

THE EFFECTS OF COMMON VALUES ON EUROPEAN PEACE

NO TO RACISM



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VERSES COMMON VALUES

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The Effects of Common Values on European Peace

Racism and xenophobia



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VERSES AND COMMON VALUES

QUR'AN

BIBLE

TORAH

Contributed by:

ASPECT, A.M.E.F.E, EDU Centrum, Marie e.V

TOYEV



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QUR'AN

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VERSES AND COMMON VALUES

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2016

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INTRODUCTION

Value means abstract measure for the importance of something, the compensation for something, worth, and high and beneficial quality. (Turkish Language Society, Turkish Dictionary. Racism. 2005)

Value is something is considered good, nice, and right in a society's or an individual's view or something that is advocated. (Grand Larousse. Racism, 1986)

Value is the fundamental criterion which we use to judge things and see what is right or wrong. The rightness and validity of a value come from the fact that it relies on knowledge and evidence and it has internal consistency and it aims for improvement and it is a source of a beneficial action. Thanks to this extensive background, values acquire universality. (Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN. Hz. Peygamber ve İnsan Yetiştirme Düzeni (Prophet and System for Educating People), DİB Yayınları, Ankara 2015, p. 13.)

The values which endow people with true human qualities and which also support the very fabric of societies can be classified into two groups:

High divine values and values generated by human beings.

High divine values are general, valid and universal. In comparison, only part of human- generated values are universal. Social life has its unique dynamism as it continuously changes, develops and is renewed. Universal values tend to be more permanent in this process. However, it is hard for people to maintain universal values in all areas. Society influences people who are social beings and shape them based on dominant value judgments.

Religions have made great contributions to the formation of universal values. These values have been effective in combating racism and xenophobia and forms of violence associated with them. However, it hasn't been possible to prevent racism and xenophobia and forms of violence associated with them so far. Today, cases of mobbing, violence and killing have skyrocketed within a racist context.

The media outlets are teeming with reports of attacks on places of worship, threats, provocations, racist demonstrations, incineration of homes with people in them, and arson. This indicates the need for new measures against racism. Accordingly, new values are needed. In this context, this project is an attempt to solve the problem. Our goal is to make contributions to the existing efforts to combat racism and xenophobia and promote European common peace not by solely voicing criticisms, but also by coming up with proposals.

In identifying the verses, priority was given to the verses that are directly related to racism, and the verses that concern the factors leading to racism were provided at a later stage, and common values were penned down. The views of Qur'an commentators and other scholars/experts were assessed in the Comments section.

With this work, we hope to contribute to peaceful coexistence of human beings.

1. VERSES AND COMMON VALUES

Islam is a religion based primarily on Tawhid, the faith in the oneness of Allah (the God). Islam, in this regard, represents the one common religion which all prophets coming from Adam offer to mankind. The Qur'an states that all the prophets invite people to the Tawhid. Islam is the last circle of revelation-based religion tradition. Undoubtedly, Tawheed is the essence of Islam. However, the Qur'an reiterates that faith in resurrection, faith in prophecy, as well as believing that Muhammad is the last prophet are also necessary along with faith in Tawhid.

The basic principles of Islamic faith in the Qur'an regarding faith, worship and morality were revealed when Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was alive thanks to his being a great role model and using mind to understand divine revelations.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) refers to certain qualities when describing Muslims. According to this description, the Muslim is the one from whose tongue and hand people are safe; who do not go to sleep satiated while his neighbour is hungry; who loves for others what he loves for himself; who knows that saying nice words to and smiling at others is like giving alms; and, who have mercy and respect for people.

Islam, with regard its message and provisions, is addressed to all mankind at all times. Islam is characterized by dynamics such as balance, taking the middle path, justice, norm, and so on. There is no place in Islam for excesses and deficiencies.

The main source of Islam is the Qur'an. The Qur'an is a book that cannot be altered or falsified until the day of judgement. All copies of the Qur'an around the world are the same.

Islam builds a harmonious and passionate society, acting in solidarity. Brotherhood, solidarity, equality, justice, exhorting one another to truth and patience, spreading goodness, and fighting against evil form the basic dynamics of this society, which comes together with faith that shelters no discrimination in terms of race, color, country and class.

Islam rejects forcing people to become muslim. Islam adopts the principle that there is no compulsion in religion. It is based on spreading by conquering the hearts. The provisions of Islam are easy to live. The difficulties that cannot be sustained are not ordered.

Islam is based on the principle of equality and justice. Anyone who profess the Islamic faith is considered as a Muslim regardless of their languages, races, or background.

Islam considers fear of God as the only measure of superiority. Therefore, racism and xenophobia are rejected. This is clearly indicated in the Qur'anic verses.

1.1. Verses of the Qur'an that are directly related to racism and xenophobia:

Racism and xenophobia are as old as humanity. Racism is in essence "denigrating those who are not like us." It is treating people as the other and humiliating them. This is prohibited in many verses of the Qur'an.

The Qur'an:

"O humanbeings! Surely We created you from a male and a female. We made you into nations and tribes so that you may know each other. Surely the nobler amongst you in the sight of Allah is one who is the most righteous of you. Surely Allah is Knower-Observant. (Surah al- Hujurât, 49: 13)

Values:

1. Awareness of how a human being is created and also how the mankind was created.
2. Recognizing that all people descended from a father and a mother, which does not give any superiority over one another.

3. Superiority in the sight of God is not through race, but with good behavior and virtue.
4. Achieving piety (taqwa) is the highest value, because through this piety people do not discriminate.
5. Getting acquainted with each other through clans and tribes which means that distinction between races is not made for quarelling and for claims of superiority.
6. Being connected to, and adoring, one's own race without being a racist, and beautiful racial claims without racism.
7. Not remaining silent in the face of the evil deeds carried out by someone from the same race.
8. Not acceding to persecution even though it is carried out by someone from the same race.

Comments: Islam abolished artificial measures of supremacy in human relations and promoted knowledge and piety (taqwa) as the sole measure of superiority. People are entitled to the same rights by divine command. Every human being is respectable without discrimination. All people are descendants of the same parents, namely Adam and Eve. As such, no race has the right to claim supremacy over other races.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

“Anyone who champions racism is not one of us. Anyone who fights for any racist cause is not one of us. Anyone who dies for any racist cause is not one of us (Muslims).” Imam Muslim (Imare 53, Hadith no. 1850)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) again said:

“Those whom Allah value most are the ones who fear Allah the most. No Arab holds greater esteem over a non-Arab; nor a non-Arab over an Arab. No person with a black skin has greater esteem over a person with white skin; nor a person with white skin over a person with black skin. Superiority is only in piety and submission.” (Jam al-Fawaid, 1/510, hadith no: 3632)

Once Prophet Muhammad was asked:

“Can it be considered racism when a person loves his nation?”

Muhammad (pbuh) replied:

“No! Yet, it is racism when a person supports his race in oppression.” (Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, 4/107, 160)

The Holy Qur'an:

“The believers are only brothers. Thus make peace amongst two (contending) brothers. Fear Allah! So that you may receive mercy”. (Surah al-Hujurah, 49: 10)

Values;

1. Brotherhood in accordance with religion and belief.
2. Making peace among human beings is considered a high virtue.
3. Not causing mischief and evil among people.

Comments: One of the basic laws of the society is to make sure love and respect dominate social relations. A community of individuals who love each other will live happily. In this way, unity and cohesion can be achieved.

The Holy Qur'an:

“O you who believe! Let not a group among you scoff at another. It may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor let some women scoff at others. It may be that the latter are better than the former. Nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other; nor call each other with (offensive) nicknames. What a bad deed is impiety after the belief! And those who do not desist are indeed doing wrong.” (Surah al-Hujurah, 49: 11)

“Woe to every kind of scandal-monger and backbiter! Who piles up wealth and lays it by thinking that his wealth would make him eternal.” (Sura al-Humaza, 104: 1-3)

Values;

1. Not scoffing and making fun of another group of people.
2. Not condemning each other.
3. Not calling each other with unpleasant nicknames.
4. Not backbiting people.
5. Not believing that wealth can be used to buy immortality.
6. Not believing that money can bring happiness.
7. Wealth is a blessing of God endowed upon some people to be utilized for good purposes and not kept for just one's own selfish interests.

Comments:

For Islam, all human beings have legally equal rights. Islam advises people to love each other. It prohibits people from scorning or humiliating other people.

Making fun of other people is another form of denigration. Every human being is equipped with unique personality and dignity. Any attack on people's personality arouses reaction. Islam, however, forbids acts of deriding other people. Making fun of other people or humiliating them is an act people do not approve from the psychological perspective.

Also, slandering or ridiculing other people and earning money or wealth through such behaviors will not render people eternal or immortal. Wealth is to be used for good purposes and the rich must do everything to help the needy. This does not have to be in the way of giving money to the poor; but perhaps the best way is to find them good ways of sustenance so that they do not remain in the need of others to provide them financial help.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said in this regard:

“A Muslim is one from whose tongue and hands other Muslims are safe. Whereas the believer is the one who is entrusted with the lives and wealth of the people.” (Sunan al- Nasa'i, Belief, 8)

The superior human community established by Islam under the guidance of the Holy Qur'an has glorious manners. Every individual in that society has inviolable dignity. This dignity is synonymous with the society's dignity. Any insult on any individual is like self-insult. Indeed, the entire community is one and whole and has common dignity.” *(In the Shade of the Qur'an, Commentary on 11th verse of Sura al-Hujurah, Sayyid Qutb)*

One day Abu Dharr got angry with Bilal and reproached him saying “O the son of a black woman!” Bilal went to the Messenger of Allah and complained about it.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) called upon Abu Dharr and asked him::

–“Have you reproached Bilal about his mother being black? This means you still retain the standards and judgments of the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. None is more virtuous over another, those with white or black skins, except by righteous deeds.”(Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, Egypt 1313, V, 158.)

It is reported that Abu Dharr felt so bad that he went to Bilal's house and put his head on the doorstep saying that “By God, if Bilal does not forgive me by stepping upon my head and then entering his house I shall not leave his house.” Although Bilal is said to have forgiven him and refused to step on his face Abu Dharr did not leave until Bilal stepped on his face and entered his house.

The Holy Qur'an:

“From His signs is His creation of the skies and the earth, and the difference of your tongues and colors. Surely in that are certain signs for the worlds.” (Surah al-Rum, 30: 22)

Values:

1. Considering the variety and diversity of languages as evidence or signs (ayât) of Allah's existence.
2. Considering the variety and diversity of color as evidence of Allah's existence.
3. Being aware of the fact that color and language differences are not controllable

Comments:

Allah created diverse languages, different behaviors, unique manners, speaking styles and dialects even in neighboring countries. This diversity in Allah's creation is manifestation of His divine art. It is obvious that Allah created this diversity as ornaments for the world. Therefore, these difference should not be used for claims of superiority; but maintained as signs.

“If these differences had not existed and if people had been created in uniformity, it wouldn't have been possible for the world to witness human relations at this level. Considering the difficulties of distinguishing between the two people wearing the same clothes, we can visualize the convenience of diversity in social life.” (*Kur'an Yolu Tefsiri*, Surah al-Rum, commentary on the 22nd verse. Religious Affairs Directorate)

The Holy Qur'an:

“O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women. And fear Allah, through whom you ask one another, and the wombs. Indeed Allah is ever, over you, an Observer.” (Sura al-Nisa, 4:1).

Values;

1. Knowing that people are created from a single human self.
2. Accepting that all human beings are descendants of the same parents.
3. Respecting kinship rights.

Comments:

Abu al-Hasan Harakani said:

“Whoever comes to the door, give them bread and never question their faith because anyone who is worthy to carry a spirit before Allah the Almighty is worthy enough to eat the bread at Abu al-Hasan's table.” (*Harakani*, Harakani Association Publications, p. 19. Kars)

The Holy Qur'an:

“Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. And our messengers had certainly come to them with clear proofs. Then indeed many of them, [even] after that, throughout the land, were transgressors.” (Maida surah 5\32)

Values;

1. Responding even an evil act with good.
2. After receiving good from someone return a favour with better.
3. Feeling that killing one person is like killing all mankind.
4. Feeling that saving one's life is like saving all mankind.
5. Not making mischief in society.
6. Abstaining from going to extremes in society.
7. Not setting a bad example.
8. Not encouraging others through setting a bad example.

Comments:

People are by their nature social creatures. This is the very basis of social life. Irregularity of relations among people makes an adverse effect on the society. The Qur'an encourages people to vie for goodness, beauty and righteousness. People have certain rights they acquire by birth. These are inalienable and nontransferable rights. Everyone is entitled to these rights regardless of their color, language, religion or race for the sake of their human nature. Today, these rights are termed as human rights. Right to life deserves special mention among human rights. Right to life is the most fundamental human right. Breach of the right to life is considered a crime in every society or country. Such a breach entails penalty in some way or other. Man is the most valuable and most eminent being in the universe.

"One who kills unjustly, often does not recognize the right to life, and therefore he leads other people to kill also which means he is actually encouraging others for the same act." (*Hak Dini Kur'an Dili, Elmalılı Hamdi Yazır*).

The Holy Qur'an

"So when the Horn is blown, no relationship will there be among them that Day, nor will they ask about one another." (Sura al-Muminun, 23/101)

Values;

1. Not getting into strife over races among people.
2. Not inquiring and investigating about others among themselves.
3. Not boasting and bragging among themselves.
4. Every human being is responsible for himself/herself.

On the Judgment Day, neither one's race nor his family can save a person. The only thing that would be beneficial will be the good deeds done in the name of Allah.

The Holy Qur'an:

"We have certainly created man in the best of stature" (Sura al-Tin, 95/4)

"We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference." (Sura al-Isra, 17/70)

Values;

1. Human-beings are created in the best and most beautiful form.
2. It is the Creator that shaped human beings in the way that they are created.
3. Human-beings are provided with opportunities on the land and sea.
4. Every human-being is superior to other creatures.

