

MOHAMMAD ELIUS
ISSA KHAN
MOHD ROSLAN BIN MOHD NOR
MOHD YAKUB ZULKIFLI BIN MOHD YUSOFF
KAMARUZAMAN BIN NOORDIN

**ISLAM AS A RELIGION OF TOLERANCE AND DIALOGUE:
A CRITICAL APPRAISAL**

Mohammad Elius

University of Malaya, Department of Islamic History and Civilization, Academy of Islamic Studies, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Email: eliusium@gmail.com

Issa Khan

University of Malaya, Department of Syariah and Management, Academy of Islamic Studies, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Email: shahaalam83@gmail.com_issa@um.edu.my

Mohd Roslan Bin Mohd Nor

University of Malaya, Department of Islamic History and Civilization, Academy of Islamic Studies, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Email: m_roslan@um.edu.my

Mohd Yakub Zulkifli Bin Mohd Yusoff

University of Malaya, Department of Quran and Hadith, Academy of Islamic Studies, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Email: zulkifli@um.edu.my

Kamaruzaman Bin Noordin

University of Malaya, Department of Syariah and Management, Academy of Islamic Studies, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Email: zamann@um.edu.my

Abstract: This study analyses Islam as a religion of tolerance and dialogue based on textual analysis and historical interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah. It also supports its case by exploring the behaviour of early Muslim rulers towards those belonging to other religions. The study highlights that Islam plays a unique role in promoting religious tolerance and dialogue by providing freedom, justice and equal rights for all irrespective of their religion, culture and civilisation. Though some Qur'anic verses and the Prophetic traditions seem to be contradictory to dialogue and tolerance, upon examination, they are contextualised to particular contexts and circumstances. The study concludes that the teachings of the Qur'an, the Prophetic traditions and the treatment of early Muslim rulers support that Islam plays a vital role in promoting tolerance, dialogue and interreligious harmony in the world.

Key words: Islam, Qur'an, Sunnah, tolerance, dialogue, religious freedom and interreligious harmony.

1. Introduction

Dialogue is an increasingly important issue, particularly among people of religions (Swidler 2014). Today's world is diverse ethnically, religiously and culturally (Wani et al. 2015, 645; Islam 2010, 44). These diverse relationships have been changed drastically after the 9/11 attacks. This resulted in ongoing Palestine-Israel conflict, conflicts in the Middle East, and Buddhist-Muslim conflicts in Myanmar and Thailand (Hasan 2011, 25). Interreligious dialogues can be an important tool to mitigate these conflicts and strengthen the tolerance and harmony that should characterise these relationships (Haque 2010, 2).

Being a universal religion, Islam teaches to love and respect every culture, religion and ideology (Wani et al. 2015, 645). Muslims have played an important role in promoting tolerance and interreligious dialogue since the time of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) (Karim and Saili 2009, 67). The Holy Qur'an contains numerous examples of religious tolerance and harmonious relationships (Al-Qur'an, 49:13; 5: 48; 16: 125). Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, was a model for positive engagement with others (Ibn Hisham 1955, 197). Islamic history carries many examples of harmonious relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims (Karim and Saili 2009, 83-88).

Nevertheless, despite the many examples of Islam's positive approach to treating others, this very engagement is often misunderstood and sometimes misconstrued. This has led to several studies that have sought to resolve such misunderstandings (Kamali 2009, 27-54; Baker 2009, 55-74; Mandour 2010, 885-893; Karim and Saili 2009, 65-94; Hasan 2011, 25-35; Ibn Humaid 2010, 24-48; Wani et al. 2015, 642-656; Al-Masud and Elius, 2016 18-22). Despite these efforts, the current level of ignorance concerning Islam's legacy toward the treatment of others merits further research to clarify the ambiguity regarding Islam's concept of religious tolerance and interreligious dialogue. It is to this end that this paper is dedicated.

2. Methodology

This research has adopted the method of contextual analysis. The authors interpret the primary sources of Islam, i.e. the Qur'an and Sunnah (Prophetic traditions). Scholarly articles and books have been reviewed, and the opinions of contemporary religious scholars have been analysed to understand the nature of religious tolerance and dialogue in Islam.

