchange greetings on happy days like Eid. These are some ways that Islam strengthens the bond of social ties. The following comment by Siddiqi, who describes the Prophet (PBUH) as a role model for the minority community, is worth noting.

“To make social relations with the majority community is very helpful for the Muslim minority to survive in the respective state. Islam doesn't approve total separation of Muslim minorities from non-Muslim society. At the social and humanitarian level, Muslims are directed to forge cordial social relations with all. This is a powerful tool to convey the message of Islam among non-Muslims. We should treat non-Muslims very well.”<sup>59</sup>

Nevertheless, ethical engagement does not equate to moral relativism. While Islam encourages good relations with non-Muslims, it maintains its own ethical and legal boundaries. For instance, certain social practices that contradict Islamic morality (such as interest-based financial dealings or certain dietary laws) remain prohibited for Muslims. Thus, while ethical coexistence is prioritized, it does not override core Islamic jurisprudence.

### 3. Participation in Public Interest

In times of public problems and disasters the community, joining with other communities and extending a helping hand to everyone without any discrimination or striving to solve the problem is a high act of worship from a religious perspective. It is essential to live in harmony with other communities in times of untouchability, social inequality, starvation, social injustice, usury, exploitation, corruption, drug abuse, atheism, environmental pollution, sedition, famine, and natural disasters such as drought, earthquake, flood, and landslide. The Prophet (PBUH) participated in the 'Hizful Fuzhul', which is a good example of this. Islamic history also evidences that after the Prophet (PBUH) came to *Medinah*, he sent 500 dinars<sup>60</sup> to Abu Sufyan to distribute to the poor there during a severe drought in *Makkah*.

Tariq Ramadan, who examines this event of 'Hizful Fuzhul' from a contemporary perspective, explains three lessons that the Muslim community should learn from this. First, even before Islam, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) had accepted the need to oppose injustice and establish justice. Second, there is nothing wrong with participating in projects that are carried out to establish justice and the common good, even if they are created by non-Muslims. Third, Islam will never act against the value system that has already been established in society. It can be universal principles or fundamentals and values prescribed

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<sup>59</sup> Yasin Mazhar Siddiqi, *The Prophet Muhammad: A Role Model for Muslim Minorities*. The Islamic Foundation, United Kingdom (2006). p. 193.

<sup>60</sup> al-Shaybani, *Sharah al-Siyar al-Kabir*, (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1997), Vol. 01, P. 96.

by other religions.<sup>61</sup> In this way, Qaradawi questions how Islam, which teaches that one should not harm or do injustice to even an animal, can fail to help fellow human beings.<sup>62</sup>

Despite this openness, participation in public causes does not extend to compromising Islamic principles. Muslims are encouraged to work for the common good but must ensure that their engagement does not lead to assimilation into practices contrary to Islamic teachings. For example, while engaging in humanitarian efforts, Muslims must uphold ethical dealings, maintain religious obligations, and avoid activities that contradict Islamic law.

#### 4. Contribution to the Nation

Whether the Muslim community lives in a minority or a majority in a country, they should love the country, be loyal to the country, respect the fair laws of the country, and act following the country's laws. They should also contribute to the development of the country. Especially Muslims living as minorities in a country should never live apart from the national mainstream. Instead, they should live as indispensable partners of the nation.<sup>63</sup> The Prophet (PBUH) expressed his love for his country by looking at the land of *Makkah* during his migration and saying, "You are the most beloved city to me among all the cities in the world. If these people had not expelled me, I would not have taken a single step and gone to another city."<sup>64</sup>

When the Prophet (PBUH) went to *Medinah*, he made a radical change in all its social, economic, family, and political spheres. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Ibrāhīm<sup>65</sup> has extensively studied the work the Prophet (PBUH) did for the country of *Medinah* in terms of protecting that society from injustice and utilizing national resources appropriately, which is the duty of a Muslim to do in this world, the work of *Imārat* and *Khilāfah*. When the Prophet (p.b.u.h.) went to *Medinah*, he first changed its name. He established *Masjid-un-Nabawi*. He conducted a population census. He created the ‘*Medina Covenant*’ for the benefit of the nation. He used the mosque for the development of education. He strengthened social relations. He created market opportunities. He provided health guidelines to maintain the health of that society. As a result, he built a well-structured nation. There, people of all races and religions, without distinction, received their rights, performed their duties, and breathed freedom. Overall, a civilized society that enjoyed security and peace was formed

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<sup>61</sup> Tariq Ramalan, P. 121.

<sup>62</sup> Qaradawi, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase*, (Cairo: Dar al-Nasr for Egyptian Universities, 1992), p.188.

<sup>63</sup> Ashker Aroos & Mohamed Ashath, *A Study on Models and Foundations for Nation-Building: An Analysis from the Lense of Prophetic Sirah*, *EduCompassion: Jurnal Integrasi Pendidikan Islam dan Global*, Vol. 01, No. 03 (2025): 115-126.

<sup>64</sup> Tirmizi, No. 3925.