Comments:

Muhammad (pbuh) and his friends were sitting, a funeral procession passed in front of them. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stood up. Then, his friends also stood up. They said:

Muhammad (pbuh) and his friends were sitting while a funeral procession passed in front of them. Prophet

Muhammad (pbuh) stood up. Then, his friends also stood up. After the funeral went away they said:

"O Prophet of Allah! This funeral procession was not one of a Muslim; it was the funeral procession of a non-believer (of a Jew in another narration).

- Muhammad (pbuh) replied:

- **"Is it not a human-being?"** (Bukhari, Janaiz, 651, Muslim, Janaiz, 24)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

"Anyone who champions racism is not one of us. Anyone who fights for any racist cause is not one of us. Anyone who dies for any racist cause is not one of us (Muslims)." Imam Muslim (Hadith no. 1850)

Muhammad (pbuh) and his friends were sitting, a funeral procession passed in front of them. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) stood up. Then, his friends also stood up. They said:

“O Prophet of Allah! This funeral procession was not one of a Muslim; it was the funeral procession of a non-believer (of a Jew in another narration).

- Muhammad (pbuh) replied:

- **“Is it not a living being (soul)/a human-being?”** (Buhari, Ceaiz 651)

The Holy Qur'an

“And of His signs is that He created you from dust; then, suddenly you were human beings dispersing [throughout the earth].” (Sura al-Rum, 30: 20)

Values;

1. Knowing that human beings were initially created from earth, regardless of their race, color, belief and language.

2. Knowing that human beings were created from earth before spreading across the world.

Comments:

Allah created everything in the universe in due measure. He knows how human beings are created. He knows which rules can be used to perfect human life. This is because He created everything. “We love the creatures, due to the Creator.” Yunus Emre

1.2. Verses of the Qur'an related to the reasons giving rise to racism and xenophobia:

Reasons leading to racism and xenophobia;

1.2.1. Sense of superiority and boasting (boasting with racial origin and having a sense of superiority)

Islam does not endorse it if a person boasts about his race or family and considers this as one of the factors that disrupt peace among people. Indeed, man is created in the best stature. Therefore, no race can claim superiority over others. This is prohibited in many verses of the Qur'an.

The Holy Qur'an:

“They Say: ‘If we return to Medina, indeed the mighty-ones will drive out the meaner-ones’. The Might belongs to Allah and to His Messenger, and to the believers. But the hypocrites do not know.” (Surah al-Munafiqun, 63/8)

“So the angels prostrated themselves altogether. Except Iblis. He showed haughtiness, and became one of the unbelievers.” (Sura al-Sad, 38: 73-74)

“Do not turn your face away of the people. Do not walk on the earth with hilarity. Surely Allah never likes all who is arrogant-boaster.” (Sura al-Luqman, 31: 18)

“Do not walk on the earth in exultation. Surely you do not cleave the earth, and never reach the mountains in hight.”

“The evil of all these in the side of your Lord is abhorred.” (Sura al-Isra, 17: 37- 38)

Reasons leading to racism and xenophobia;

Values;

1. Leaving the rule of being superior with wealth and possessions but with deeds preponderate before God.

2. No domination of the strong over the weak.

3. Wealth and abundance of goods do not provide an advantage to the person.

4. Maintaining life and social cooperation not with the supremacy of race but that of belief.

5. Being aware that weakness or strength do not lie in race but in behaviors.

6. Not being spoiled by the provisions but being thankful for them.

7. Not patronizing like the Satan saying that fire is better than earth.

8. Bragging about his own doings rather than the doings of his race.
9. Not disdaining others because of their race or of other reasons.
10. Not turning his back on others because of their race or of other reasons.
11. Not walking on the earth boasting about his race or for other reasons.
12. Not being one of those who boast or have delusions about their race or for other reasons.

Comments: Here, Muslims' behaviors related to lifestyles are defined. Religious principles are provided. It is impossible to know what the future has in store. Blind faith in anything is disproved.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

“One who is killed under the banner of a man who is blind to his just cause and who raises the slogan of family or supports his own tribe dies the death of one belonging to the days of Jahiliyya (ignorance).” (Muslim, Imara: 57)

1.2.2. The lack of a culture of sharing and solidarity; selfishness.

One of the characteristics of racist people is that they have weak emotions for sharing. They see foreigners as their rivals. They do not want to share and start to show racist behaviors towards foreigners. However, sharing would add new values both to them and to their addressees. In Islam “giving to others” is not understood as lessening one’s wealth, but rather the Qur’an affirms that giving to others brings blessing to the wealth and thus actually increases it.

For instance, when information is shared, new information will appear on the horizon. Sharing will multiply joys and add upon the existing knowledge and hence but sooth pain.

-The Holy Qur’an:

“They ask you what they should spend. Say: ‘Whatever goodness you spend for the parents, the relatives, the orphans, the destitute, and the wayfarer, and whatever good you do, surely Allah is Knower of it.’ (Sura al-Baqara, 2: 215)

“And worship God and never associate anything with Him. And goodness to the parents and the relatives, and the orphans, and the poor, and the near neighbor, and the far neighbor, and the near friend, and the wayfarer, and what your right hands possess (the slave-girls). Surely Allah never likes one who is snobbish and boastful. (Sura al-Nisa, 4: 36)

Values;

1. Not being afraid to share.
2. Sharing is a virtue. It is to be virtuous.
3. Being righteous by sharing with the relatives, orphans, poor people, travelers, beggars and slaves.

Comments: “The most important purpose or functions of material sharing is to ensure the sharing of emotions among individuals and groups and reinforce the will to coexistence by helping the needy people with their material needs.” (*The Prophet and Ethics of Coexistence*. “Thousands of things are one”, 19. M. Çağırıcı)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also said:

“The one who does not thank people does not thank Allah.” (*Tirmidhi. Birr, 35*)

Sharing with the relatives, wayfarers and orphans will not weaken anyone financially. It will rather reinforce one both materially and spiritually.

Today, global world citizenship is constantly debated and it is inevitable to keep in touch with other people who are practitioners of other faiths. Thanks to technological advancements, people are today able to

travel from one continent to another on a daily basis and diverse communities frequently interact with each other. This in turn leads to a culture of meeting different societies.

“The basic motive for the people of learning in their relations with the practitioners of other religions as well as with Muslims is to seek or God’s contentment. Indeed, this is entailed by the fact that we should love the creatures because of their Creator. As Yunus Emre said:

We recite Alef (i.e. reading the alphabet) and proceed with wholesale of our assets

We love the creatures, due to the Creator.

People of learning try to show that it is possible to influence other people by establishing good relations with them regardless of their false beliefs, statuses, colors, languages, etc.” (H. Kamil YILMAZ, *Hız. Peygamber ve Birlikte Yaşama Ahlakı* (The Prophet and Ethics of Coexistence), p. 19, DİB Yayınları, 2015, Ankara)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“Believers are like a single body in loving each other, showing mercy to each other and being kind to each other. When an organ of that body feels pain, other organs, too, feel it.” (Muslim, Birr, 66; Bukhari, Adab, 27)

1.2.3. Lack of empathy (What if I’d been born black or yellow! And vice versa)

One of the reasons for the emergence of a racist mind is the lack of empathy. The first steps for forgiveness consist of showing understanding and getting to know each other with our brains and hearts. Empathic attitude makes diversity no longer a threat; it paves the way for a more peaceful, healthy environment of communication.

The Holy Qur’an:

“Surely Allah commands the justice, and the doing goodness, and the giving to the relatives, and He forbids the indecencies, and the wickedness, and the oppression. He admonishes you so that you may learn a lesson.” (Sura al-Nahl, 16:90)

“Your Lord decreed that you do not worship except Him, and to behave to the parents with goodness. If they reach to the old age either one or both of them, so do not tell them ‘ugh,’ nor chide them. But tell them a generous Word.” (Sura al-Isra, 17: 23)

“Lower for them the wings of humility of mercy, and say: ‘My Lord! Hve mercy upon them as they reared me when I was little.’” (Sura al-Isra, 17: 24)

Values;

1. Being fair with everyone.
2. Doing favors to and helping others
3. Avoiding depravement and nefarious affairs.
4. Controlling one’s temper and being forgiving.
5. Empathizing with the elderly particularly including parents and being polite and respective toward them.
6. Being humble toward the elderly and protecting them.

Comments:

A person moves away from racist mindset if he empathizes. Without empathy, he is driven toward racism.

Prophet Muhammad:

“One who does not want for his brother what he wants for himself does not have (true) faith.” (Bukhari, Iman: 7)

“He who can sleep with a full stomach while his neighbor is hungry is not a true believer.”
 (Hakim, II, 15; Heysemi, VIII, 167)

Allah may pity him and test you with that thing.” (Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyama: 54)

“Do not laugh at something bad that happens to your brother. God may test you with that thing.”
 (Tirmidhi, Sifat al-Qiyama: 54)

“No one is perfect physically or spiritually. Therefore, no one can claim superiority to other people. All human beings are equal in terms of their rights and freedoms, regardless of their gender, physical fitness or health, wealth, age or family ties. Showing haughtiness, selfishness or intolerance to the people whom we consider as imperfect or faulty, deriding them, denigrating them or discriminating them on the basis of their colors, religion, race or gender amount to breach of the rights of other people or, as commonly referred to in contemporary law, violation of human rights. Human rights violations today constitute one of the major legal and social problems in the international agenda.” (Muhammet Altun, Ankara University, Social Sciences Institute, Master’s Thesis, Ankara 2006)

“Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

“A man was traveling and he was thirsty. He found a well. He went down and drank water and when he went out, he saw a dog who was thirsty and licking the wet soil. The man thought that the dog was suffering from thirst in the same way he had been. So he went down inside the well and filled his shoe with water. Then he went out by carrying his shoe in his mouth and gave water to the dog. Allah accepted his favor and showed mercy.”

The Companions of the Prophet asked:

“O Messenger of Allah! Will Allah reward us for our treatment with animals?” The Prophet (pbuh) replied:

“There is a reward for us for our kindness toward every animal with a liver.” (Muslim, Jihad, 44, Ibn Majah, Adab, 8)

1.2. 4. Unemployment and economic hardships.

As a result of technological developments, people from different nationalities have started to work in the same workplace. Problems are very likely to arise among them. As these problems increase, people may start to exhibit racist behaviors. Thus, foreign workers may be perceived as enemies who reduce employment opportunities.

The Holy Qur’an:

“Give the relatives their rights, and also to the destitute, and the wayfarer, but do not squander wastefully.” (Sura al-Isra, 17: 26)

“Offer during the known, appointed days the sacrificial cattle that He has provided for them by pronouncing Allah’s Name over them. Eat of their meat and feed the distressed, the poor” (Sura al- Hajj, 22: 28).

“Do not approach the property of the orphan, except with what is good, until he reaches his maturity. Keep the promise. Surely the promise creates responsibility. (Sura al-Isra, 17: 34)

Values;

1. Not doing wrong things with fear of poverty.
2. Not persecuting people with fear of poverty.
3. Not following Satan’s footsteps and not engaging in parsimony

4. Helping the indigent people, the relatives, the poor people and wayfarers.
5. Keeping one's promises

Comments:

In this verse, people are cautioned against Satan who urge people to adopt a negative attitude against economic hardships and engage in wrongdoing.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“O My Allah, I seek refuge in You from the hardships of poverty, disbelief and poverty” (Nasai, Sahw, 90, Ahmed b. Hanbal, Musnad, V, 36, 39,)

1.2.5. Lack of a sense of tolerance and humility.

It is inevitable that there are people with different beliefs and religions in a society. This is a natural aspect of social life and we can do nothing about them. Indeed, we cannot decide where to be born.

In this context, tolerance and humility constitute essential sources of social coexistence. Without tolerance and humility, it is inevitable for people to indulge in arrogance, self-conceit, hubris and other negative attitudes and racist approaches, xenophobia and inclination to violence will be inescapable.

The Holy Qur'an:

“Do not point your eyes to what We bestowed as pairs. Do not sorrow about them. Lower your wings to the believers.” (Sura al-Hijr, 15: 88)

“The servants of the Merciful, who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the ignorants address them they say: ‘Peace.’” (Sura al-Furqan, 25: 63)

Values;

1. Being humble toward friends and wayfarers. Not being arrogant.
2. Not bragging.
3. Refrain from jealousy. Being modest.
4. Being tolerant and acting with tolerance.

Comments:

Arrogance replaces tolerance and humility and can be defined as one's self-perceived superiority.

In other words, it involves treating other people as inferiors. Soil is a symbol of humility. Unlike the the soil in forbearance. As Rumi advised, he should be like the earth in humility and modesty.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“A person cannot enter Paradise if he has even an ounce of arrogance in his heart” (Muslim, Iman, 147; Abu Dawud, Adab, 29, Tirmidhi, Birr, 61)

“Giving alms does not diminish one's wealth. Allah increases the dignity and honor of those who forgive other people. Allah exalts the one who shows humility in the name of Allah.” (Muslim, Birr, 69)

A man was trembling with fear when he was talking to the Prophet (pbuh), but he said:

“Calm down! I am not a king, but the son of a woman who eats dried meat.” (Ibn. Majah, Sunan Etimah, 30)

“Tolerance means accepting diversity. It means refraining from otherizing. As Rumi noted, tolerance means treating all human beings as a whole. Tolerance entails that we treat man as the most eminent of all creatures and embrace people regardless of their faith, color, or faults.

It consists of not breaking their hearts. It is the promotion of unity for fraternity and peace.”
 (Süleyman Aslan, Onların Vasıfları, p. 167)

Rumi said:

“Do not be conceited, but be grateful and humble. Do not see yourself as the Satan did.” (Masnavi I./3362)

1.2.6. Lack of getting acquainted with others and a culture of living together and solidarity.

Reciprocity is one of the most important principles in Islam. It is one of the sources of social peace and coexistence. People can hardly meet their needs alone. Therefore, by their nature, people tend to create communities and help each other.

