



## ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE OF DIALOGUE AMONG CIVILIZATIONS FOR GLOBAL PEACE AND CO-EXISTENCE

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### Abstract

*It can be argued that human beings possess an inherent tendency towards engaging in dialogue and communication with others. The promotion of dialogue is a significant aspect of Islam, aimed at promoting compassion and peace between individuals with varying beliefs and backgrounds. The possession of Divine logos enables him to engage in meaningful discourse with others, as he is capable of understanding and exploring the nature of things. Dialogues occur among various individuals and groups, including scholars, philosophers, cultures, religions, and common people in their daily lives. The presence of this phenomenon can be observed in prominent religious texts and the actions of their respective founders. The study aims to analyze the principles and rules of effective communication as stated in the Holy Quran. Different types of dialogue are used by scholars to promote relationships between religions, including "Interfaith dialogue" and "Interreligious dialogue." Additionally, there are broader forms of dialogue between cultures and civilizations, such as "dialogue among civilizations." The Muslim viewpoint on dialogue considers both forms of dialogue. Interreligious dialogue is supported by the Quran and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad. Some various precepts and events demonstrate how the Prophet established relationships with other religious communities. Individuals belong to different religious groups. The Quran and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad emphasized the importance of maintaining relations with other ethnic groups and communities for trade and cross-cultural interactions. The tradition of dual conversation has been upheld by Muslims throughout history. The Muslim approach to dialogue involves engagement with other religious communities on both secular and spiritual levels. The article will examine the Islamic viewpoint on dialogue, specifically regarding interfaith dialogue and political dialogue with other civilizations to promote global peace and coexistence.*

**Keywords:** Dialogue, Islam, Global peace, Coexistence, Interfaith dialogue, inter communities dialogue

### PROLOGUE

The Islamic viewpoint on dialogue pertains to the approach adopted by Muslim scholars and practitioners when engaging in dialogue with individuals from religions and cultures that differ from their own. The primary objective of this discourse is to explore the potential prospects of interactions between Muslims and other religions and communities to ensure global peace and coexistence. This will enable us to establish a robust foundation upon which we can envisage the potential provisions of the relationships between Muslims and other religious groups. Regrettably, some scholars and media outlets have portrayed these relationships in a negative light in contemporary times. The means of engaging in this discourse will be through analytical and scholarly modalities, commonly referred to as collaborative dialogue. This study aims to investigate the extent to which Islam, as a religion, promotes peace-building. The Quran affirms the authenticity of preceding revelations in several verses. Furthermore, the Quran is commonly referred to as the Muhaymin, meaning the protector, about the preceding revelations. A regulation and a Way have been designated by Allah for



every community. It is recommended that individuals from diverse communities engage in a friendly competition to outdo one another in performing acts of virtue. As stated in Quran (*Al-Quran, Surah Al-Maeda, 48*)

*We have revealed to you `O Prophet` this Book with the truth, as a confirmation of previous Scriptures and a supreme authority on them. So judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires over the truth that has come to you. To each of you, We have ordained a code of law and a way of life. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one community, but His Will is to test you with what He has given each of you. So compete with one another in doing good. To Allah you will all return, then He will inform you `of the truth` regarding your differences.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

Furthermore, it is stated in the (*Al-Quran Surah Ibrahim:4*) that God has exclusively assigned messengers who spoke the language of their respective communities, with the intention of conveying His message to them in a comprehensible manner:

*We have not sent a messenger except in the language of his people to clarify the message for them. Then Allah leaves whomever He wills to stray and guides whomever He wills. And He is the Almighty, All-Wise.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

According to the (*Al-Quran Surah Al-Mu`minun:44, Surah An-Nisa:166, Surah Al-Ghafir:78, Surah An-Nisa:164*), messengers were assigned by God to various communities in a consecutive manner, with the intention of leaving no room for mankind to dispute God's actions after the messengers' arrival:

*Then We sent Our messengers in succession: whenever a messenger came to his people, they denied him. So, We destroyed them, one after the other, reducing them to `cautionary` tales. So away with the people who refuse to believe!*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

*Yet `if you are denied, O Prophet,` Allah bears witness to what He has sent down to you—He has sent it with His knowledge. The angels too bear witness. And Allah `alone` is sufficient as a Witness.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

*We already sent messengers before you. We have told you the stories of some of them, while others We have not. It was not for any messenger to bring a sign without Allah's permission. But when Allah's decree comes, judgment will be passed with fairness, and the people of falsehood will then be in `total` loss.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