3. The Concept of Interreligious Dialogue

The word 'dialogue' is derived from Greek '*dialogos*'. *Dia* means 'through' and *logos* means 'word'. So, dialogue means "through word" (Bohm 2017, 2). Dialogue hence refers to speech, conversation, discussion and consultation between two or more people with an intention to share and learn from one another for achieving a common benefit (Karim and Saili 2009, 69). It is a form of communication through discussion (Kimball 1991, 86). Swidler (1983, 348) interpreted dialogue as a conversation "on a common subject between two or more persons with differing views." Interreligious dialogue refers to the mutual relationship with cooperative and positive attitudes among the adherents of different religions (Arinze 1990, 162). It emphasises good communication with people of different religion and culture with a view to mitigating ignorance and interreligious misunderstanding. Interreligious dialogue is the mutual understanding of each other's religion. It does not seek absolute agreement. Rather, it is an exchange of views to mutually understand each other despite differences in belief (Kurucan & Erol 2012, 20). The prime cause of interreligious dialogue is to gather the followers of different faiths and make a worthwhile contribution to interreligious harmony and co-existence. Hans Kung is quoted by Morgan (2011, 3) as saying: "No peace among the nations without peace among the religions. No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions. No dialogue between the religions without investigation of the foundations of the religions."

In the Qur'an, the word *hiwar* has been used three times with the meaning of dialogue (Al-Qur'an, 18: 34; 18: 37; 58:1). *Hiwar* refers to a discussion between two or more people or groups with an objective to correct mistakes, offer arguments, establish facts, and critique ideas (Ibn Humaid 2010, 30). The notable thinker Ismael Raji al-Faruqi characterises dialogue as *Da'wah* and mission which he considers as altruistic arms for Muslims and Christians (Al-Faruqi 1998, 248; Haq 2014, 616). He emphasises ethics as the starting point of dialogue with people of other religions (Fletcher 2008, 294).

4. The Qur'anic View of Religious Tolerance and Dialogue

Diversity, according to Islam, is not made by human beings but by God for the benefit of humankind. The Qur'an states, "If God willed He would make you one community" (Al- Qur'an, 5: 48). Another verse states, "If God willed, all human beings would believe. So will you (O Prophet) compel them to believe?" (Al-Qur'an, 10: 99). These verses imply that religious diversity is part of God's plan and that Muslims should treat others with an open mind, love, cooperation, mutual understanding and tolerance (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 37). Muslim scholars affirm the

legitimacy of God's various revelations (Haq 2014, 618) and interfaith relationships (Hussain 2008, 89). According to Islamic teachings, there has not been a single religious system for the entire humanity. God sent a Prophet to every community and did not differentiate between the Prophets (Al-Qur'an, 22: 67; 2: 285). Islam is considered as the continuation of all earlier revealed religions. It approved the earlier Prophets such as Prophet Noah who was called the submitter (Muslim) (Al-Qur'an, 10: 72) and Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) who was called pure (Al-Qur'an, 3: 67).

The Qur'an recognises that differences in religion exist and are, in fact, part of God's plan. Due to this reality, the Qur'an recognises one's right to practise their religion. It states, "Your religion is for you and my religion is for me" (Al-Qur'an, 109: 6) and "truth comes from your God and those who want to believe - let them believe and those who do not, let them do so" (Al-Qur'an, 18: 29). Al-Qurtubi (1964, 281) explains that Muslims cannot impose Islam on anybody. Everybody must be free to choose and practise their religion. Non-Muslims also have the right to be judged by the laws of their religion in any Islamic society (Al-Qur'an, 5: 47). They have the right to establish their house of worship, propagate their religion and raise their children according to their religion.

The Qur'an reminds us that all human beings, irrespective of their ethnic and religious affiliation, are from the same origin, namely Adam and Hawwa (Eve) (Al-Qur'an, 4: 1). Kamali (2009, 32) argues that the unity of the origin of mankind is the basis of equality in Islam. According to a tradition of Prophet's farewell address: "O' People! You are created by one God, and you are also the descendants of the same father. So, the Arabs are not superior to the non-Arabs, neither white to the black nor the black to the white except by the degree of righteousness" (Albani 1996, 449). Therefore, a person cannot claim his or her superiority over others. The Qur'an forbids Muslims from insulting the adherents of other religions (Al-Qur'an, 6: 108). It also proscribes referring to them in abusive terms (Al-Qur'an, 49: 11).

Despite this, some Qur'anic verses make harsh remarks against non-Muslims (Al-Qur'an, 2: 191; 4: 89). These verses were revealed in particular circumstances. Interpreting these verses requires understanding the context of their revelation. Muslim scholars suggest that there is no generality in the Qur'an or Sunnah (Hasan 2009, 105). Thus, it is not right to justify any particular issue based on a particular Qur'anic verse or a Prophetic tradition if other verses or traditions provide different meanings (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 100). The universal teachings of Islam are sometimes misunderstood or misconstrued by those with insufficient knowledge of Islam (Kamali 2009, 37).