The Holy Qur'an:

“And worship Allah and never associate anything with Him. And goodness to the parents and the relatives, and the orphans, and the poor, and the near neighbor, and the far neighbor, and the near friend, and the wayfarer, and what your right hands possess (the slave-girls). Surely Allah never likes who is snobbish and boastful.” (Sura al-Nisa, 4: 36)

“And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.” (Sura al-Isra, 17: 36)

Values:

1. Treating parents well
2. Treating relatives well
3. Being nice to the poor and orphans
4. Being nice to close and distant neighbors,
5. Being responsible towards neighbors.
6. Being nice to friends.
7. Being nice to travelers.
8. Being nice to employees.
9. Not bragging and not boasting.
10. Keeping away from tentative information or knowledge

Comments:

The term coexistence applies not only to relationship between different religions, but also the relations among different ethnic groups and even different sects and groups within the same faith. (İslam Kültüründe Hoşgörü, Bir Arada Yaşama Tecrübemizin Esasları (Tolerance in the Islamic Culture, Principles of our Coexistence Experience), Mehmet ÖZDEMİR, DİB Yayınları, Ankara, 2015)

Our world today sees extremely rapid developments in the field of science and technology. There are significant breakthroughs in communication and means of mass communication. As they are made available for public use, travels from one country to another have rapidly increased. Convenience in travels between countries and continents has been urging people to come together and know each other and even live together.

As physical borders seem to have disappeared around the globe, people with diverse religions, languages, races, colors, countries, cultures, beliefs and sects have started to live together at rates never seen before. Economic, political, religious and cultural interactions have been experienced on a global scale, which in turn has led to problems of getting to know more about others.

Certainly, Islam has set forth principles of law and ethics concerning peaceful coexistence of diversities as well as for maintaining diversities as identities.

Islamic societies have always observed certain measures and standards in their relations with non-Muslim societies from the time of our Prophet (pbuh) to our time. These measures are advised directly by the Qur'an and the Prophet (pbuh). The verses forbidding pressurizing other people to convert to Islam (Baqara, 2: 256; Kahf, 18: 29) entails that we should show understanding to the practitioners of other religions or faiths. Preliminary relations with Christians and Jews started, respectively, with Muslims migrating to Abyssinia and with Muslims migrating to Medina at the time of the Prophet (pbuh). Model relationship was established with practitioners of three divine religions and agreements were made among them and a law of coexistence was developed and this was sealed with the Charter of Medina." (Hz. Peygamber ve Birlikte Yaşama Ahlakı (The Prophet and Ethics of Coexistence), Mehmet GÖRMEZ, DİB Yayınları, 2015, Ankara)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“Archangel Gabriel advised me to do kindness to my neighbors so insistently that I thought inheritance would be introduced among neighbors.” (Bukhari, Adab, 28; Muslim, Birr, 140-141).

“If one’s neighbor is not assured that one does not mean him harm; then that person cannot enter Paradise” (Muslim, Iman, 73).

“For Allah, the best friend is the one who is beneficial. Likewise, the best neighbor is the one who is beneficial.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 28)

“Archangel Gabriel advised me to do kindness to my neighbors so insistently that I thought inheritance would be introduced among neighbors.” (Bukhari, Adab, 28; Muslim, Birr, 140-141. (Tirmidhi, Birr, 28)

“Taking into consideration that no differentiation is made among neighbors according to their faiths, Islamic scholars agree that even non-Muslim neighbors are entitled to these rights. (Acruni, I, 328.)

The Holy Qur'an:

“The donations are for the poor who committed themselves for the way of Allah and cannot go from their aura. They do not make persistent begging from the people. Whatever you donate, surely Allah is Knower of it. (Sura al-Baqara, 2: 273)

Values;

1. Helping the poor people around for the sake of social cohesion.
2. Having a culture of living without conceit and arrogance.
3. Being a model of decency in one's behaviors. Comments;

You can discern the signs of poverty in their behaviors. They can hardly ask anything from other people, let alone being insistent in their begging. They just use indirect methods to make people understand their situation.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“Allah is soft on His creatures and loves those who are soft.” Abu Dawud. Adab, 10) ***“The one who does not thank people does not thank Allah.”*** Tirmidhi. Birr, 35 ***“Every pleasant utterance is alms.”*** (Bukhari Adab, 34)

“The one who rejoices for doing a favor and who saddens for doing evil.” (Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, Musnad IV, 399.)

“A believer is one with whom one can make friendship. A person who does not communicate with other people and with whom communication cannot be established is worthless.” (Ibn Hanbal, II, 400 side with the poor, laborers, etc.)

1.2.7. Lack of the concepts of equality and brotherhood of mankind.

In Islam, the concept of fraternity constitutes one of the basic pillars of coexistence. The Holy Qur'an frequently uses this concept to stress that it is a common human value. Islam introduced fraternity and equality among people to unite them. It abolished all forms of discrimination.

“We have certainly created man in the best of stature.” (Surah al-Tin, 95/4)

“And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference.” (Surah al-Isra, 17/70)

Values;

1. Human-beings are created in the best and most beautiful form.
2. It is the Creator that shaped human beings in the way that they are created.
3. Human-beings are provided with opportunities on the land and sea.
4. Every human-being is superior to other creatures. Comments;

In his Farewell Sermon, our Prophet summed up the universal value of Islam that all human being are equal by birth as follows:

“O humankind! Know that your Lord is one. Your ancestors are one. You are all children of Adam, and Adam was created from earth. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black, nor a black has any superiority over a white.

A funeral procession passed by while the Prophet was sitting. Our Prophet stood up. Then, his friends also stood up. They said:

O Prophet of Allah! This funeral procession was not one of a Muslim; it was the funeral procession of a non-believer (of a Jew in another narration).

The Prophet replied:

Is it not a human-being? Is it not a living being (soul)? (Bukhari, Janaiz, 651)

After migrating to Medina, our Prophet (pbuh) signed an agreement with non-Muslims, which is referred to as the Charter of Medina. With this agreement, our Prophet laid the moral and legal foundations of peace and coexistence among diverse religions and cultures.

1.2.8. Differences in languages, religions, and colors.

The sheer multiplicity of languages and colors, the assortment of characters and temperaments and the diversity of abilities and capabilities do not call for contention or competition. Rather, they urge us to help each other in fulfilling our obligations and satisfying our needs.

The Holy Qur'an:

“From His signs is His creation of the skies and the earth, and the difference of your tongues and colors. Surely in that are certain signs for the worlds.” (Sura al-Rum, 30/22)

Values:

1. Considering the variety and diversity of languages as evidence of God's existence.
2. Considering the variety and diversity of color as evidence of God's existence.
3. Being aware that color and language differences are not controllable

Comments:

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“O humankind! Your Lord is the only one and your father is the only one. “An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab nor a non-Arab has any superiority over an Arab; also a white has no superiority over a black, nor a black has any superiority over a white.” (Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. Musnad, V, 411)

One day Abu Dharr got angry with Bilal and reproached him “O son of a black woman!” Hearing this, the Prophet was angry with Abu Dharr:

“O Abu Dharr, Have you reproached Bilal about his mother being black? Do you still live with the mindset of age of ignorance?” Abu Dharr put his head on the ground and said:

“I won’t raise my head if Bilal does not put his foot on my cheek.” (Bukhari Iman: 22) Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“Those whom Allah value most are the one who fear Allah most. No Arab holds greater esteem over a non-Arab; nor a non-Arab person over an Arab person. No person with a black skin has greater esteem over a person with white skin; nor a person with white skin over a person with black skin. Superiority is only in piety and submission.” (Jam al-Fawaid, 1: 510, hadith no: 3632)

The Holy Qur’an:

“He is Allah, the Creator, the All-Holy Maker (Who creates without any defects), the All-Fashioning. To Him belong the All-Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the heavens and on the earth glorifies Him (declaring Him to be absolutely above having any defects). He is the All-Glorious with irresistible might, the All-Wise. (Sura al-Hashr, 59: 24)

Values;

1. Knowing that Allah created people with diversity.
2. Knowing that it is Allah who fashioned people in creation.

Comments;

People have no control over their physical characteristics in creation. It is Allah who determines which physical characteristics people will have. Therefore, the color, facial shape, stature, etc. of other people are all created by Allah. Accordingly, there is no social or religious basis for any claim for superiority. Superiority can be measured only on one’s position in the scale of good deeds.

1.2.9. Failing to suppress the emotions of envy and jealousy.

Jealousy is an innate property of human beings. As some feelings are given us by Allah in creation, jealousy is an innate emotion. We experience this emotion in our daily lives since our childhood. What matters is that we should be able to put jealousy to good use. The Qur’an prohibits the use of jealousy in a negative way.

The Holy Qur’an:

“Many of the People of the Book desired to turn you back to disbelief after your belief, due to envy in their selves, after the Truth has become clear to them. Pardon and disregard it until Allah brings His command. Surely Allah is Capable of everything.” (Sura al-Baqara, 2: 109)

“Or do they envy the people over what Allah gave them from His bounty. Yes indeed We gave the family of Abraham the Book and the wisdom. And We gave them a great kingship.” (Sura al-Nisa, 4: 54)

Values;

1. Jealousy fuels conflicts between people. Exuberance and concupiscence lead to disputes.
2. Forgiveness and tolerance mitigate jealousy.
3. The human carnal self is prone to jealousy. It is best not to provoke it.

Comments;

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

“Beware of envy! It consumes up good deeds just as the fire consumes wood.” (Abu Dawud, Adab, 44)

The Holy Qur'an:

“They spend (out of what Allah has provided for them,) both in ease and hardship, ever-restraining their rage (even when provoked and able to retaliate), and pardoning people (their offenses). God loves (such) people who are devoted to doing good, aware that Allah is seeing them” (Al Imran, 134).

Values;

1. Controlling one's anger in order to be a good human being.
2. Having the virtue of forgiveness in order to be a good human being.
3. Helping people both in abundance and in straits responsibly.

1.2.10. Sense of justice and injustice.

Injustice, too, leads to racism and xenophobia. Injustice that targets a group will necessarily pave the way for hatred and racism.

The Holy Qur'an:

“Surely Allah commands the justice, and the doing goodness, and the giving to the relatives, and He forbids the indecencies, and the wickedness, and the oppression. He admonishes you so that you may learn a lesson.” (Nahl surah 16/90)

“Give the orphans their property and do not substitute the good thing with the bad one. Do not eat their wealth by mixing it with your wealth, because this is a great outrage.” (Sura al-Nisa, 4: 2)

Values:

1. Being fair.
2. Doing favors.
3. Staying away from heinous affairs and depravement.
4. Being sensitive about what is religiously forbidden and what is religiously permitted.
5. Not exploiting the rights and assets of the orphans.
6. Not being greedy or ill-intentioned.
7. Not earning wealth in the name of others

Comments;

Everyone is equal in terms of rights and freedoms. Showing haughtiness, selfishness or intolerance to the people whom we consider as imperfect or faulty, deriding them, denigrating them or discriminating them on the basis of their colors, religion, race or gender amount to breach of the rights of other people or, as commonly referred to in contemporary law, violation of human rights. Human rights violations today constitute one of the major legal and social problems in the international agenda.”

1.3. Verses that emphasize common denominators.

An examination of practitioners of three major religions in Europe reveals that they believe in God, in the Hereafter and the Prophets. This is a fact noted in many places in the Qur'an.

1. Believing in the Allah
2. Believing in the Hereafter

3. Believing in the prophets

1.3.1. Believing in God.

The Holy Qur'an:

“And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference.” (Sura al-Nisa, 4: 175)

179. So keep from disobedience to Allah in reverence for Him, and obey me. (Sura al-Shuara, 26: 179)

Values;

1. Knowing Allah as the best friend

The belief is that professes absolute monotheism: there one God, Allah, and Muhammad

It is his only prophet.

The soul is immortal and will be judged by God to reward or punishment. Paradise is a kind of garden and he will go to stop the righteous. The infidels will go to hell.

Their holy book is, the Koran

Belief in Allah is one of the pillars of the Islamic faith. This is stressed in the reciting of the testimony of faith.

1.3.2. Believing in the Hereafter

Belief in the Hereafter is another common aspect of the three religions. The Holy Qur'an, the Bible and the Torah advocate the belief in the Hereafter.

The Holy Qur'an:

“The day that He gathers you for the day of gathering; this the day of the Taghabun. Whoever believes in Allah and does good, He covers his evil, and He puts him into gardens beneath which rivers flow as they are stayers therein forever. This is the great salvation.” (Sura al-Taghabun, 64: 9)

Values;

1. Not being one of those who lose on the Judgment Day.

2. Being one of the happy people by doing beneficial deeds.

1.3.3. Believing in the prophets

Belief in the prophets is another common aspect of the three religions. Thus, the Holy Qur'an, the Bible and the Torah contain verses regarding the belief in the prophets.

The Holy Qur'an:

“The Messenger and the believers believed in whatever was sent down to him from his Lord. Every one of them believed in Allah, and His angels and His books.” (Sura al-Baqara, 2/285)

“And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference.” (Sura al-Nisa, 4: 165)

Values;

1. Not discriminating among the prophets.

2. Believing in the prophets in taking the straight path.

3. Believing in the prophets as bearers of good tiding and cautions. Comments;

Prophets are the people Allah chose so that they convey God's commandments to people. They are

messengers of Allah. The first prophet is Prophet Adam and the last one is Prophet Muhammad. This is mentioned in the verses. As the last prophet is Muhammad, there will be no other prophet until the Judgment Day. Muslims believe not only in Prophet Muhammad, but also in all prophets mentioned in the Holy Qur'an.

One of the pillars of the Islamic faith is the testimony of faith: "I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah and I also bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger."

1.4. Verses that denote the preventive power of moral principles against evil actions

It is a fact that certain moral characteristics people have innately as well as those moral principles acquired through the religious and social structure drive away bad behaviors. These can be examined in three groups:

1. The role of moral principles in human relations
2. Putting human and human dignity at the center
3. Man and his responsibilities in society

1.4.1. The role of moral principles in human relations

Various rules dominate the social life as well as interpersonal relations. Adherence to these rules, guided by the religious and social context, is indispensable for social life. Social order can be guaranteed if people abide by them; otherwise, social order is disrupted. "I am sent to perfect good manners and fine morals," the Prophet said, and this implies that moral principles are significantly important for the social life.