*There are messengers whose stories We have told you already and others We have not. And to Moses Allah spoke directly.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran

These verses connote the existence of numerous messengers and religions that are not explicitly referenced in the Quran. Furthermore, as the Divine Envoys, they all served as the conveyors of the Divine Message. There is a multitude of verses that make explicit or implicit reference to the obligation of believers to have faith in all Divine messengers and to believe in all Divine Scriptures (Wani, Abdullah, & Chang, 2015). The Messenger and the believers share a belief in the divine revelation that was bestowed upon the former by his Lord. Every individual adheres to the belief in the existence of a divine being, along with the acceptance of the existence of celestial beings, holy scriptures, and divine messengers. There is no differentiation made among any of the messengers of



the divine entity in question (Bakar, 2009). The individuals in question express their compliance by stating, (*Al-Quran Surah Al-Baqarah:286*):

*Allah does not require any soul more than what it can afford. All good will be for its benefit, and all evil will be for its loss. 'The believers pray,' "Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord! Do not place a burden on us like the one you placed on those before us. Our Lord! Do not burden us with what we cannot bear. Pardon us, forgive us, and have mercy on us. You are our 'only' Guardian. So grant us victory over the disbelieving people."*

– *Dr. Mustafa Khattab, the Clear Quran*

In the view of the author, the aforementioned verses in the Quran, among others, articulate certain prerequisites that enable a productive and positive exchange between cultures and religions. This serves as the fundamental research inquiry. Dialogue is a fundamental tool employed by Muslim practitioners of interfaith dialogue to understand the wider scope and potential of other religions (Sanni, 2012). The ultimate aim of this study is to foster harmony, cultivate mutual understanding, and promote peaceful coexistence among diverse religious communities, globally. To engage in such discourse, a plethora of references can be found in the Quran, the Traditions of the Prophet (Peace be upon Him), and Islamic History.

### STUDY STRATEGY

The methodology employed in this study was qualitative research, specifically utilizing contextual analysis. This study employs a research methodology that involves collecting data from primary sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah, as well as reviewing scholarly articles and books. Also, it is an attempt to examine the nature of interreligious dialogue in Islam. The analysis of these opinions is aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the topic.

#### Exposition of the subject matter

As per Fernand Braudel's perspective, the social sciences exhibit a limited capacity for providing conclusive definitions. This lack of decisiveness among social scientists often leads them to engage in debates rather than establishing clear-cut conceptual boundaries (Islam, 2019). The term "dialogue" has been historically derived from literary texts and philosophical discussions, such as Plato's dialogues, English or French dialogues, and intellectual debates between Greeks and Muslims (Izetbegović, 2010). These conversations and exchanges of ideas between individuals have contributed to the various meanings associated with the term. Consistent with the denotation of the term, the discourse within this specific set will be a perpetual chronicle to encompass and literary works to scrutinize (Malaysia, 2014). In the present context, the term "dialogue" pertains to its utilitarian significance, specifically referring to the exchange of religious and cultural knowledge among individuals of varying religious backgrounds. The primary objective of such an exchange is to mitigate, regulate, or transform conflicts that may arise between these individuals (Köchler, 2014). The rationale behind adopting this particular definition is rooted in the pressing need to engage in dialogue in the present day, with the ultimate goal of comprehending the concept of dialogue in the context of "religion and peace" (Rabadi, 2014). The approach to Peace Dialogue is influenced by the United Nations' strategies for peace, development, and human rights. In particular, it aligns with the vision and values of the World Summit for Social Development, which prioritized social integration on the global agenda (Haynes, 2016). This process involves multiple stakeholders working together to achieve mutual accommodation in social transformation, ultimately aiming to achieve peace. The challenge of mutual accommodation arises in situations where groups have a history of conflict resulting in fatalities, and where there is an uneven distribution of wealth and resources (Kurup, 2014). Tolerance of difference, consensus on objectives, and the exploration of shared meaning can be contentious even in more harmonious social contexts, where they are the subjects of debate, discussion, and discourse. This entails a thorough examination of pertinent theories and trends, such as "religion and violence", which have significantly influenced the development of dialogue between faiths in contemporary times (Al Saleeh, 2019). The utilization of dialogue as a means of addressing the theory of "religion and violence" represents a significant response. From the Islamic perspective,



dialogue serves primarily to mitigate the existing tensions within religious conflicts. The connotation of the term "dialogue" in this context would diverge from that of a non-religious, non-faith, or secular-based discourse (Younas et al., 2023).