Robert Spencer (2007) criticised Islam by saying that it inspires its followers to kill non-Muslims if they do not agree to accept Islam or compel them to pay *jizyah*. He quoted the Qur'anic verse: "Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider

unlawful what Allah and His messengers have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the scripture (fight) until they give the *jizyah* willingly” (Al-Qur’an, 9: 29). Linking with the opinion of Robert Spencer, Rachel M. Scott (2010, 17) also says that the Islamic policy is to convert all people to Islam either by force through jihad or persuasion or compel them to give *jizyah*. Now, if we analyse the background of the revelation of the verse, we will find that it was revealed in the 9th Century Hijrah during the battle of Tabuk when the Romans and non-Muslim Arabs united to destroy the Muslim community. It was a difficult situation for the Muslims and a serious threat. So, Allah commanded Muslims to strictly prevent them and save Islam in that particular situation. This is not a ruling against non-Muslims; it was a defensive tactic at a time of war (Al-Zuhayli 2010, 175).

The norm of Islam is embodied in the following verse, “Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly. Allah only forbids you from those who fight you because of religion and expel you from your homes” (Al-Qur’an, 60: 8-9). These verses clearly state that Muslims are not obliged to fight against non-Muslims. Islam only allows fighting against those non-Muslims who initiate fighting against Islam and Muslims. Al-Tabari (2000, 321) comments on the verses (Al-Qur’an, 60: 8-9) that Muslims must be fair and just while dealing with non-Muslims and maintain positive relationships in so long as there is no open hostility toward Islam and Muslims. Al-Qurtubi (1964, 58) and Ibn Kathir (1999, 90) maintain that the verses prohibit fighting with those non-Muslims who do not see Muslims as their enemies and fight against them.

In Islam, the concept of jihad is misunderstood by many Muslims and non-Muslims (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 57). The Arabic word jihad means to endeavour or to struggle. It is a struggle within oneself for the purification, elevation, and enlightenment of the self (Sa’di 1988, 71). Al-Jurjani (1983, 80) elaborates that jihad is constructed from the Arabic *juhd* which means ‘exerting one’s capacity and power in repelling the enemy to the best of one’s ability, whether by word or by deed’ (Abu-Munshar 2007, 49).

The scope of physical jihad is limited and supported only in the case of self-defence (Zewail 2006, 96). It arises when non-Muslims fight Muslims (Al-Buti 1993, 118). Physical jihad in Islam is also warranted to counter injustice, oppression, and persecution. Muslims are permitted to initiate this only when injustice and persecution reach extreme levels, and the purpose should be to establish justice and not aggression or conversion (Akhter et al., 2016, 137). It cannot be a method for spreading Islam. Some have suggested that the Prophetic tradition is that a believer cannot be killed for the killing of a disbeliever (Spencer, 2007). Yet another hadith clarifies that during the life of the Prophet Muhammad, when a Muslim

killed a *dhimmi* the Prophet ordered to execute the Muslim and it was done accordingly (Al-Qutni 2004, 157).

Spencer (2007) argues that Islam makes non-Muslims second-class citizens in the form of *dhimmis*. Islam does not differentiate between classes, and all are equal in the face of law and enjoy the same citizenship rights (Al-Buti 1993, 121). The Islamic state deals with all citizens according to principles of social justice (Kurucan & Erol 2012, 88). Again, *dhimma* refers to a person who has entered into an *al-'ahdu* or covenant with Muslims. It also means safety, security and guarantee (Al- Jurjany 1983, 107). It is an agreement between Muslims and non-Muslims in an Islamic country for the protection of its non-Muslim citizens (Al-Zuhayli 2010, 742). The Prophet counselled his companions to treat *dhimmis* with leniency and warned those who oppressed them. Safwan ibn Sulaim narrated that the Prophet said, "He who is unjust to a *dhimmi* or belittles him or imposes anything upon him beyond his ability or takes something from him without his permission I will be the witness against him in the Day of Judgement" (Abu Dawud in Mawsu'ah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah 2008, 145). In line with the Prophet's teachings, Ibn Abedin, a renowned Hanafi jurist, includes that oppressing a *dhimmi* is a greater sin than oppressing a Muslim (Mahmud 2006, 30).