<sup>65</sup> ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Ibrāhīm al-‘Umarī, *Binā’ al-Mujtama’ al-Madanī wa Tanmiyatuh fi al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah*, Riyād: Dār al-Kunūz al-Ishbīliyah, 2015.

on earth. This is undoubtedly a great debt of gratitude that the Prophet (PBUH) owed to the country where he lived.

### 5. Facilitating Healthy Dialogue

Dialogue plays a major role in understanding each other and accepting differences. Dialogue and discussion are considered the best approaches to not only understanding each other but also resolving misunderstandings among people living in a multi-ethnic society. In modern times, the clash between civilizations is avoided and dialogue between civilizations is emphasized as a topic of discussion. The Prophet (PBUH) had many discussions both individually and collectively in Makkah and *Medinah*.

The Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia established a healthy dialogue with the Negus and paved the way for peaceful coexistence.<sup>66</sup> In *Medinah*, they discussed and made agreements with Jews, Christians, and polytheists. It is significant to note that interfaith dialogue is not about imposing one's religion on another or creating arguments. Rather, it is a peaceful approach to understanding one religion and resolving doubts.<sup>67</sup> In particular, in the history of the Prophet (PBUH), the agreement made by the Prophet (PBUH) after discussing with the Christian clergies who came to *Medinah* from the region of 'Najran'<sup>68</sup> is a good example of this.

While Islam promotes respectful engagement with other faiths, it does not subscribe to religious relativism or accept religious pluralism making all religions equally valid. The purpose of interfaith dialogue is to clarify misconceptions, promote peaceful coexistence, and uphold justice, rather than merging religious identities or diluting the theological uniqueness of Islam. The following chart examines the above discussion

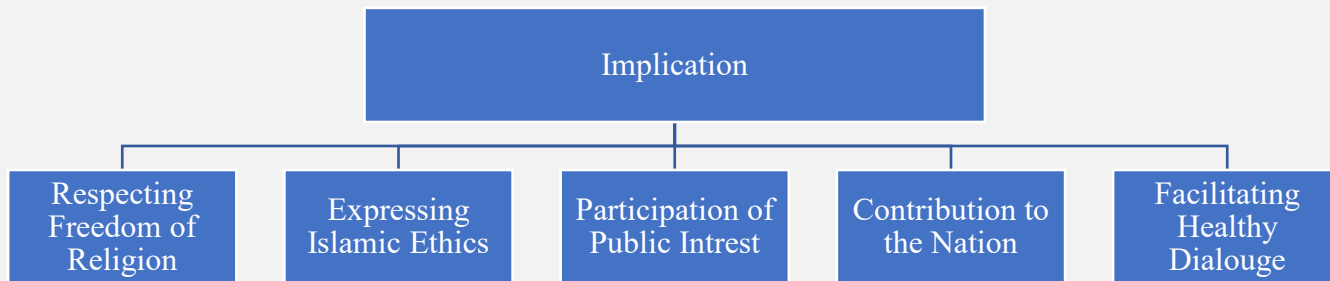
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<sup>66</sup> Seyyid 'Ali Khidr, *al-Ḥiwār fi al-Sirah al-Nabwiyyah*, (Makkah: Muslim World League, 2012), p. 66-150.

<sup>67</sup> Abdul Rehman, Saifullah & Nighat, "Islamic Paradigms for Interfaith Dialogue: A Quranic and Sunnah Perspective", *Journal of The Scholar*, Vol.8, No. 2, 2022. pp. 66-82.

<sup>68</sup> Muḥammad Ḥamīdullāh, *Majmū'at al-wathā'iq al-siyāsiya li al-'ahd al-nabawīyah wa al-Khilafah al-Rāshidah*, (Beirut: Dar al-Nafayis, 1985), p. 188-189.

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### **Conclusion**

It is God's will that people in the world live separately with different identities. They cannot live divided. The Messenger of God (PBUH), who brought a peaceful way of life to the world, is a model man for the entire human community as a messenger and as the final messenger. His life and guidance are exemplary for any human being living at any time.

When a Muslim lives in a multi-ethnic society, he is obliged to live as a people without separating people for any reason and to maintain the uniqueness of Islam. He should not isolate himself in the name of maintaining uniqueness or dissolve in the name of living together but should live as a person who gives proof of Islam in action. An exemplary life for this can be obtained from the life history of the Prophet (PBUH). By following it in our lives, we can build a world ruled by high qualities such as peace, harmony, freedom, brotherhood, equality, unity, coexistence, tolerance, compromise, patience, and moderation. This is the proof we give to Islam.

In conclusion, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) exemplified an unparalleled approach to diversity and inclusion in human relations, fostering peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and justice among people of different backgrounds. His life and teachings reflect a commitment to embracing social, cultural, and religious plurality while maintaining Islam's fundamental theological principles. While he engaged in multi-religious people, upheld the rights of non-Muslims, and ensured their freedom of belief and practice, he never compromised on the core tenets of the Islamic faith, such as Tawhid (the Oneness of God), prophetic teachings, and the essentials of worship. This balance highlights the unique nature of Islam, which champions inclusivity and harmonious living without diluting its religious doctrine in the minority context. Therefore, Islam's distinctiveness lies in its ability to respect diversity while firmly upholding its theological foundations, ensuring both peaceful coexistence and unwavering commitment to faith.

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