The objective of engaging in dialogue is to foster constructive communication among communities that are diverse and polarised, with the ultimate goal of dismantling preconceived notions and reestablishing confidence (Rofiqi & Haq, 2022). The primary objective of engaging in dialogue is to facilitate the acquisition of comprehension regarding the emotional, cognitive, and expressive tendencies of other participants. This, in turn, fosters the development of empathy among the participants, enabling them to effectuate change (Dastagir & Ramzy, 2019). Dialogue is a collaborative process that entails the participation of individuals from diverse backgrounds within a community, to promote mutual comprehension and exchange knowledge on matters that are of significance to them (Abu-Nimer & Smith, 2016).

#### ***Need for Dialogue in Global Peace and Coexistence***

The significance of interreligious dialogue cannot be overstated in terms of fostering amicable relations and promoting peaceful cohabitation among diverse religious factions. Numerous tragic events have occurred throughout the course of world history (Burawoy, 2015). The contemporary world is facing various real and pressing issues such as the 9/11 attacks, the Israel-Palestine conflict, Pakistan-Afghan Issue, the Ukraine-Russia war, conflicts in the Middle East, Muslim-Buddhist conflicts in Thailand and Myanmar, and Hindu-Muslim clashes in India and Bangladesh (Art, Crawford, & Jervis, 2023). These scenarios are seemingly in opposition to religious beliefs. It is widely acknowledged that various religions espouse the values of universal love and compassion towards fellow human beings (Baranovskyi, 2023). However, it is a matter of concern that numerous egregious crimes leading to the loss of innocent lives are committed in the name of religion, as reported by Human Rights Watch in 2016 (Watch, 2016). It is imperative to acknowledge the underlying cause of this issue and devise a resolution that fosters collaboration among individuals from diverse religious and cultural affiliations, thereby facilitating constructive participation in interfaith discourse for the betterment of mankind (Wang & Miao, 2022). Interreligious dialogue serves as a crucial mechanism for reducing the interreligious tensions that exist among individuals globally. The notion of dialogue has been present throughout the entirety of human history. Numerous instances of interreligious dialogue have been documented throughout history (Khan et al., 2020).

#### ***Emphasis on Dialogue for Peace in Quran***

The Quran places significant emphasis on the value of engaging in dialogue and seeking peaceful resolutions to conflicts. The practice of encouraging adherents to participate in encouraging and respectful dialogues is aimed at fostering comprehension and preserving pleasant associations (Hamidi, 2016). The following verses exemplify the Quran's teachings on fostering peaceful dialogue (*Al-Quran Surah Al-Fussilat:125*

*Invite 'all' to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord 'alone' knows best who has strayed from His Way and whom is 'rightly' guided.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, *the Clear Quran*

This verse exhorts adherents of Islam to engage in the act of encouraging others to the way of Islam with sagacity and sound counsel. The statement underscores the significance of employing benevolent and efficacious reasoning while deliberating on matters about religious beliefs, thereby fostering harmonious dialogue (*Al-Quran Surah Al-Hujraat:13*).

*O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may get to know one another. Surely the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, *the Clear Quran*



This verse advocates for the utilization of benevolent actions and behavior in response to antagonism. Through this approach, it is widely held that hostility can be converted into amity, cultivating an environment of tranquility and conciliation (*Al-Quran Surah Al-Furqan:63*).

*The 'true' servants of the Most Compassionate are those who walk on the earth humbly, and when the foolish address them 'improperly', they only respond with peace.*

– Dr. Mustafa Khattab, *the Clear Quran*

This verse espouses the notion that individuals who adhere to a particular faith should react to speech that is either uninformed or provocative in a composed and courteous manner. The concept of exhibiting a modest and mild disposition when confronted with challenging circumstances is advocated, thereby facilitating the creation of harmonious engagements (Wagay, 2022).

The aforementioned verses underscore the Quran's prioritization of peaceful dialogue, sagacity, benevolence, and deference as cardinal tenets for fostering comprehension and settling disputes in a nonviolent fashion.

#### ***Emphasis on Dialogue for Peace in Prophet (PBUH) life***

Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) was renowned for his exceptional abilities in communication and dialogue. He attributed significant value to the utilization of productive and courteous dialogue as a mechanism for resolving disputes, disseminating information, and cultivating comprehension among individuals (Wagay, 2022). Throughout his lifetime, Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him) engaged in numerous peace treaties that were primarily founded on the principles of dialogue and negotiation (Wagay, 2022). The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was involved in several noteworthy peace treaties, which are of historical significance.