The Holy Qur'an:

"And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart about all those [one] will be questioned."

"Do not walk on the earth in exultation. Surely you do not cleave the earth, and never reach the mountains in height." (Sura al-Isra, 17: 36-37)

Values;

1. Realizing that people are tested with their deeds.
2. Attaining superiority only through our deeds.
3. Acting morally in trades.
4. Not acting on hearsay or on any knowledge which has not been confirmed. Not having blind faith.

Comments:

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) also said in a related issue:

"Anyone who believes in Allah and the Judgment Day should not disturb his neighbors. Anyone who believes in God and the Judgment Day should treat his guests. Anyone who believes in Allah and the Judgment Day should speak wisely or keep silent" (Bukhari, Nikah, 80, Adab, 31, 85, Riqaq, 23)

"A believer is one with whom one can make friendship. A person who does not communicate with other people and with whom communication cannot be established is worthless." (Ibn Hanbal, II, 400)

"Property, honor and blood of a Muslim is inviolable for other Muslims. The evil of humiliating one's Muslim sisters or brothers is gross enough to send one to Hell." (Abu Dawud, Adab, 35)

"Allah is lenient and merciful. He favors the people who act leniently and compassionately." (Ibn Majah, Adab, 9, Hadith No. 3689, 11, 1216)

We are being tested by God with our deeds. Every good deed we perform makes us superior to others. Every evil deed lowers our position. In this connection:

“So he who has done an atom’s weight of good shall see it. He who has done an atom’s weight of evil shall see it.” (Sura al-Zilzal, 99:7-8). These verses remind us that we are responsible even for the slightest of our deeds.

It is forbidden in our religion to use foul language. Muslims are discouraged from becoming furious and curse other people even if they wrong them. Instead, they should advise them to refrain from evil deeds and forgive them.

Rumi saw two people quarrel with each other and use foul language against each other. “So you call me that? If you say one bad thing to me, you will hear a thousand from me,” one was saying. Hearing this, Rumi said to him:

“No, don’t say anything to him. Come and say whatever you’ll say to me instead. If you say one thousand, you won’t hear even one from me.” Upon this, the quarreling people become friendly again. (Mevlana C.Rumi, E. Yeniterzi, p. 24-25)

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh):

It is a great sin to use foul language against a Muslim and it is disbelief to fight a Muslim. (Bukhari, Iman, 36, Adab, 44)

“No one should call another evildoer or infidel. If the person so accused is not an evildoer or infidel, then those charges will recoil back to the one who uttered them.” (Bukhari, Adab, 44)

“Lack of decency and foul language blemish anyone who has them. Decency beautifies whoever has it.” (Tirmidhi, Birr, 47).

No justification can be made for using foul language against or denigrating other people even if they have false or superstitious beliefs.

1.4.2. Putting human and human dignity at the center

Man is created in the best stature. This is clearly expressed in the Holy Qur’an. For this reason, human beings are honorable and the most dignified of all creatures. Life, property, blood, honor and dignity of every human being is respected, sacred and inviolable in Islam. The Holy Qur’an forbids anything that may damage life, property, honor and dignity of a human being and effectively protect human beings.

The Holy Qur’an:

4. Certainly We created the human being in the best stature.

5. Then We rendered him to the lowest of the low.

6. Except those who believe and did good. They shall have a reward never to be cut off.” (Sura al-Tin, 95: 4-6)

6. Surely the human is highly ungrateful to his Lord,

7. And he himself is a witness to this.

8. And he is fond of wealth.

9. But isn’t he aware that the time will come when all that is in the graves are raised?

10. And when all that is in the breasts is divulged?

11. Surely their Lord on that Day is indeed aware. (Sura al-Adiyah, 100: 6-11)

Values;

1. Knowing that the creation is honorable.

2. Knowing that one is rewarded continuously based on one’s deeds.

Comments;

One day Abu Dharr got angry with Bilal and reproached him “O son of a black woman!” Bilal went to the Messenger of Allah and complained about it.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said to Abu Dharr:

“Have you reproached Bilal about his mother being black?” This means you still retain the standards and judgments of the pre-Islamic days of ignorance. None is more virtuous over another, those with white or black skins, except by righteous deeds.” (Ahmed Ibn Hanbal, Musnad, Egypt 1313, V, 158.)

Life, property, blood, honor and dignity of every human being is respected, sacred and inviolable. After migrating to Medina, our Prophet (pbuh) signed an agreement with non- Muslims, which is referred to as the Charter of Medina. With this agreement, our Prophet laid the moral and legal foundations of peace and coexistence among diverse religions and cultures. There is the legal and moral value to our fraternity that arises from our identities as human beings and as Muslims. Due to our fraternity stemming from our identity of human beings, every human being is respectable regardless of his religion, race, color or country. For this reason, we need to treat everyone as human beings. Injustice done to human beings or their persecution is unacceptable.

1.4.3. Man and his responsibilities in society

People have responsibilities toward society and the world starting with the family. These responsibilities are clearly expressed in the Qur'an. People are reminded of their responsibilities such as doing right things, setting a good example in good deeds, advising goodness to other people, being aware of their responsibilities toward their families, and being responsible for the protection and development of the country they rule, and they are told that they will be rewarded if they fulfill their responsibilities.

The Holy Qur'an:

“I swear by the afternoon, most surely human beings are at a loss, except those who believe, and do good, and admonish each other the truth and the patience.” (Sura al-Asr, 103: 1-3)

“And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge. Indeed, the hearing, the sight and the heart - about all those [one] will be questioned.” (Sura al-Isra, 17: 36)

Values;

1. Doing good deeds. Advising people to do what is right.
2. Advising people to be patient in the face of events.
3. Not acting without knowledge.

The Holy Qur'an:

“And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend.” (Sura al-Fussilah, 41: 34)

“Whatever good touches you is from Allah. Whatever bad thing touches you is from yourself. We sent you to human being as a Messenger. And Allah is sufficient as a Witness!” (Sura al-Maida, 5: 79)

“Competition in [worldly] increase diverts you until you visit the graveyards.” (Sura al-Taqasur, 102: 1-2)

Values:

1. Realizing that good and evil deeds are not the same.

2. Finding the best method in preventing the evil.
3. Enjoining and promoting what is right and good and advising against the evil.
4. Not boasting with abundance of wealth.
5. Using time to boost our creativity without nurturing motives for getting rich.
6. We should remember that one day we will also die and proceed to give an account of what we have done in this world. This fact is expressed in the verse as “visiting the graveyards”.

Comments:

Enjoining and promoting what is right and good and advising against the evil are among the responsibilities of every Muslim. This is Luqman’s advice to his son: **“O my little son! Perform the prayer. Enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and be patient against what befalls on you. Surely these actions are from those which require determination.”** (Sura al-Luqman, 31: 17).

In the context of advising against the evil deeds, our Prophet said: “Whoever sees an evil deed should correct it with his hands or with his tongue or with his heart, depending on his capability.” (Muslim, Iman, 78).

“I swear by Allah that either you enjoin what is right and good and forbid what is wrong and evil or Allah will send down punishment on you. Then you beg and pray to Allah, but your prayers aren’t answered” (Tirmidhi, Fiten, 9)

Any person who can use his intellect can distinguish what is good from what is evil. It is a virtue to do so. It is a great virtue to forbid what is wrong and evil.

The Holy Qur’an:

“Do not approach adultery. Surely it is an indecency and an evil way. And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right. And whoever is killed unjustly - We have given his heir authority, but let him not exceed limits in [the matter of] taking life. Indeed, he has been supported [by the law].” (Sura al-Isra, 17: 32-33)

Values;

1. Staying away from heinous affairs. Not persecuting people.
2. Not engaging in depravement.

Comments;

Human life is a never-ending moral struggle. If human beings exhibit due struggle, Allah will help them in this struggle. As Allah’s caliph on Earth, man is equipped with the ability for free selection and assumes a major role. The Qur’an refers to this role of establishing a social order based on good manners and justice as the trust.

Prophet Muhammad always sought to uphold justice and fairness in human relations. He didn’t exploit rights of other people and he didn’t allow others to do exploit these rights unfairly. Fair conduct is a major social law that boosts social integration and mutual respect among people. Justice is the main pillar of property while injustice undermines it. Justice is a moral principle that ensures protection of the innocent. One of the Qur’an’s main purposes is to establish a social order based on justice and moral manners.

2. EVALUATION

Every human being wants to live together. Coexistence starts with birth and continues until the end. This is something innate for human beings. What matters here is to be able to keep diversities together in unison.

Unfortunately, certain political discourses may negatively affect people, increasing their inclination towards racist discourses. The lack of faith in certain people may trigger irresponsible behaviors toward others. Therefore, it is essential to invest more time and resources in this matter.

Here, our purpose is to boost and reinforce peace and coexistence by identifying and promoting values in sacred texts and combat racism and xenophobia which are obstacles preventing people from attaining the goal of coexistence.

The main factors for coexistence are listed in the sacred texts. The set of behaviors and values that originate in the family and ripple through the society constitutes important traits and pillars that will lead people to peaceful coexistence. The values listed here indicate that we need to treat everyone nicely without discrimination based on their races, languages, religions, etc. In the final analysis, we see that God does not love people who denigrate other people, but love themselves.

Preliminary relations with Christians and Jews started, respectively, with Muslims migrating to Abyssinia and with Muslims migrating to Medina at the time of the Prophet (pbuh). Model relationship was established with practitioners of three divine religions and agreements were made among them and a law of coexistence was developed and this was sealed with the Charter of Medina.

Islam introduced solid moral values concerning coexistence. It created a culture of peace, tolerance and conciliation. To our dismay, however, the Muslim world is today teeming with dissension, division, conflict, clashes, discord, violence and terror. It is obvious that this is due to our lack of knowledge about the main sources of our religion as well as lack of wisdom, insight and learning. We don't know why they do this and what their purpose is. But we know that these incidents have nothing to do with the sources and culture of Islam. They have no relation to the Holy Qur'an and the practices of the Prophet (pbuh).

Given the results of the surveys on racism and xenophobia, the efforts to identify and compile the values common to the verses of the Qur'an, the Torah and the Bible are essential in combating racism and xenophobia in Europe. Based on these surveys, we must note that the development of the culture of living together is one of the important steps to be taken towards the prevention of racism. Problems still persist in accepting diversity even in today's atmosphere of coexistence.

The weakness in the coexistence culture of non-Muslim societies surfaces in the form of Islamophobic policies of hatred and discrimination and attacks against mosques. On the other hand, the Muslim countries are experiencing internal conflicts due to sectarianism, racism and ideological discrimination and innocent people die in the process. Historical and cultural texture of the cities is also destroyed. The way of promoting peace, justice and virtue in this country and geography is to revive the culture, law and ethics of coexistence.

Every human being is unique. Every human being is different in terms of feelings, thoughts and abilities. Every human being is precious and has the same human essence regardless of linguistic, racial, gender or national differences. Every human being is honorable and respectable. Life, property, and dignity of every human being is inviolable. Every human being deserves to lead a dignified life.

As a result of the surveys conducted on racism and xenophobia in five countries -- Turkey, Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, and Bulgaria-- the following remarkable results were obtained.

1. It was evident that racism has been rising steadily in EU countries.
2. It was emphasized that racism is used by politicians.
3. The results stating that "use of religious motifs caused reasons that lead to racism" were realized at such a high rate that it could not be underestimated.
4. Another significant finding was that "not having adequate knowledge about the religious tenets" was also one of the reasons which led to racism.

5. It could also be seen that the perception that “racism correlates with low education level and economic causes” is becoming more and more widespread.

7. It has been pointed out that there is an urgent need for the reorganization of the laws on racism.

8. The development of the culture of living together is one of the important steps to be taken towards the prevention of racism.

9. In the context of the actions that triggers racism, it is striking that the attacks on religious symbols and values are the most prominent.

10. Racist discourse used by politicians and the fact that such discourse takes place in the media was one of the most remarkable among those actions which were seen as triggering racism.

11. It was evident that attacks on religious values in European Union countries have already taken place at high rates.

12. Unfortunately, the news reports and images in media reports about racism were perceived as a trigger among those with racist ideas and those who have a tendency towards racism. As it can be seen in the survey results, media ranks first among those which trigger racism the most.

Here, it is clear that religious factors as well as the significance people attach to these factors are considerably influential.

When the value judgments in Turkey are considered, the verses of the Holy Qur'an prohibiting racism and the words of Prophet Muhammad related to racism are of paramount importance for the Muslims.

In CONCLUSION,

it is embarrassing when people are exposed to racism and xenophobia as a hate crime. The struggle against these inhuman acts that make profound impact on individuals and society is of pivotal importance. It is a humanitarian duty to combat racism and xenophobia. Trying to extinguish the fire of hate crimes with the bonds of love and common values is an important way to combat this hate fire.

Following Yunus Emre, who said, “We love the creatures, due to the Creator,” and saw all nations as one community and Rumi, who said: “Come, come again, whoever, whatever you may be, come / Heathen, fire-worshipper, sinful of idolatry, come / Come, even if you have broken your vows a hundred times / Ours is not the portal of despair or misery / Come, even if you have broken your vows a hundred times.” Abu al-Hasan Harakani, one of the spiritual architects of Kars, said:

“Whoever comes to the door, give them bread and never question their faith. Because anyone who is worthy to carry a spirit before God the Almighty is worthy enough to eat the bread at Abu al-Hasan's table.” (Harakani, p. 19). Knowing that man is the most honorable of all creation, it is essential that we treat human beings with love.

Surely racism denies different colors and different nationalities. But it should be noted that different colors and nationalities exist in reality even if they are denied. We believe different colors add color to life but people with racist views are far from taking pleasure from this celebration of colors. To make them enjoy this celebration of colors, we need to fight more against racism and will need to find new ways in this fight. Unfortunately, certain political discourses may negatively affect people, increasing their inclination towards racist discourses. The lack of faith in certain people may trigger irresponsible behaviors toward others. Therefore, it is essential to invest more time and resources in this matter.