The *jizyah* in Islam is another misunderstood concept. Spencer (2007) criticises that Muslims impose *jizyah* on non-Muslims and fight against them if they refuse to pay. To refute his argument, *jizyah* is not compulsory for all non-Muslim citizens in an Islamic state. The amount of *jizyah* is neither fixed by the Qur'an nor by the Prophet Muhammad. The amount depends on the economic conditions, place and time (Abu-Munshar 2007, 53). The *jizyah* paid by non-Muslims is similar to *zakat*. Muslims are obliged to pay *zakat* as a religious duty whereas non-Muslims pay *jizyah* as part of their responsibility to the state (Al- Zuhayli 2010, 746). *Jizyah* is not mandatory for those who cannot afford it. There are exemptions for women, slaves, children, the elderly, monks, insane, unemployed, disabled and the poor (Yaqub n.d., 135-36). Thus, the *jizyah* is not a burden or punishment for non-Muslims. Mohammed Ayoob and Hasan Kosebalaban (2009, 16) in their edited book "Religion and Politics in Saudi Arabia: Wahhabism and the State" demonstrate that the *jizyah* paid by non-Muslims is for their protection. It obliges Muslims to engage in fighting for saving the lives, religion, property as well as freedom of movement of non-Muslims.

5. The Prophetic Approach to Religious Tolerance and Dialogue

The life of Muhammad provides numerous examples of dialogue and heartfelt conversation between Muslims and non-Muslims (Haq 2014, 632). His life is a sign of tolerance and peace (Wani et al. 2015, 651). The Prophet

spent his life with believers, unbelievers, atheists, and idolaters (Kurucan & Erol 2012, 70). He visited the ill irrespective of their religious beliefs (Al-Tirmidhi 1975, 328). In conformity with the teachings of the Qur'an, the Prophet is reported to have said: "All creatures of God are members of the family of God, and he is the best-loved of God who loves best His creatures" (Akbarabadi 1969, 104). The Prophet loved all human beings. He never cursed anyone, not even his enemies, and he always sought for them the mercy of God. When the Prophet went to Ta'if to propagate Islam, the people tortured him yet the Prophet sought their forgiveness and guidance (Galush 2003, 500; Nor 2011, 211). In the battle of Uhud, the polytheists struck the Prophet badly, which caused his teeth to split open and acute bleeding. Even during that painful situation, the Prophet sought God's forgiveness for them and said: "O' Allah! Forgive them for they know not what they do" (Ibn Hajjaj n. d., 1415).

The Prophet set an example of generosity to neighbours irrespective of their religion. Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet of Islam said: "He who believes in Allah and the hereafter he must not be the cause of sufferings for his neighbour" (Al-Bukhari in Mawsuah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah 2008, 509). There are many other traditions regarding the rights and dignity of neighbours regardless of their religious affiliation. For example, "He will not be a true believer, the Prophet repeated three times, from whose hands his neighbour is not safe" (Al-Bukhari in Mawsuah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah, 2008, 509). The Prophet also said: "Gibrael (Gabriel) used to advise me to treat my neighbour well until I thought he will make it my heir" (Al-Bukhari in Mawsuah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah, 2008, 509). A Muslim cannot be a true Muslim unless he considers his neighbour as himself and he cannot cause suffering to his neighbour in any circumstance (Ibn Hamid 2013). Muslims must maintain good conduct of all human beings without considering their religion. Jabir Ibn Abdullah narrated: "Once we along with the Prophet were passing by a funeral procession. When Prophet saw this, he stood up, and we also stood up observing him. Then we informed the Prophet that it was the dead body of a Jew. The Prophet replied that when you saw a funeral procession, you would stand up" (Al-Bukhari in Mawtuah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah 2008, 102). This Prophetic tradition denotes the attitude of the Prophet toward the people of other religions. His respect to the dead body of a non-Muslim manifests how Muslims should treat non-Muslims.

The Prophet admired good people and their actions without considering their religion. In the fifth year of Prophethood, Muhammad directed his companions to migrate to Abyssinia (Haq 2014, 629) and assured them that there was a fair Christian ruler (Najashi) (Ibn Kathir 1988, 85). The Prophet would trust non-Muslims and accept their help. For example, after being severely persecution by the people of Ta'if, the Prophet returned to Mecca under the protection of a non-Muslim, Al-

Mut'im (Al-Mubarakpuri 2006, 73-77). The Prophet granted non-Muslims the freedom to learn their religion. That is why he visited Baitul Midras, the Jewish religious school, many times during his life. Abu Bakar also visited the same institute several times and enquired about their religious education (Al-Qurtubi 1964, 50).