The Treaty of Hudaibiyah is a historical agreement that was signed between the Prophet Muhammad and the leaders of Mecca in the year 628 CE. The treaty held great significance as it facilitated the establishment of a cessation of hostilities and harmonious cohabitation between the involved factions. The Prophet Muhammad participated in a dialogue with the leaders of the Quraysh and reached an agreement that facilitated the peaceful visitation of the Kaaba in Makkah by the Muslims. Despite its initial unfavorable appearance to the Muslim community, the treaty ultimately facilitated a deeper comprehension between the two factions and established the groundwork for the nonviolent acquisition of Makkah (Ghasemi Shub, Shahroodi, & Ayazi, 2020).

The Treaty of Hudaibiya, which was established through diplomatic discussions between Prophet Muhammad and the Banu Khuza'a tribe, came into existence. The primary objective of the treaty was to establish a state of tranquility and stability within the region and to prevent either party from engaging in any form of hostile activities against the other. The text incorporates a stipulation that in the event of an assault on the Banu Khuza'a, the Muslims and Prophet Muhammad would extend their support to the tribe. The treaty exemplified the Prophet's dedication to upholding amicable relationships and safeguarding vulnerable tribes against acts of hostility (Khorramshad & Mojtahedi, 2020).

Following the successful military campaign against the Jewish stronghold of Khaybar, Prophet Muhammad, and the Jewish community entered into a treaty that ensured their physical security, safeguarded their legal entitlements, and permitted them to maintain their customary way of life and religious observances. The treaty was established through a process of dialogue and negotiation, ultimately resulting in the granting of autonomy to the Jewish community in their respective affairs. The treaty in question underscored the dedication of Prophet Muhammad to upholding justice and fostering harmonious coexistence among diverse religious communities (Ab Halim, 2018).

The Treaty of Aqabah is a historical agreement that was signed between the Islamic prophet Muhammad and a group of people from Yathrib. It pertains to two distinct accords that were established by Prophet Muhammad with the inhabitants of Medina (RAHMAN, 2020).

The aforementioned treaties established the basis for the Hijrah, or migration, of the Prophet and his adherents from Makkah to Madina. The agreements established reciprocal obligations of safeguarding and collaboration between the Muslim community and the inhabitants of Medina. The Prophet participated in a dialogue with the envoys of the urban center, deliberating on conditions



and accords that culminated in a harmonious and thriving cohabitation of the Muslim and non-Muslim populace in Medina (Ahmed, 2021).

These peace treaties are indicative of the emphasis placed by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) on peaceful conflict resolution and dialogue as a means of fostering harmonious relationships among diverse groups.


### **Wrap-ups and the way forward**

Islamic conversation promotes global peace and interfaith understanding. It promotes peaceful cooperation, tolerance, and respect. Muslims and non-Muslims can address common issues, dispel misconceptions, and create understanding through dialogue. Also, it promotes interfaith cooperation. Respectful dialogues can help religious people comprehend each other's beliefs, values, and practices. Understanding dispels stereotypes, prejudices, and misconceptions, promoting peaceful coexistence. Dialogue promotes peaceful conflict settlement. Islamic traditions emphasize peaceful dispute resolution, and discourse can help people and communities discover common ground and reconcile. Muslim and non-Muslim interaction promotes societal cohesiveness and inclusion. Dialoguing about other cultures, customs, and viewpoints promotes unity and humanity. Understanding and empathy promote peaceful cooperation and eliminate prejudice and discrimination.

Dialogue programs teach about Islam, its values, and its contributions. Islamic conversation promotes tolerance, respect, and diversity by correcting misperceptions. This information helps people to fight prejudices, and Islamophobia, and promote global peace. Islamic dialogue promotes peace, justice, and human rights. Muslim thinkers, leaders, and activists discuss compassion, forgiveness, and equality to develop a peaceful society. They can work with peace and social justice groups through these talks. Islamic interaction with youth is essential to peace. Youth can learn about peace, tolerance, discussion, critical thinking, and leadership by participating in dialogue projects. Empowering youth as peace ambassadors creates a more harmonious and inclusive world. Islamic dialogue promotes global peace by increasing understanding, resolving disagreements, establishing bridges, advocating for peace, and enabling individuals and communities to work toward a more peaceful and inclusive future.

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