In short, racism cannot be defended on no basis and consists of just a corrupt philosophy, which means to destroy human dignity, and damage and destruct human honor, divide and fragment societies from each other. So, racism cannot be accepted by civilized nations. Accepting people as as humans is a necessity of humanity.

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The Effects of Common Values on European Peace

Racism and xenophobia



VERSES AND COMMON VALUES

BIBLE

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INTRODUCTION

Value means abstract measure for the importance of something, the compensation for something, worth, and high and beneficial quality. (Turkish Language Society, 2005)

Value is something is considered good, nice, and right in a society's or an individual's view or something that is advocated. (Grand Larousse, 1986)

Value is the fundamental criterion which we use to judge things and see what is right or wrong. The rightness and validity of a value come from the fact that it relies on knowledge and evidence and it has internal consistency and it aims for improvement and it is a source of a beneficial action. Thanks to this extensive background, values acquire universality. (Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN, Hz. Peygamber ve İnsan Yetiştirme Düzeni (Prophet and System for Educating People), DİB Yayınları, Ankara 2015, p. 13.)

Extensive commentaries need to be made regarding the Common Values verses in the Bible in the review RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA, prepared by Turkey Formal and Non- Formal Education Foundation. Hoping that this is going to be accomplished in the future, I will try to summarize my opinions in general in a few sentences.

I would like to offer my congratulations and gratitude to those who have prepared this file, chosen these verses, and all those who have taken part in this important project. I'd like to thank all of you.

As it was clearly seen over the course of history, mankind could not stay away from religion and belief starting from the beginning. So people exist to experience justice and freedom.

Human beings have always questioned themselves starting with their existence, seeking their own country and future. Am I free? Am I a prisoner?

According to the laws of the nature people are free; yet, it is the wars that take people prisoner. It is the people who give way to evil whereas it is the Creator that shows mercy to people. In other words, injustice (sin) brings people to the status of prisoners (Gospel of John 8.34).

In the first centuries of Christianity, class related ethnic identity was not mentioned often. In the Bible and St. Paul, there is no racial discrimination. Human beings are treated as a whole, regardless of their being free or captive (Galatians: 3.1-29).

The contemporary world is characterized with alienation from the innate spiritual values which constitute people's collective lives, and, with lack of increased intolerance." (Deputy Patriarch Monseigneur François YAKAN)

I. VERSES ON COMMON VALUES

1.1. Verses of the Bible that are directly related to racism and xenophobia:

Racism and xenophobia are as old as humanity. Racism is in essence “denigrating those who are not like us.” It is treating people as the other and humiliating them. This is prohibited in many verses of the Bible.

New Testament,

Letter of St. Paul to the Colossians 3.11-17 Chapter 3. Verses 5-14:

“5- Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6- For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7- In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8- But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth

9-10- Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11- Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12-14. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Values:

1. Refraining from ambitions and ill desires.
2. Avoiding lies, barbarism and racial discrimination.
3. Being forgiving, merciful and humble towards each other.
4. Attaching to each other with love.

New Testament, Galatians, Chapter 3, Verses 7-9, 28-29

7. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

29. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise

Values:

1. Meeting in the Abrahamic genealogy.
2. Believing that all nations meet at Abraham and as such, they are blessed.
3. Refraining from racial discrimination and being one in Jesus Christ.
4. Being children of Abraham.

Comments:

In the first centuries of Christianity, class related ethnic identity was not mentioned often. In the Bible and St. Paul, there is no racial discrimination. Human beings are treated as a whole, regardless of their being free or captive (Galatians: 3.1-29).

Old Testament; Genesis 3/20

“The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living”

Interpretation:

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) states that “all human beings belong to the same species and have the same origin” (Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, 1978).

New Testament, Acts 17/26

“And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place” Acts 17:26

Old Testament Numbers 16:22

”And they fell on their faces and said, “O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will you be angry with all the congregation?” Numbers 16:22

New Testament, Hebrews 12:9

“Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live?” Hebrews 12:9

New Testament, Ephesians 3/14,15

“From whom every family in heaven and on earth is named” Ephesians 3:15

“For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name.”

Values;

1. Being aware of the fact that all races descend from the same ancestors.
2. Paying respect to those who descend from the same ancestors.

Interpretation:

First, we know that all races come from the same ancestor common.

We do not know exactly how God’s providence worked for color differences in races, but we can understand how people. They spread throughout the centuries developed different customs cultures. Do not However, under the cloak of customs, all have basically the same nature, the ability to love, a sense of responsibility, conscience and deep sense of respect for justice and law. Of course, the former things often be defined differently.

Therefore, the first step to overcome racism is to expand our circle include all races and nations, striving to understand their origins, culture, way of thinking and living. With more understanding, we will be surprised to find that other races and peoples are more like us than we expected, with a common nature of aspirations and hopes.

New Testament, Galatians 3/27-28

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:27-28

Ephesians 2/14-16

“For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.” Ephesians 2:14-16

New Testament, Acts of the Apostles 10/34-35

“34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: “Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.” Acts 10:34-35

New Testament, Romans 2/11

“For God shows no partiality.” Romans 2:11

Values;

1. Not discriminating between people based on religion.
2. Not discriminating between people based on gender.
3. Refraining from hostility between people and eliminating it, if any.

Interpretation

We need to learn to put ourselves in the shoes of others and act consequence.

Therefore, if we want to please God, we have no racial prejudice against others, on the contrary we try to understand them and make them what they wanted receive instead.

No matter what social position we are, if we want to be treated into consideration, justice, kindness, compassion and mercy, we must first strive to do this to others. If we do this, regardless of what others do, we will be pleasing of God for our lives removed from prejudice malicious racist.

1.2. Verses that are related to factors leading to racism and xenophobia in the Bible:

Reasons leading to racism and xenophobia;

1.2.1. Sense of superiority and boasting and selfishness. (boasting with racial origin and having a sense of superiority)

New Testament,

Acts of the Apostles 10/25-28

“25. As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence.

26. But Peter made him get up. “Stand up,” he said, “I am only a man myself.”

27. While talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people.

28. He said to them: “You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean.”

New Testament,

Acts of the Apostles 10/34-35

“34-35. Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.”

Values;

1. No denigrating any person in connection with his race.
2. Not addressing anyone in a way he doesn't like.
3. Not discriminating between people based on gender.
4. Accepting people regardless of their races.

1.2.2. The lack of a culture of sharing and solidarity; selfishness.

One of the characteristics of racist people is that they have weak emotions for sharing.

They see foreigners as their rivals. They don't want to share and start to show racist behaviors towards foreigners. However, sharing would add new values both to them and to their addressees.

For instance, when information is shared, new information will appear on the horizon. Sharing will multiply joys, but sooth pain.

New Testament

Gospel of Matthew: 8.20 and 25.35

Chapter 25, Verses 34-40

“34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36. Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

38. When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

39. Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40. And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Values:

1. Feeding the hungry.
2. Clothing the needy ones.
3. Visiting the ill ones and protecting them.

1.2.3. Lack of Empathy (What if I'd been born black or yellow!)

One of the reasons for the emergence of a racist mind is the lack of empathy. The first steps for forgiveness consist of showing understanding and getting to know each other with our brains and hearts. Getting to know each other with our brains and hearts means feeling with heart of others and thinking with the brains of others. Only in this way can we know other people and this is what empathy is all about. Likewise, showing understanding is an attitude that emerges with empathy.

Emphatic attitude makes diversity no longer a threat; it paves the way for a more peaceful, healthy environment of communication.

New Testament

Acts of the Apostles 10/25-26

“As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. But Peter made him get up. “Stand up,” he said, “I am only a man myself.”

Values:

1. Upholding human dignity.
2. Treating others with empathy.

New Testament Matthew 7/12

“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12

“a brief summary of human behavior required by God from the beginning of the world“ (Wayne Partain, Notes Mateo)

Values;

1. Being nice to people.
2. Acting with empathy.

Interpretation

We need to learn to put ourselves in the shoes of others and act consequence. Therefore, if we want to please God, we have no racial prejudice against others, on the contrary we try to understand them and make them what they wanted receive instead.

No matter what social position we are, if we want to be treated into consideration, justice, kindness, compassion and mercy, we must first strive to do this to others. If we do this, regardless of what others do, we will be pleasing of God for our lives removed from prejudice malicious racist.

1.2. 4. Unemployment and economic hardships

As a result of technological developments, people from different nationalities have started to work in the same workplace. Problems are very likely to arise among them. For instance, a worker who is forced to share his job will show negative attitude toward foreigners when there is a difference in the wages or if the workplace proceeds with layoffs. As these problems increase, people may start to exhibit racist behaviors. Thus, foreign workers may be perceived as enemies who reduce employment opportunities.

Here, people start to be concerned about being unemployed and facing financial hardships. Obviously, employment and economic hardships necessarily reduce quality of living for people, thereby getting them into financial and psychological problems.

Unemployment and economic difficulties are transience, but values are eternal.

New Testament

Gospel of Matthew: 8.20 and 25.35

Chapter 25, Verses 34-36

34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36. Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Values:

1. Feding the hungry.
2. Clothing the needy ones.
3. Visiting the ill ones and protecting them.

1.2.5. Lack of a sense of tolerance and humility.

It is inevitable that there are people with different beliefs and religions in a society. This is a natural aspect of social life and we can do nothing about them. Indeed, we cannot decide where to be born. We necessarily become individuals within the societies where we are born. In this context, tolerance and humility constitute essential sources of social coexistence. Without tolerance and humility, it is inevitable for people to indulge in arrogance, self-conceit, hubris and other negative attitudes and racist approaches, xenophobia and inclination to violence will be inescapable. For this reason, the value of tolerance and humility will be cherished when they are applied to the whole of our lives. Being tolerant in certain areas of life while letting intolerance dominate other areas is unacceptable.

New Testament

LETTER OF ST. PAUL TO THE COLOSSIANS 3.11-17

Chapter 3. Verses 5-14:

“5- Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6- For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7- In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8- But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9-10- Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

11- Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

12-14. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

Values:

1. Refraining from ambitions and ill desires.
2. Avoiding lies, barbarism and racial discrimination.
3. Being forgiving, merciful and humble towards each other.
4. Attaching to each other with love.

New Testament

St. Matthew 7:1,2

“1. Do not judge so that you will not be judged.

“2. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

New Testament Matthew 7/12 7:12)

“12. So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them” (Bible, Matt

Values;

1. Refraining from bias in our relationship with other people.
2. Knowing how to be nice to other people.
3. Being rewarded for one's behaviors.

New Testament, Acts 17:26

People are of one blood all nations

„And has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation“

Values;

1. Knowing that people have no control over the place and time of their birth.
2. Being tolerant toward everyone with this knowledge.

1.2.6. Lack of getting acquainted with others and a culture of living together and solidarity.

People can hardly meet their needs alone. Therefore, by their nature, people tend to create communities and help each other.

GOSPEL OF LUKE CHAPTER 17, Verses 1-4

“1. Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

2. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3. Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

Values;

1. Warning anyone who commits a crime even if he is your brother
2. Not rejecting the repentance regardless of the multitude of crimes.

New Testament Luke 17/1-4

“1. Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!

2. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3. Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. “

Values;

1. Warning anyone who commits a crime even if he is your brother

2. Not rejecting the repentance regardless of the multitude of crimes.

New Testament

Gospel of John 8.34, Chapter 8, Verse 34

3.4. Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Values:

1. Staying away from sin.

Comments:

According to the laws of the nature people are free; yet, it is the wars that take people prisoner. It is the people who give way to evil whereas it is the Creator that shows mercy to people. In other words, injustice (sin) brings people to the status of prisoners (Gospel of John 8.34).

Old Testament Exodus 20/12-17

Verse 12 Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Verse 13 Thou shalt not kill.

Verse 14 Thou shalt not commit adultery. Verse 15 Thou shalt not steal.

Verse 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Verse 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

Values;

1. Treating parents respectfully.

2. Not killing anyone.

3. Not stealing anything.

4. Not telling any lie to neighbors

5. Refraining from perjury.

6. Not coveting neighbors' family or property.

Comments:

A wonderful summary and systematic exposition of the basic moral values of people; Suggest sinless life and good relations between people;

Contain moral and behavior which no legislation in the world can resist against;

The norms, concerning the relationships between people are accepted by all legislations in the world;

The first written laws that human society has known.

Old Testament Chapter 3 Proverb 29."

"29. Do not devise evil against your neighbor, For he dwells by you for safety's

Values:

1. Avoid evil and be good.

2. Do not abuse people's trust.

Old Testament Chapter 4 Proverb 24

“24. Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.”

Values:

1. Be honest.
2. Avoid hypocrisy and falsehood.
3. Respect people. Do not speak evil about others.

Old Testament Chapter 10 Proverb 12

“12. Hatred stirs up strife, But love covers all sins.

Values:

1. Avoid hatred. Hatred is harmful, it leads to strife and even crimes.
2. Respond to hatred with love. Love is creative, it can repair what hatred has done.
3. Old Testament Chapter 25 Proverb 28

“28. He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.”

Old Testament Chapter 26 Proverb 27

“Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.”

Values:

1. Repress your anger and emotions.
2. Be restrained.
3. Think before you utter the wrong word. Avoid hatred and evil thoughts.
4. Do not plan betrayals and abominations, and do good.

New Testament

Peter 2/16,17. Chapter 2 Verse 16-17

“As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.”

“Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

Values:

1. Love freedom, but do not be a freedom-loving person.
2. Do not misuse your freedom.
3. Love and respect people, even the ones different from you.

New Testament Peter 4/8-10 Chapter 4 Verse 8-10

“8. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins”

“9. Use hospitality one to another without grudging.”

“10. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

Values:

1. Love defeats evil.
2. Behospitable to all people.
3. Do not grumble.

4. Respect your colleagues, regardless of their faith.

Old Testament Proverbs, 31,25:

“25. She is clothed in dignity and power and can afford to laugh at tomorrow.”

Values;

1. Being honorable.
2. Looking to the future with confidence.

New Testament Galatians 5/22, 23

“22. And the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace.” 23. faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Old Testament Proverbs 11, 28

“28. He that trusted in his richness shall fall, but the righteous shall flourish as the green.”