The Prophet formed a community based on common interest in Madinah (Haque 2010, 5). He mediated between Muslims and many Jewish, polytheistic and ethnic groups of Madinah and established one *ummah* by the signatories of those groups (Baharuddin et al. 2009, 303). To uphold the peaceful co-existence between the groups, there was a common legal, military, economic and political goal (Kurucan & Erol 2012, 74). Muslims and Jews lived side by side in harmony (Abu-Munshar 2007, 41). Husain (2010, 38) explains that the Charter of Madinah is the first written and modern constitution in history. He elaborates that the charter made the "formation of a pluralistic and tolerant polity in Madinah which can be regarded as the 'contemporary parlance of good governance'".

The Prophet entered into many agreements with non-Muslims. His treaty with the Christians of Najran is another example of tolerance and religious freedom. The Prophet allowed them to pray in his mosque (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 79; Kamali 2009, 45). This treaty ensured the complete protection of Christians, their wealth, nationality and religion. Their churches and priests were protected. No priest was removed from their position, and nobody was refused travel. The Christians enjoyed complete freedom in practising their religion. No taxes were levied on them, and nothing was imposed beyond their means. No Christians were forced to convert to Islam. Muslims treated Christians with compassion and cooperation. This agreement was maintained throughout the Prophetic and caliphate period (Yaqub n.d., 84-87).

Another treaty of the Prophet was with Ibn Harith bin Qab and his tribe. It says that everybody will enjoy complete freedom in their religious affairs and their lives and wealth, and their places of prayer will be protected by God, His Prophet and the believers. None will be forced to accept Islam. If anybody is subject to discrimination, Muslims must come forward to help (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 80). There were many more agreements between Muslims and non-Muslims during the period of Prophet Muhammad. In every agreement, the Prophet guaranteed the security of lives, property and the religion of non-Muslims.

Although that Prophet guaranteed freedom of religion for all, the question of apostasy was controversial. Yohanan Friedmann (2003, 126) explains that Prophetic traditions, "whoever changes his religion, kill him" (Al-Bukhari 2001, 15) was supported by some pre-modern Muslim jurists. In the modern period, a number of Islamic scholars opine that those who simply convert to another religion from Islam but do not engage themselves in hostility or fighting against the Islamic state or its community cannot be executed (Saeed and Saeed 2004, 59 and Kadivar,

2014, 6). Kamali (1994, 95) maintains that the Prophet of Islam “never killed anyone solely for apostasy.” Those on whom the death penalty was enforced committed other crimes along with apostasy (Kadivar 2014, 9). This opinion is justified by two hadiths narrated by Aisha, the wife of the Prophet: (1) he who leaves Islam and engages in fighting against Allah and His Prophet shall be killed (Ibn Kathir 1999, 363), (2) A Muslim cannot be executed except for three reasons: (i) a married person committing adultery will be stoned to death, (ii) he who leaves Islam in fighting against Allah and His Prophet, and (iii) he who kills somebody (Abu Dawud in Mawsuah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah 2008, 1540). Both hadiths make it clear that changing Islam is not the only reason for execution but their engagement in fighting against Islam and Muslims is the prime cause of execution. At the beginning of the Prophet’s residence in Madinah, Muslims were preoccupied with many internal and external threats. In that situation, a person used to stay either with Muslims or their enemies. For a person to leave Islam meant that he had joined the opponents and will fight the Muslims (Saeed and Saeed 2004, 60). According to another opinion, apostasy was closely linked to joining hands with Islam’s enemies and spreading hate campaigns as well as engaging in war against Muslims (Kadivar 2014, 10).

6. Early Muslim Ruler’s Attitude to the People of Other Religions

Evidence indicates that non-Muslims received favourable treatment and their religious identities were protected in many territories under the rule of the four caliphs, the Umayyads, Abbasids, and Ottomans (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 85). Abu Yusuf narrates that there were many agreements between Muslims and non-Muslims during the period of Abu Bakar, Umar, Usman and Ali and that they did not break such agreements. The churches, temples, and synagogues were preserved, and everybody practised their religion without restraint (Yaqub n.d., 160). During the reign of Caliph Umar, there was an agreement among Jews, Christians and Muslims that “their churches and synagogues would not be changed. No party will insult others and fight against one another. No party will harm one another. The violation of the agreement will be considered as punishable” (Hamidullah 1987, 428). One example of granting the rights of non-Muslims is Umar’s treatment of Christians in Islamic Jerusalem. Umar ensured safety and security of their lives, possessions, places of worship, and religious symbols, and did not enforce taxes beyond their abilities (Abu-Munshar 2007, 91-92). The assurance given by Umar to those living in Aelia (Islamic Jerusalem) is a historic example of tolerance toward non-Muslims.

Once Umar passed by an old blind man who was begging. Umar asked him, which religion do you belong to? He answered that he was a Jew. Umar again asked him, what caused you to beg? He replied, for my livelihood and paying *jizyah*. Umar held him with his hand, brought him to his house and gave him something. Then Umar sent him to the state treasury and told the treasurer to allocate a pension for him as well as for those who were like him. Umar also exempted him from paying *jizyah* (Abu-Munshar 2007, 78-79)

When Salah al-Din conquered Islamic Jerusalem in 1187 CE, he followed Umar in every step. He ordered to reopen the churches after three days of closure and granted religious freedom (Abu-Munshar 2007, 156). He made Islamic Jerusalem an open place for all Christians and allowed them to practice their religion. Muslim rulers' treatment shows that they maintained Islamic teachings of religious freedom and interreligious harmony throughout their rules.

We recognise that in the course of Muslim history there have not always been examples of uninterrupted respect and tolerance. For example, Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah, the Fatimid caliph, occasionally intervened in the freedom of religion and supported violence against non-Muslims (Saeed and Saeed 2004, 22-23). Another incident is that Walid ibn Abdul Malik, the Umayyad caliph, demolished a church to expand the mosque of Damascus. The Christians of Damascus complained to 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the succeeding caliph. 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz demolished the extension despite protests from the Muslims (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 89). These isolated incidents happened only because of not following the true teachings of Islam.

7. Conclusion

The study concludes that diversity in religious beliefs and practices are a natural part of God's plan and that Muslims should accept these differences with sincerity and cooperation for the satisfaction of God. Islam, as a universal religion, recognises dialogue and tolerance between religions (Haq 2014, 618). The Qur'anic approach and the Prophet's dealings, as well as early Muslim rulers' treatment of non-Muslims, establish that the people of other religions have received equal opportunities alongside Muslims. Islamic teachings prohibit Muslims from harming those of other religions and encourages helping and securing them and providing them with their due rights and dignity. (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 43). Normally, people accepted Islam willingly and through peaceful means (Hasan 2009, 107). Muslim rulers entered into many agreements with non-Muslims and provided them with their due rights including the protection of their churches, temples and synagogues (Yaqub n.d., 160). There are relatively few counterexamples of prejudice, alienation, injustice and violence such that collectively they do not

present a convincing case that Islam is not a religion of peace and tolerance (Kurucan and Erol 2012, 85). In short, if the teachings of Islam regarding tolerance and interreligious dialogue are applied properly, violence, instability and interreligious conflicts will be marginalised.

Acknowledgement: This article is supported by UMRG grant no. RP035C-17HNE.

References:

- Abu Munshar, Meher Y. 2007. *Islamic Jerusalem and Its Christians: A History of Tolerance and Tensions*. New York: Tauris Academic Studies.
- Abu Dawud, 2008. Sunane Abi Dawud in *Mawsuah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah*. Riyadh: Dar al-Salam.
- Akbarabadi, Said A. 1969. "Islam and Other Religions". In *Islam*. 103-115. Patiala: Punjabi University.
- Akhtar, Saeed, Badshah Rahman, Atta Ur Rahman, Muhammad Rahim, Aliya Shah, Janas Khan. 2016. "The Quranic Concept of Religious Tolerance and its Manifestation in Islamic History". *Journal of Applied Environmental and Biological Sciences* Vol. 6 Issue 3: 136-139.
- Albani, Abu Abdur Rahman M. N. U. 1996. *Silsilatu Al-Ahadith Al-Sahihah*. Vol. 6, Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maaref.
- Al-Tabari, Muhammad I. J. 2000. *Jamiul Baiyan Fi Tawil al-Qur'an*. Vol. 10, Beirut: Muassalah al-Risalah.
- Arinze, Francis C. 1990. *The Church in Dialogue: Walking with Other Believers*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press.
- Al-Bukhari, Muhammad I. 2008. *Al-Bukhari in Mawsuah al-Hadith al-Sharif al-Kutub al-Sittah*, Riyadh: Dar al-Salam.
- Al-Bukhari, Muhammad I. I. (2001). *Sahih al-Bukhari*. Vol. 5, Daru Turuk al-Nazat
- Al-Buti, Muhammad S. R. 1993. *Al-Jihad Fi al-Islam*. Damesk: Dar al-Fikr.
- Al-Faruqi, Ismael R. 1998. *Islam and Other Faiths*. Leicester: The Islamic Foundation and the International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- Al-Jurjany, Ali I. M. 1983. *Kitab al-Ta'rifat*. Beirut: Daru al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah
- Al-Masud, Abdullah., and Mohammad Elius. 2016. "The Qur'anic View of Interreligious Dialogue and Harmony". *International Journal of Recent Research in Social Sciences and Humanities* Vol. 3 Issue 1: 18-21. Accessed July 10, 2017. www.papewrpublication.org.
- Al-Mubarakpuri, Safiur R. 2006. *Al-Raihaiq al-Makhtum*. Damascus: Dar al-Asama.
- Al-Qurtubi, Abu Abdullah M. 1964. *Al-Jami al-Ahkam al-Qur'an*. (Tafsir al-Qurtubi), Vol. 3, 4 & 18. Cairo: Dar al-Qutb al-Misriyyah.