Old Testament Proverbs 11, 30

“30. The fruit of the justice is a tree of life.”

New Testament Hebrews 10, 35:

“35. Cast not away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward.”

Values;

1. To tell the truth.
2. Do not give up telling the truth.

1.2.7. Faulty understanding of equality and brotherhood. (Refraining from being side by side with the poor, laborers, etc.)

New Testament 1.2.7. Lack of the concepts of equality and brotherhood of mankind. St. John's Letter 3.7-8 Chapter 3, Verses 13-16

“13. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him

16. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Values:

1. Treating all human beings as brothers.
2. Knowing that hating one's brother is like killing a person.
3. Loving and protecting brothers to death.

New Testament Titus

Chapter 2, Verses 11-13

“11. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12-13. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live

soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ”

Values:

1. Abstaining from wrongdoing and other worldly desires.
2. Competing in peace and kindness.

Comments:

In Christianity, Jesus Christ established solidarity based on love without discrimination and this fraternity is visible everywhere in the Bible. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (Titus: 2.11-12).

1.2.8. Differences in languages, religions, and colors

The sheer multiplicity of languages and colors, the assortment of characters and temperaments and the diversity of abilities and capabilities do not call for contention or competition. Rather, they urge us to help each other in fulfilling our obligations and satisfying our needs.

Color, race, language, homeland or other values are not dearer to God than these values. A human being is superior to another only according to the values that have any worth for God. Given the fact that all differences were created by God, will He endorse our making them source of hostility or hatred? Rather, God enjoins us to get to know each other, come together for beneficial acts and act in cooperation so that common values can be put into practice. If people attain this level of consciousness, the reasons for conflict and hostility will be eradicated on Earth.

New Testament Colossians 3/9-11

“Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

Values;

1. Abandoning bad habits.
2. Not discriminating between people.

1.2.9. Failing to suppress the emotions of envy and jealousy.

Jealousy is an innate property of human beings. As some feelings are given us by God in creation, jealousy is an innate emotion.

We experience this emotion in our daily lives since our childhood. What matters is that we should be able to put jealousy to good use.

1.2.10. Sense of justice and injustice

There is a proverb: “The fruit of a righteous person is a tree of life.” New Testament Peter 3/15

“15. Be ready for taking responsibility towards everyone who demands an explanation about the hope which is inside you.”

New Testament, Acts, 26, 1:

“1. Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You have our permission to speak for yourself.’ Then Paul stretched out his hand and took his responsibility.” (Martin Luther; others: „began his defense“)

New Testament, Mark 10, 31:

“31. But many that are first shall be last: and the last first.”

Old Testament, Jeremiah 39, 18

“18. I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the Word but get your life because you have put trust in me.”

Old Testament Isaiah 11/4:

“4. But with justice shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.”

1.3. Verses that emphasize common denominators

An examination of practitioners of three major religions in Europe reveals that they believe in God, in the Hereafter and the Prophets.

1. Believing in the God
2. Believing in the Hereafter
3. Believing in the prophets

In addition to these, we can list the values and assets common to Christianity, Islam and Judaism as follows:

Belief in a Higher God: Religion begins with the belief in a supreme God, man feels compelled to respond to a call from God. This is the difference between the polytheistic religions and religious monotheism.

Existence of a Cult and Rites: The proximity of the divine leads man to reach the Supreme God through acts of worship, adoration, petition, thanksgiving, sacrifices, etc.

Track a Moral Agenda: The belief in a supreme God awakens in man the need to get right with God.

Belief in a Life after Death: The existence of God reveals to man that his personal life is transcendental and must endure beyond a death.

Social Influence: The various religions affect not only the individual, but to coexistence among men. Moral duties arising in society, a schedule is made and holy days listed.

Creation of Culture: Religions have created over time cultural expression in all the arts. It must be added human and ethical values that shape the cultures of peoples.

1.3.1. Believing in God.

Christianity is a religion based on divine revelation; God sent his revelations to human beings before they start to look for Him.

Divine providence is at the basis of Christianity.

THE BIBLE SAINT JAMES Chapter 2 Verse 14

“14. What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?”

Chapter 2 Verse 26 .”

“26. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Values:

Deeds are more important than faith.

Faith is only proved only through good deeds.

Avoid verbosity about faith.

1.3.2. Believing in the Hereafter

Belief in the Hereafter is another common aspect of the three religions. The Holy Qur'an, the Bible and the Torah advocate the belief in the Hereafter.

1.3.3. Believing in the prophets

Belief in the prophets is another common aspect of the three religions. Thus, the Holy Qur'an, the Bible and the Torah contain verses regarding the belief in the prophets.

New Testament

“17. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.

18. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”

INTERPRETATION

We must discern what God expects of us, we develop this perception towards our neighbors.

When the world was filled with corruption and violence, God chose a man of great faith through which he could bless the world.

Was necessary to happen a number of miracles to the apostle Peter, and others with him, were convinced that both nations Jews are accepted as facts by the blood of Christ in the people of God.

God does not affect the class or racial differences to express their approval.

He has such carnal preferences. God does not look at race, color, nationality, formal education, wealth or poverty to approve or disapprove someone.

1.4. Verses that denote the preventive power of moral principles against evil actions

It is a fact that certain moral characteristics people have innately as well as those moral principles acquired through the religious and social structure drive away bad behaviors. These can be examined in three groups:

1. The role of moral principles in human relations

2. Putting human and human dignity at the center

3. Man and his responsibilities in society

New Testament

Ephesians 6:1-4

“1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”

2. Honor your father and mother “which is the first commandment with a promise

3. so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth”

4. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord“.

Values:

1. To be respectful to the parents, to keep their promises.

2. Raising children with the advice of God.

1.4.1. The role of moral principles in human relations

Various rules dominate the social life as well as interpersonal relations. Adherence to these rules, guided by the religious and social context, is indispensable for social life. Social order can be guaranteed if people abide by them; otherwise, social order is disrupted.

1.4.2. Putting human and human dignity at the center

Man is created in the best stature.

New Testament Colossians 3/12-14

“12. Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

13. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

14. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

1.4.3. Man and his responsibilities in society

People have responsibilities toward the society and the world starting with the family. People are reminded of their responsibilities such as doing right things, setting a good examples in good deeds, advising goodness to other people, being aware of their responsibilities toward their families, and being responsible for the protection and development of the country they rule, and they are told that they will be rewarded if they fulfill their responsibilities.

Old Testament Chapter 1 Proverb 22

“22. How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorners delight in their scorning, And fools hate knowledge?”

Values:

Do not waste your life in ignorance.

Carelessness destroys man.

Only through learning will you acquire knowledge and wisdom.

Knowledge teaches us to comprehend the lessons of life and discern what is good and what is evil.

A clever man understands the proverbs and advice of wise men and their messages as well.

It is the clever man only who can make wise and correct decisions.

Old Testament Chapter 3 Proverb 27

“27. Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in the power of your hand to do so.”

Values:

1. Do good, be merciful.

2. Do not send away a person in need.

3. Help people whenever you can do it. Old Testament Isaiah, 32, 17:

“17. And the impact of justice shall be peace, and the effect of justice quietness and assurance for ever.”

Values;

1. Being righteous in peace and security and not refraining from the truth.

2. EVALUATION

The evaluations made by the Project Partners at the end of the work on Verses and Common Values are given below: A.M.E.F.E Malaga/SPAIN

BELIEF IN A HIGHER GOD: Religion begins with the belief in a supreme God, man feels compelled to respond to a call from God. This is the difference between the polytheistic religions and religious monotheism.

The Existence Of A Cult And Rites: The proximity of the divine leads man to reach the Supreme God through acts of worship, adoration, petition, thanksgiving, sacrifices, etc.

Track A Moral Agenda: The belief in a supreme God awakens in man the need to get right with God.

Belief In A Life After Death: The existence of God reveals to man that his personal life is transcendental and must endure beyond a death.

Social Influence: The various religions affect not only the individual, but to coexistence among men. Moral duties arising in society, a schedule is made and holy days listed.

Creation Of Culture: Religions have created over time cultural expression in all the arts. It must be added human and ethical values that shape the cultures of peoples.

Some of the greatest tragedies that affect us every day are prejudice, mistrust, hatred and conflicts arising from racism and xenophobia.

Belief begets proceed.

Each of us has learned to draw a circle around itself. Within this circle, commonly we have been taught to enclose all the rights and privileges we want for ourselves, without the rest invade or remove what is ours.

Furthermore, this circle belonging family includes immediate relatives and friends, tribe or clan, the nation and its folklore

In the practice, we come to know and approve the background and culture of their own race, nation and tribe, with their aspirations, way of thinking and acting suspiciously wary of those who bring new customs and ways.

Then the educational gap and personal assets up a wall of prejudice that tends to be bitter. Those with greater social benefits tend to despise or belittle those who have less.

The Poor people often envy with great resentment and even hate, the rich and educated.

These attitudes have prompted several nations to collapse the class struggle and segregation racial.

First, we know that all races come from the same ancestor common.

We do not know exactly how God's providence worked for color differences in races, but we can understand how people. They spread throughout the centuries developed different customs cultures. Do not However, under the cloak of customs, all have basically the same nature, the ability to love, a sense of responsibility, conscience and deep sense of respect for justice and law. Of course, the former things often be defined differently.

Therefore, the first step to overcome racism is to expand our circle include all races and nations, striving to understand their origins, culture, way of thinking and living. With more understanding, we will be surprised to find that other races and peoples are more like us than we expected, with a common nature of aspirations and hopes.

FINAL REFLECTION: Someday end racism and xenophobia?

"It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it," Isaiah 2:2

Seeing the serious racial tensions, many people wonder if they really have advanced in the fight against racism. Some believe that we can never win, but we believe that in the end will win.

EDU Centrum. Dobrovice/CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic is a country with a low number of people declaring affiliation to any church or religious society in Europe after Estonia **has the second lowest percentage of citizens claiming to be religious or church members.**

In the period 1991-2001 the number of believers has fallen (**32.14% of the population**).

During the 2011 census the total number of believers again fell to a total of 2,175,087 (**20.6% of the population**).

In no region of the Czech Republic, 'believers' form the majority of local residents

An essential component of every moral principle is „ **do no harm to anyone**“, possibly prevent harm to others, often expressed as a number of simple prohibitions

Classical form of general moral principles is the so-called **Golden Rule** The Golden Rule is simple **principle of reciprocity in dealings between people**.

Marie e. V. Berlin/GERMANY

Dignity and Peace are two important concepts. These are expressed in the sacred texts as follows:

“A person's success and wealth are in God's hands and He bestows honor on the righteous.” (Sir. 10, 5) Peace

“God protect and bless you and the LORD shine His face on your face and be gracious to you; LORD have mercy and peace on you.” (Mo 6, 24-26) One who speaks ill of his friend ruins friendship.” “I don't feel ashamed for standing by my friend and I won't run away from him.” (Sir. 22, 25)

ASPECT. Plovdiv/BULGARIA

We have tried, putting the human in the center, to show that the moral messages of the sacred writings have a universal character.

Let's get to know each other through religion.

The attempt of man to comprehend the world around him, his place in it, attitudes and forces that move it.

Religion stimulates the development of morality and the innate desire in humans to be improved. This improvement includes all sublime aspirations - to truth, good and beauty and most importantly - striving for more complete and perfect life.

Religion is a spiritual quality of man. The examples above show that;

The moral teachings of the sacred writings of various religions have a universal character. This is the eternal wisdom of these books.

Religion unites; it does not separate people when it is not used for political purposes. The Balkans' history is an illustration of this statement.

If people listen to their hearts and follow the messages of their sacred books, they will be able to live together regardless of their religious differences.

The examples show that religion teaches us: Tolerance, sympathy, humanity, solidarity.

The culture of living together, regardless of language, religion and color. Refrain anger, emotion, jealousy.

Help and protect the poor and the weaker than us.

The importance and power of universal and moral principles in the relationships of people.

The importance of education and the power that educated people possess to overcome racism and xenophobia.

Not to abuse the trust of people. To love freedom, but not be freedom-loving people. To live in peace and mutual understanding.

TOYEV. Ankara/TURKEY Monseigneur François YAKAN

The spiritual leader of Turkey's Chaldean-Assyrian Community and Deputy Patriarch (Istanbul)

As it was clearly seen over the course of history, mankind could not stay away from religion and belief starting from the beginning. So people exist to experience justice and freedom.

Human beings have always questioned themselves starting with their existence, seeking their own country and future. Am I free? Am I a prisoner?

According to the laws of the nature people are free; yet, it is the wars that take people prisoner. It is the people who give way to evil whereas it is the Creator that shows mercy to people. In other words, injustice (sin) brings people to the status of prisoners (Gospel of John 8.34).

In the first centuries of Christianity, class related ethnic identity was not mentioned often. In the Bible and St. Paul, there is no racial discrimination. Human beings are treated as a whole, regardless of their being free or captive (Galatians: 3.1-29).

The contemporary world is characterized with alienation from the innate spiritual values which constitute people's collective lives, and, with lack of increased intolerance.

Abrahamic religions' failure to adapt to the modern world's rapid progress is taking toll on common values and collective lives. These universal values primarily include equality, justice and freedom in the lives of man, whom God created in His image.

If mankind fails to appreciate and implement these three concepts, the resulting void paves the way for racism and violence and the world peace is threatened. Yet all prophets promote and declare equality of human beings. Divine religions are essentially and originally the one and the same. All of three Abrahamic religions are essentially the same. Indeed, practitioners of these three religions believe in one God. Ten Commandments are universal moral principles and they are the same in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Therefore, human beings should experience faith with focus on integrity and sanctity. Human beings should be respected for their human quality.

We are the inheritors of Prophet Abraham's legacy, so gathering around his eternal dinner table that was open to everyone should serve as a source of inspiration for the best coexistence.

In Christianity, Jesus Christ established solidarity based on love without discrimination and this fraternity is visible everywhere in the Bible. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (Titus: 2.11-12).

In conclusion, the best ordinance for fighting racism, xenophobia and violence is to create an education system based on common values of divine religions as soon as possible.