- Al-Qutni, Abu al-Hasan D. 2004. *Sunane Daru al-Qutni*. Vol. 4, Beirut: Muassatu al-Risalah.
- Al-Zuhayli, Wahbah. 2010. *Mousuah al-Fiqh al-Islami Wa al-Qadaya al-Mu'asara*. Vol. 3, Damescus: Dar al- Fikr.
- Al-Tirmidhi, Muhammad, I. I. 1975. *Sunan- al -Tirmidhi*, Vol. 3, Egypt: Sharika Maktaba Wa Matbah Mustafa Albani Al-hobla.
- Ayoob, Mohammed, and Hasan Kosebalaban. 2009. *Religion and Politics in Saudi Arabia: Wahhabism and the State* (eds.) Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Baharuddin, Azizan, Raihanah Abdullah, and, Chang Lee W. 2009. "Dialogue of Civilization: An Islamic Perspective". *Journal of Dharma* Vol. 34 Issue 3: 301-318.
- Baker, Osman. 2009. *The Qur'an on Interfaith and Inter-civilizational Dialogue: Interpreting A Divine Message For Twentieth Century Humanity*. Kuala Lumpur: IIITM and ISUGO.
- Bohm, David. 2017. "On Dialogue". Accessed July 15, 2018. <http://sprott.physics.wisc.edu/Chaos-Complexity/dialogue>.
- Fletcher, Charles D. 2008. "Ismail al-Faruqi (1921-1986 and Interfaith Dialogue: The Man, the Scholar, the Participant". PhD Thesis, The Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University.
- Friedmann, Yohanan. 2003. *Tolerance and Coercion in Islam: Interfaith Relations in the Muslim Tradition*. Cambridge University Press.
- Haq, Muhammad Z. 2014. "Muslim's Participation in Interfaith Dialogue: Challenges and Opportunity". *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* Vol. 49: 613-646.
- Haque, Faatin. 2010. "Countering Religious Militancy through Interfaith Cooperation: An Islamic Perspective". Paper presented at World Universities Congress, Canakkale Onsekiz University, Turkey, October 20-24.
- Hasan, Ahmad H. H. 2011. "An Islamic Perspective of Interfaith Dialogue amidst Current Inter-Religious Tensions Worldwide". *GJAT*, Vol.1 Issue 1: 25-35.
- Hasan, Muhammad H. 2009. Interpreting Islam and Plural Society. In *Islam and Civilizational Renewal*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies, Vol. 1 Issue 1: 99- 121.
- Galush, Ahmed A. 2003. *Sirat al Nababiyah Waadawah Fi al Ahd al-Makki*. Beirut: Muassatu al-Risalah.
- Hamidullah, Muhammad. 1987. *Majmuah al-Wasaek al- Siyasiyyah lil-ahad al- Nawabi wa al- Khilafa al- Rashida*. Beirut: Dar al- Nafaes.
- Husain, Syed A. 2010. "Islamic Perspective of Interfaith Harmony and Dialogue". Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue. Dhaka: University of Dhaka, November 27-29.
- Hussain, Amir. 2008. "From Tolerance to Dialogue: A Muslim Perspective on Interfaith Dialogue with Christians". *Asian Christian Review*. Vol. 2 No. 2&3: 85-97.
- Ibn Hajjaj, Muslim. n.d. *Sahih al-Muslim*. Vol. 3, Beirut: Daru Ihya al- Turas al-Arabi.