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The Effects of Common Values on European Peace

Racism and xenophobia



VERSES AND COMMON VALUES

TORAH

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TOYEV



2016

I. VERSES AND COMMON VALUES

1.1. Verses that are directly related to racism and xenophobia.

1.2. Verses that are related to factors leading to racism and xenophobia.

1.2.1. Sense of superiority and boasting with race.

1.2.2. The lack of a culture of sharing and solidarity; selfishness.

1.2.3. Lack of empathy.

1.2.4. Unemployment and economic hardships.

1.2.5. Lack of a sense of tolerance and humility.

1.2.6. Lack of getting acquainted with others and a culture of living together and solidarity.

1.2.7. Lack of the concepts of equality and brotherhood of mankind.

1.2.8. Not being able to use the differences such as language, religion and color in a positive way.

1.2.9. Failing to suppress the emotions of envy and jealousy.

1.2.10 Injustice and sense of justice

1.3. Verses that emphasize common denominators

1.3.1. Believing in the God

1.3.2. Believing in the Hereafter

1.3.3. Believing in Prophets

1.4. Verses that denote the preventive power of moral principles against evil actions

1.4.1. The role of moral principles in human relations

1.4.2. Putting human and human dignity at the center

1.4.3. Man and his responsibilities in society

2. EVALUATION

3. REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

Value means abstract measure for the importance of something, the compensation for something, worth, and high and beneficial quality. (Turkish Language Society, 2005)

Value is something is considered good, nice, and right in a society's or an individual's view or something that is advocated. (Grand Larousse, 1986)

Value is the fundamental criterion which we use to judge things and see what is right or wrong. The rightness and validity of a value come from the fact that it relies on knowledge and evidence and it has internal consistency and it aims for improvement and it is a source of a beneficial action. Thanks to this extensive background, values acquire universality. (Şaban Ali DÜZGÜN, Hz. Peygamber ve İnsan Yetiştirme Düzeni (Prophet and System for Educating People), DİB Yayınları, Ankara 2015, p. 13.)

Before assessing the perspective on other societies of Judaism, known as a monotheistic religion sent by God to humanity, we will first try to understand its perspective on its own society.

As is the case with any belief system, being a practitioner or member of a religion takes the form not only of adapting to the society's behaviors, but also of staying away from the society and not abiding by the rules. That is, an individual with this faith may observe general rules or may choose not to abide by them. However, such an individual cannot be excluded from the society for this reason.

As stated in Exodus, a person who intends to convert from other faiths to Judaism is supposed to comply with the "circumcision" requirement. Circumcision is a symbol of the agreement between God and Prophet Abraham and it is the most important requirement for conversion. A person who fulfills this requirement becomes part of the society and, like any ordinary individual, becomes entitled to eat the flesh of the Passover sacrifice. It should be added that the worship of sacrifice used to be performed at the Temple in Jerusalem and it was terminated with the destruction of the Temple.

In connection with the people with different beliefs who choose to stay with the Jewish community without converting to Judaism, Exodus 22/20 reads: "Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt." A similar sentence is found in Leviticus 19/33: "When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them." Another injunction on the same matter can be found in Numbers 9/14: "You must have the same regulations for both the foreigner and the native-born." In the same context, Deuteronomy 10/19 reads: "And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt."

Clearly, discrimination is prohibited not only as regards the presentation of the worship of sacrifice which was compulsory for the Passover, but also against the "foreigners" who live in the same land. Moreover, sensitivity in this regard is sought by emphasizing what Hebrews went through in Egypt.

The laws sent down in the Sinai peninsula were applied by the Israelites who entered and settled in the Promised Land under the leadership by Joshua upon God's order.

The word "ger" in the Torah are used as a "refugee or asylum-seeker" in the Bible. The phrase "ger tsedek" is used to denote the people who adopted the Jewish faith. To this end, requirements of circumcision, acceptance of the injunctions and mikveh should be fulfilled.

I. VERSES AND COMMON VALUES

1.1. 1.1. Verses that are directly related to Racism and Xenophobia.

Racism and xenophobia are as old as humanity. Racism is in essence “denigrating those who are not like us.” It is treating people as the other and humiliating them. This is prohibited in many verses of the Torah. Some of these verses are given below:

Old Testament Exodus 12/48.

“A foreigner residing among you who wants to celebrate the Lord’s Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat it.”

Old Testament Exodus 12/49

“The same law applies both to the native-born and to the foreigner residing among you.”

Values; rules.

1. Abiding by rules.
2. Not making discrimination between foreigners or native-born people in applying the

Comments:

As is the case with other religions, there may be people who seek to convert to Judaism. According to Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh De’ah, 268/2), describing the rules for conversion to the Jewish faith, the following question is asked to the prospective convert: “What is your reason for converting to this faith? What do you intend to achieve by converting to Judaism, which goes through suffering and hard times all around the world?”

In the rules concerning the Passover, a feast for the exit from Egypt, the Torah brings the following requirement for those who want to convert in Exodus 12/48): “A foreigner residing among you who wants to celebrate the Lord’s Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat it.”

As stated in Exodus, a person who intends to convert from other faiths to Judaism is supposed to comply with the “circumcision” requirement. Circumcision is a symbol of the agreement between God and Prophet Abraham and it is the most important requirement for

conversion. A person who fulfills this requirement becomes part of the society and, like any ordinary individual, becomes entitled to eat the flesh of the Passover sacrifice. It should be added that the worship of sacrifice used to be performed at the Temple in Jerusalem and it was terminated with the destruction of the Temple.

Old Testament Exodus 22/20

“Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt.”

Values;

1. Not doing any injustice to foreigners.
2. Not making pressures or impositions on foreigners.
3. Acting with empathy toward foreigners.

Comments:

This phrase is used in connection with the people with different beliefs who choose to stay with the Jewish community without converting to Judaism.

A similar sentence is found in Leviticus 19/33, 34.

Old Testament Leviticus 19/33, 34:

33. “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them.

34. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself.”

Old Testament Numbers 9/14

14. A foreigner residing among you is also to celebrate the Lord’s Passover in accordance with its rules and regulations. You must have the same regulations for both the foreigner and the native-born.”

Old Testament Deuteronomy 10/17-19

17. “For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes.

18. He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.

19. And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.”

Values;

1. Living together.
2. Not treating foreigners badly.
3. Loving foreigners as much as we do ourselves.
4. Empathizing with other people.
5. Applying rules equally to everyone.
6. Not taking bribes.
7. Being fair and not favoring anyone.

1.2. Verses that are related to factors leading to racism and xenophobia.

Reasons leading to racism and xenophobia;

1.2.1. Sense of superiority and boasting with race. (Boasting with racial origin and having a sense of superiority)

As noted in the initial verses of the Torah, all people are descendants of Adam and Eve. Adam referred to his wife, Eve, as “em kol hay,” meaning the “mother of all human beings.” Ten generations later, the entire humanity was wiped away in the Flood, and the humanity has descended from Noah and his family. Job 31/13-15 reads as follows:

“If I have denied justice to any of my servants, whether male or female, when they had a grievance against me, what will I do when God confronts me? What will I answer when called to account? Did not he who made me in the womb make them?”

Old Testament Leviticus 19/33, 34

33. “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them.

34. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.”

Values;

1. Not treating foreigners badly.
2. Not regarding ourselves superior to others and loving foreigners as much as we do ourselves.

Comments:

As can be seen here, it is of crucial importance to show mercy to all of God’s creatures and act in good faith. This applies to all those who are from other belief systems.

The Torah gives stories about first generations only shortly. It talks about the leader of the generation in question and does not discuss other at length. After the period of Abraham, the information became more detailed. It talks not only about Hebrews, but also other societies. In the book of Genesis, it is written that Abraham’s first son Ismail and Isaac’s son Esau’s have twelve sons each. There is also detailed information about who they were and where Esau’s bloodline lived. Thus, the Torah provides information about the societies that lived at that time.

The Torah has negative remarks about certain people while giving positive ones about others. For instance, in the encounter between Abraham and Egypt’s Pharaoh, the Pharaoh is portrayed as a negative personality. Yet, the Torah tells this about Avimelech of Gerar: “Yes, I know you did this with a clear conscience, and so I have kept you from sinning against me.” The Torah makes unfavorable mention of Amalekites because they betrayed the Israelites while they were exiting Egypt. On the other hand, it praises Moses’s father-in-law Jethro and gives his name one of its weekly sections.

1.2.2. The lack of a culture of sharing and solidarity; selfishness.

One of the characteristics of racist people is that they have weak emotions for sharing. Sharing and mutual assistance are advised and expounded with examples in the Torah.

Old Testament Leviticus 19/10

10. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner.”

Old Testament Leviticus 25/35

35. “If any of your fellow Israelites become poor and are unable to support themselves among you, help them as you would a foreigner and stranger, so they can continue to live among you.”

Values;

1. Being considerate about foreigners in harvest.
2. Giving the poor and foreigners their due share in harvest.
3. Helping the people who become poor.

1.2.3. Lack of empathy. (What if I’d been born black or yellow!)

One of the reasons for the emergence of a racist mind is the lack of empathy. The first steps for forgiveness consist of showing understanding and getting to know each other with our brains and hearts.

Emphatic attitude makes diversity no longer a threat; it paves the way for a more peaceful, healthy environment of communication.

The Torah urges people to empathize and act accordingly.

Old Testament Leviticus 19/33, 34

3.3. “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them.

3.4. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.”

Old Testament Leviticus 19/16-18

16. Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor’s life. I am the Lord.

17. “Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt.

18. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.

Values;

1. Not treating foreigners badly.
2. Putting ourselves in the shoes of foreigners.
3. Empathizing with other people.
4. Not upsetting neighbors. Cautioning the neighbors when needed.

Comments:

Based on the verse, “Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt,” it can be said that Hebrews constituted a community of people without identity or personality or rights. The doctrine that they are supposed to know well how this feels is prevalent among the wise. The Talmud teaches that Jewish believers are supposed to promote human rights and their application in the land where they live.

1.2.4. Unemployment and economic hardships.

As a result of technological developments, people from different nationalities have started to work in the same workplace. Problems are very likely to arise among them. For instance, a worker who is forced to share his job will show negative attitude toward foreigners when there is a difference in the wages or if the workplace proceeds with layoffs. As these problems increase, people may start to exhibit racist behaviors. Thus, foreign workers may be perceived as enemies who reduce employment opportunities.

Here, people start to be concerned about being unemployed and facing financial hardships. Obviously, employment and economic hardships necessarily reduce quality of living for people, thereby getting them into financial and psychological problems.

Unemployment and economic difficulties are transience, but values are eternal.

Old Testament Leviticus 19/13-15

13. “Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.

14. Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God. I am the Lord.

15. “Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

Values;

1. Not coveting neighbors' property.
2. Treating the disabled people well.
3. Paying the wages of workers without delay.
4. Not discriminating between people based on wealth.

1.2.5. Lack of a sense of tolerance and humility.

It is inevitable that there are people with different beliefs and religions in a society. This is a natural aspect of social life and we can do nothing about them. Indeed, we cannot decide where to be born. We necessarily become individuals within the societies where we are born. In this context, tolerance and humility constitute essential sources of social coexistence. Without tolerance and humility, it is inevitable for people to indulge in arrogance, self-conceit, hubris and other negative attitudes and racist approaches, xenophobia and inclination to violence will be inescapable. For this reason, the value of tolerance and humility will be cherished when they are applied to the whole of our lives. Being tolerant in certain areas of life while letting intolerance dominate other areas is unacceptable.

Old Testament Ezekiel 21/26

“This is what the Sovereign Lord says: ‘Take off the turban, remove the crown. It will not be as it was: The lowly will be exalted and the exalted will be brought low.’”

Old Testament Zephaniah 2/3

“Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord’s anger.”

Old Testament Psalms 149/4, 18/27, 25/9

“For the Lord takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with victory. (149: 4)

“You save the humble but bring low those whose eyes are haughty.” (18: 27) “He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.” (25: 9)

Old Testament Proverbs 3/34

“He mocks proud mockers but shows favor to the humble and oppressed.” (3: 34)

Values;

1. Earning the Lord’s favor by acting with humility.
2. Seeking righteousness and humility.
3. Not being arrogant and not being a mocker.

1.2.6. Lack of getting acquainted with others and a culture of living together and solidarity.

People can hardly meet their needs alone. Therefore, by their nature, people tend to create communities and help each other.

Old Testament Leviticus 19/13, 15-17, 18, 33, 34

13. “Do not defraud or rob your neighbor. Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.

15. Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

16. Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor's life.

17. Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt.

18. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself.

33. When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them.

34. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself."

Old Testament Numbers 9/14: **born."**

"You must have the same regulations for both the foreigner and the native-

Old Testament Deuteronomy 10/19:

"And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt."

Old Testament Exodus 20/12-17

"The Ten Commandments", formulated in the Bible, "Exodus" Ch. 20:

Verse 12 Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

Verse 13 Thou shalt not kill.

Verse 14 Thou shalt not commit adultery. **Verse 15** Thou shalt not steal.

Verse 16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Verse 17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.

A wonderful summary and systematic exposition of the basic moral values of people; Suggest sinless life and good relations between people;

Contain moral and behavior which no legislation in the world can resist against; The norms, concerning the relationships between people are accepted by all

legislations in the world;

The first written laws that human society has known.

Values;

1. Not doing injustice to neighbors and not coveting neighbors' family or property.

2. Not betraying neighbors and refraining from perjury.

3. Not doing injustice in trials.

4. Warning neighbors about their errors.

5. Being nice to foreigners.

6. Loving neighbors as yourself.

7. Abiding by rules of coexistence.

8. Not killing anyone.

9. Abstaining from evil and not committing adultery.

Comments:

Clearly, discrimination is prohibited not only as regards the presentation of the worship of

sacrifice which was compulsory for the Passover, but also against the “foreigners” who live in the same land. Moreover, sensitivity in this regard is sought by emphasizing what Hebrews went through in Egypt.

Old Testament Exodus 4/18

“Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, ‘Let me return to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive.’

Jethro said, ‘Go, and I wish you well.’”

Values:

1. Not being an obstacle to peace.
2. Wishing peace and well-being.

1.2.7. Lack of the concepts of equality and brotherhood of mankind. (Refraining from being side by side with the poor, laborers, etc.)

Old Testament Numbers 9/14:

“A foreigner residing among you is also to celebrate the Lord’s Passover in accordance with its rules and regulations. You must have the same regulations for both the foreigner and the native-born.”

Values;

1. Applying rules equally to everyone and upholding equality.
2. Not discriminating between foreigners and native-born people in adjudications.

The Torah also disproves double standards among different communities. In this context, Leviticus 24/22 reads: “You are to have the same law for the foreigner and the native-born. I am the Lord your God.”

1.2.8. Not being able to use the differences such as language, religion and color in a positive way.

The sheer multiplicity of languages and colors, the assortment of characters and temperaments and the diversity of abilities and capabilities do not call for contention or competition. Rather, they urge us to help each other in fulfilling our obligations and satisfying our needs.

The Torah also disproves double standards among different communities. The relevant injunction can be found in Leviticus 24/22:

Old Testament Leviticus 24/22:

“You are to have the same law for the foreigner and the native-born. I am the Lord your God.”

Old Testament Psalms 75/4-7

“To the arrogant I say, ‘Boast no more,’ and to the wicked, ‘Do not lift up your horns. Do not lift your horns against heaven; do not speak so defiantly.’ No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt themselves. It is God who judges: He brings one down, he exalts another” (Psalms, 75/4-7).

Values;

1. Not being arrogant or boast based on the West or East.
2. Accepting God’s judgment both for the West or East or both or the desert or mountains.

1.2.9. Failing to suppress the emotions of envy and jealousy.

Jealousy is an innate property of human beings. As some feelings are given us by God in creation, jealousy is an innate emotion. We experience this emotion in our daily lives since our childhood. What matters is that we should be able to put jealousy to good use.

Old Testament Job 5/2

“Resentment kills a fool, and envy slays the simple.”

Old Testament Proverbs 11/5, 6

“The righteousness of the blameless makes their paths straight, but the wicked are brought down by their own wickedness. (11: 5)

The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the unfaithful are trapped by evil desires. (11: 6)

Values;

1. Not being jealous.

2. Being virtuous and controlling one’s ambitions.

1.2.10. Sense of justice and injustice.

Sense of justice and injustice may eventually lead to racism. Racism may come to being in environments where laws are not applied equally and there is injustice.

Old Testament Leviticus 24/22

“You are to have the same law for the foreigner and the native-born. I am the Lord your God.”

Old Testament Psalms, 85: 10-11

“10. Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other.

11. Mercy and truth meet together: justice and peace kiss each other.”

Old Testament, Jeremiah 39: 18:

“18. I will surely deliver you, and you shall not fall by the Word but get your life because you have put trust in me.”

Old Testament Isaiah 11/4“And the impact of justice shall be peace, and the effect of justice quietness and assurance forever.”

Old Testament Leviticus 19/35-37

“Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity.

36 Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt. 37 Keep all my decrees and all my laws and follow them. I am the Lord.”

Old Testament Leviticus 19/15

“Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.

Old Testament Ezekiel 45/9

“This is what the Sovereign Lord says: You have gone far enough, princes of Israel! Give up your violence and oppression and do what is just and right.”

Old Testament Amos 5/15-24 (5: 24)

“Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts.” (5/15) But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!

Old Testament Zechariah 8/16, 17

“These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against each other, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this,” declares the Lord.”

Old Testament Exodus 23/1-3, 6-8

“Do not spread false reports. Do not help a guilty person by being a malicious witness. (23/1)

Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, (23/2) and do not show favoritism to a poor person in a lawsuit. (23/3)

Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits. (23/6)

Have nothing to do with a false charge and do not put an innocent or honest person to death, for I will not acquit the guilty. (23/7)

Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twists the words of the innocent.” (23/8)

Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt.”

Values;

1. Applying same laws without discrimination.
2. Weighing and measuring will balance and equity.
3. Upholding righteousness.
4. Not discriminating the poor.
5. Not favoring powerful people.
6. Being fair in trials.

1.3. Verses that emphasize common denominators

An examination of practitioners of three major religions in Europe reveals that they believe in God, in the Hereafter and the Prophets. This is a fact noted in many places in the Qur'an.

1. Believing in the God
2. Believing in the Hereafter
3. Believing in the prophets

1.4. Verses that denote the preventive power of moral principles against evil actions

It is a fact that certain moral characteristics people have innately as well as those moral principles acquired through the religious and social structure drive away bad behaviors. These can be examined in three groups:

1. The role of moral principles in human relations
2. Putting human and human dignity at the center
3. Man and his responsibilities in society

1.4.1. The role of moral principles in human relations

Various rules dominate the social life as well as interpersonal relations. Adherence to these rules, guided by the religious and social context, is indispensable for social life. Social order can be guaranteed if people abide by them; otherwise, social order is disrupted.

Old Testament Psalms 84/10, 11

“I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.”

Values;

1. Abstaining from evil.
2. Leading an honest life.

1.4.2. Putting human and human dignity at the center

People are no different from each other by creation. Old Testament Psalms 119/130, 144, 169 (130)

“The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

Your statutes are always righteous; give me understanding that I may live. (144) May my cry come before you, Lord; give me understanding according to your word. (169)

Old Testament Proverbs 3/7, 4/11, 5/1, 2, 9/8, 9, 9/12, 13

“Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. (3: 7)

I instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths. (4: 11)

My son, pay attention to my wisdom, turn your ear to my words of insight, that you may maintain discretion and your lips may preserve knowledge. (5: 1-2)

... Rebuke the wise and they will love you. Instruct the wise and they will be wiser still; teach the righteous and they will add to their learning. (9: 8-9)

If you are wise, your wisdom will reward you; if you are a mocker, you alone will suffer. (9: 12)

Folly is an unruly woman; she is simple and knows nothing. (9: 13)

The wise store up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool invites ruin. (10: 14)

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and the one who is wise saves lives. (11:30)20)

Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm. (13: The mocker seeks wisdom and finds none, but knowledge comes easily to the discerning. (14: 6)

Stay away from a fool, for you will not find knowledge on their lips. (14: 7)

Values;

1. Receive education from the right people and giving education to the right people.
2. Attaching importance to wisdom and the wise.
3. Picking up right friends in social life.
4. Using the reason wisely.

1.4.3. Man and his responsibilities in society

Old Testament Chapter 1 Proverb 22

“22. How long, you simple ones, will you love simplicity? For scorers delight in their scorning, And fools hate knowledge?”

Values:

Do not waste your life in ignorance.

Carelessness destroys man.

Only through learning will you acquire knowledge and wisdom.

Knowledge teaches us to comprehend the lessons of life and discern what is good and what is evil. A clever man understands the proverbs and advice of wise men and their messages as well.

It is the clever man only who can make wise and correct decisions.

Old Testament Chapter 3 Proverb 27

“27. Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in the power of your hand to do so.”

Values:

1. Do good, be merciful.
2. Do not send away a person in need.
3. Help people whenever you can do it.

Old Testament Isaiah, 32-17:

“17. And the impact of justice shall be peace, and the effect of justice quietness and assurance forever.”

Values;

1. Being righteous in peace and security and not refraining from the truth.

2. EVALUATION

As is the case with other religions, there may be people who seek to convert to Judaism. According to Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh De'ah, 268/2), describing the rules for conversion to the Jewish faith, the following question is asked to the prospective convert: “What is your reason for converting to this faith? What do you intend to achieve by converting to Judaism, which goes through suffering and hard times all around the world?”

In the rules concerning the Passover, a feast for the exit from Egypt, the Torah brings the following requirement for those who want to convert in Exodus 12/48): “A foreigner residing among you who wants to celebrate the Lord’s Passover must have all the males in his household circumcised; then he may take part like one born in the land. No uncircumcised male may eat it.”

As stated in Exodus, a person who intends to convert from other faiths to Judaism is supposed to comply with the “circumcision” requirement. Circumcision is a symbol of the agreement between God and Prophet Abraham and it is the most important requirement for conversion. A person who fulfills this requirement becomes part of the society and, like any ordinary individual, becomes entitled to eat the flesh of the Passover sacrifice. It should be added that the worship of sacrifice used to be performed at the Temple in Jerusalem and it was terminated with the destruction of the Temple.

As noted in the initial verses of the Torah, all people are descendants of Adam and Eve. Adam referred to his wife, Eve, as “em kol hay,” meaning the “mother of all human beings.” Ten generations later, the entire humanity was wiped away in the Flood, and the humanity has descended from Noah and his family. Job 31/13-15 reads: “If I have denied justice to any of my servants, whether male or female, when they had a grievance against me, what will I do when God confronts me? What will I answer when called to account? Did not he who made me in the womb make them?”

As can be seen here, it is of crucial importance to show mercy to all of God’s creatures and act in good faith. This applies to all those who are from other belief systems.

The one who oppresses foreigners violates God’s three prohibitions. This is expounded in Exodus 22/20, “Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner, for you were foreigners in Egypt,” in Leviticus 25/17, “Do not take advantage of each other, but fear your God,” in Exodus 23/9 “Do not oppress a foreigner,” and Bava Metzia 59/2.

Based on the verse, “Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt,” it can be said that Hebrews constituted a community of people without identity or personality or rights. The doctrine that they are supposed to know well how this feels is prevalent among the wise. The Talmud teaches that Jewish believers are supposed to promote human rights and their application in the land where they live.

Sometimes, the Torah contains very harsh wording in connection with the pagan people living in the Promised Land. It is obvious that certain harsh measures are taken to ensure that pagan people do not influence monotheistic Israelites. These measures do not apply to foreigners or pagan people living outside the Promised Land.

“Shema,” the central principle of Judaism, urges people to love God with all their heart and soul. This eternal love is reflected in the word “Shalom,” meaning “peace,” which dominates the daily life of a Jewish believer, and in the daily practice of greeting each other as well as in the eventual blessing of prayer “Amidah,” which is considered as the central prayer of the Jewish liturgy.

Rabbi Kook points out the fact that the Israel society is chosen does not mean that Israelites can stay away from other nations or ignore them. Rather, their duty is to inculcate love in other societies and act with love. In “Orot Israel,” it is written that if all communities come together and act with love and respect, this will bring peace, blessing and well-being to the world and the people with the Jewish faith have important responsibilities in this regard. Similar sources indicate that sanctity can be attained only through natural deeds of moral values.

Every human being is created to worship God. In the Talmud’s chapter “Sanhedrin,” it is written that if a foreigner learns the laws and teachings of the Torah, this will push his level up. In advising that the people who abide by these rules will live together, the Torah does not specify the faith of these people, and as such, it accentuates the very importance of being human.

For the people of the Jewish faith, loving their coreligionists entails loving people of other faiths for the sake of their being human. Wise people teach us that if any part of human body is home to hatred, this indicates that that person hasn’t become purified and his soul hasn’t matured sufficiently. It is very hard for such a person to commune with the divine love. The most important synthesis of love is to embrace all mankind at once. A fair person does not let hatred or hostility take hold of him. A person who feels the purity of the light inside is home to the divine light.

The best way is to be able to see the beauty outside Judaism. Otherwise, the opposite of this may take people to darkness.

(Source: Yaron ben Naeh compilations, Translation: Rabbi İzak Peres) Yusuf ALTINTAŞ

(Secretary General of Chief Rabbi of Turkey) Turkish Jewish Community

The concept of Judaism includes (a) a religion, traditions, philosophy and culture; and (b) the totality of the Jewish people.

The Jewish religion is the oldest monotheistic, Abrahamic religion. It has its roots as a structured religion in the Middle East during the Bronze Age. Around 13.5-15 million people worldwide are committed to it. Most of them live in the USA and Israel, not a few in Europe. During the German National Socialist terror regime from 1933 to 1945, 6 million Jews were murdered.

As with the religions of Christianity and Islam, Judaism assumes that there is only one God. Of central importance is also the belief in a covenant or a kind of contract that is concluded between God and man/woman. God is kind, sometimes angry, but he/she has the good for the people in mind. For this, the faithful keep the laws of God and try to value God and in all their (everyday) activities and to give their life, the life as a whole, a special value.

Judaism is a written religion. The "doctrine" is handed down in various books:

(A) the **Torah**, the Five Books of Moses, as can be read in the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament (in Christian terms),

B) the **Talmud**, which contains discussions and comments of the Torah. The Talmud, on the other hand, consists of the **Mishna**, the first major tract of the oral Torah, and the **Gemara**, the explanations, commentaries and supplements to the Mishna,

C) the **Halachah** which includes the Jewish law. It builds on the Mishna and Gemara. Rabbinical laws have also come into the Halachah, e.g. judgments which have been made and which have become exemplary for the understanding of Jewish law and law.

In contrast to many other religions, the Jewish does not know fixed dogmas and a catechism. Important is the good relationship with God that manifests itself in a 'good life'. That is to say, in the orientation to justice, truth, and charity, and thus in action, less in 'true' belief in certain, once established, religious ideas. This opens up the space for different interpretations of beliefs and thus also a philosophical reflection on religious questions. That is, in Judaism, the possibility of practising a pluralised discussion culture. As with all other religions, there are different tendencies (conservative, orthodox, and reformist, humanist Judaism, Hasidism, etc.)

In Judaism, history also plays an important role. Especially in the Torah, the relationship to God is embedded in a long history of experiences with God. In contrast to Christianity, the idea of the mission is not an issue in the Jewish religion.

The religious ceremonies take place in the synagogue. They are directed by a rabbi (« teacher », can be a man or a woman) and a cantor (the singer). The most important day of the week is the Sabbath. It starts on Friday evening and ends with the sunset on Saturday. The Sabbath is devoted to peace, reflection on God and being together in the family and / or with friends.

There are also various Jewish festivals. The most important are the Pesach (Passover), Rosh Hashana (New Year's Feast), Yom Kippur (Reconciliation Festival) and Hanukkah (Festival of Lights).

Sophia BICKHARDT - Marie e.V.

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