- Ibn Hamid. 2013. "The Rights of Neighbours in Islam". Accessed July 06, 2017. www.Islamland.Com.
- Ibn Hisham, Abdul M. 1955. *Sirat al-Nababiyyah*. Vol. 1, Egypt: Shakira Maktaba.
- Ibn Humaid, Salih. 2010. "Islam and Dialogue with the Other". In *Interfaith Dialogue: Cross-Cultural Views*. 24-48, Riyadh: Ghainaa Publications.
- Ibn Kathir, Abu al-Fadah I. 1988. *Al-Bidaya Wa al-Nihayah*. Vol. 3, Beirut: Dar al Ihya al Turas al-Arabi.
- Ibn Kathir, Abu al-Fada I. 1999. *Tafsir al Qur'an al- Azim*. Vol. 3 & 8. Daru Tibbiyyah
- Islam, Kazi N. 2010. "World Peace through Interreligious Dialogue". Paper presented at the 2nd International Conference on Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue. Dhaka: University of Dhaka, November 27-29.
- Kadivar, Mohsen 2014. "Apostasy, Blasphemy, & Religious Freedom in Islam: A Critique Based on Demonstrative Jurisprudence", in *Islam and Human Rights Series*, 2, Accessed January 2, 2018. [http:// kadivar.com](http://kadivar.com).
- Kamali, Muhammad H. 2009. "Diversity and Pluralism: A Qur'anic Perspective". In *Islam and Civilizational Renewal*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies, Vol.1 Issue 1: 27- 54.
- Kamali, Mohammad H. (1994). *Freedom of Expression in Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: Berita Publishing.
- Karim, Khairulnizam M. and Suzy Aziziyana Saili. 2009. "Inter-faith Dialogue: The Qur'anic and Prophetic Perspective". *Journal of Usuluddin* Vol. 29, Issue 1: 65-94.
- Khambali, Khadijah M. 2015. "Dialogue of Life: An Experience in Leeds Community". *Journal of Usuluddin* Vol. 41: Issue 1: 47-167.
- Kimball, Charles. 1991. *Striving Together: A Way Forward in Christian-Muslim Relation*. New York: Orbis Book.
- Kurucan, Ahmet, and Mustafa Kasim Erol. 2012. *Dialogue in Islam: Qur'an- Sunnah-History*. London: Dialogue Society.
- Mahmud, Munqaj B. 2006. *Al-Taa'ush Ma'a Gairy al- Muslimin Fi al-Muztama al-Muslim*. Makkah: Rabeta al- A'lami al-Islami.
- Mandour, Tayseir M. 2010. "Islam and Religious Freedom: Role of Interfaith Dialogue in Promoting Global Peace". *BYU Law Review* Vol. 3: 885-893. Accessed July 12, 2017. <http://digitalcommons.law.byu.edu/lawreview/vol2010/iss3/10/>.
- Morgan, Richard H. 2011. Peace Among Religions: Hans Kung's Analysis of Christian and Muslim Paradigms of Social Justice in Search of Global Ethic, *Forum on Public Policy*. Accessed August 20, 2017. <http://forumonpublicpolicy.com/vol2011no3/archive/morgan>.
- Nor, Mohd R. 2011. "Protecting Non-Muslims: Its Implementation during Early Muslim Rule of Islamicjerusalem". *Al-Bayan: Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* Vol. 9 Issue 1: 209-249.
- Sa'di, Abu Habib, 1988. *Al-Qamus al-Fiqhi Lughatan Wa Istelahan*. Damescus: Daru al-Fikr.

- Saeed, Abdullah, and Hasan Saeed. 2004. *Freedom of Religion, Apostasy and Islam*. Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company.
- Scott, Rachel M. 2010. *The Challenge of Political Islam: Non-Muslims and the Egyptian State*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Spencer, Robert. 2007. *Religion of Peace? : Why Christianity is and Islam isn't*. Accessed June 15, 2018. <https://www.amazon.com/Religion-Peace-Christianity-Islam-Isnt/dp/1596985151>.
- Swidler, Leonard. 1983. "The Dialogue Decalogue: Ground Rules for Interreligious Dialogue". *Horizons* Vol. 10 Issue 2: 348-351. doi:10.1017/S0360966900024087.
- Swidler, Leonard. 2014. "Dialogue for Interreligious Understanding: Strategies for the Transformation of Culture-Shaping Institution" Accessed July 15, 2018. https://books.google.com.bd/books/about/Dialogue_for_Interreligious_Understanding.html?id=dfc_CQAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y.
- Wani, Hilal, Raihana Abdullah, and Lee Wei Chang. 2015. "An Islamic Perspective in Managing Religious Diversity". *Religions* Vol. 6: 642-656; doi: 10.3390/rel6020642.
- Yaqub, Abu Yusuf. n.d. *Al-Khiraj*. Cairo: Maktaba al-Azharyyah Li al-Turas.
- Zewail, Ahmed. 2006. Dialogue of Civilizations: Making History through a New World Vision. In *SCIENCE & the Search for Meaning: Perspective from International Scientists*. Edited by Jean Staune. London: Templeton Foundation Press.