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Evaluation of the Tolerance (Behavioral and Normative Pluralism) From the Perspective of Holy Qur'an and Hadith

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ABSTRACT

Tolerance as a moral and behavioral virtue position is in Islamic Thoughts. The Holy Qur'an pays special attention to tolerance in dealing with others, such as religious and racial minorities, and the topic is mentioned as one of the missions of the holy prophets. The present study was a review of original Islamic literature, especially the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah, to explain the scope and limitations of tolerance in Islam. In explicit verses of the Qur'an and many narrations from the Imams, the peaceful life of Muslims with followers of other religions is emphasized. However, some conditions are mentioned for it.

Keywords:

Tolerance,
Pluralism,
Qur'an,
Sunnah.

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Introduction

Differences in thought, behavior, and lifestyle are realities in human life based on the nature of human creation. Acceptability of the fact requires the development of human society and increasing its capacity to interact with different viewpoints. The issue is defined as tolerance and is one of the significant human virtues that are also highlighted in Islam (Fādzil, 2011: 354-360; Nafisi, 2018: 1-7) as a prerequisite for peaceful coexistence (Usmān, 2018: 1-7). Tolerance means not suppressing ideological and non-ideological oppositions. Hence, acceptance of a difference is obvious evidence for the existence of "tolerance" in society. Tolerance in Islamic literature is known as "Tasamuh." indicates important essential literature is known as "Tasamuh" literature is as "Tasamuh." Investigation of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah indicates that tolerance is an essential issue in Islam. Its application has led to the spread of Islam throughout the world. In recent decades, despite tremendous advances in science and technology, wars and violence have remained a central problem for humanity. Unfortunately, some of the wars and violence have a religious basis. The emergence of Islamic extremist groups in recent years has raised the question, is Islam tolerating the opposite view? Here, the principles of Islamic culture of tolerance and its status and importance in the Holy Qur'ān and Sunnah (customs of the Holy Prophet Muhammad and Shia Imams) were discussed. Furthermore, the theoretical foundations of tolerance were explained from the perspective of the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīths in the ideological, moral, behavioral, cultural, and social fields. Then, the permissible and impermissible tolerance cases from the perspective were evaluated.

Tasamuh (Tolerance)

the word tolerance (the closest lexical equivalent of "Tasamuh") means "to bear", as well as respect and acceptance. In Arabic, the word "Tasamuh" means easiness and softness. Thus, the concept of tolerance is the intentional and conscious decision of the individual to refrain from coercive intervention, despite having the power to intervene, in behavior that the individual does not approve of (Usmān, 2018: 1-7). Also, the concept of "Tasamuh" is that a person, consciously and voluntarily, tolerates the opinions and behavior of oppositions and does not show violence against their behavior (Nafisi, 2018: 1-7). Tolerance is behavior that does not merely tolerate dissenting opinions but allows the owners of those opinions to comment (Fayyūmī, 1994).

Generalization and allocation of Tasamuh and its limits

A correct understanding of Islam is important fundamental to understanding the issue of religious Tasamuh in this religion. Since Tasamuh has a general meaning, in some exceptional cases, Islam considers it permissible, and in other cases, it obliges Muslims to be firm and avoid negligence (Khatībī Kūshkak, 2007; Fādzil, 2011: 354-360).

Hence, in some cases, Islam invites Muslims to be tolerant and prevents them from being harsh on human beings. On the other hand, in some cases, such as paying attention to human rights, avoiding the violation of their rights and defending themselves against aggressors, it uses seriousness and hardship. (Rijāl, 2016: 213-230)

1. Allowable cases of Tasamuh in Islam

The Tasamuh is recommended in at least five instances:

1.1. Tasamuh in dealing with people and avoiding harshness in social relation

It is stated in the Holy Qur'ān (Qur'ān 3:159) that: "It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee ..." (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/3/159/>).

1.2. Tasamuh in legislating religious laws

Islam is a religion whose principle is non-obligation and opposes severe hardship for the followers. Jurisprudential rules such as "La Haraj", "La Zharar", "Jahl" and "Nesian" indicate the same meaning (Nīkzād, 2006: 93-122). It is stated in the Holy Qur'ān that: "Allah intends every facility for you; He does not want to put to difficulties". (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/185/>). As well as: "We have not sent down the Qur'ān to thee to be (an occasion) for thy distress" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/20/2/>).

In a Ḥadīth of the Prophet (PBUH) it is stated: God did not send me to monasticism, but sent me with the Abrahamic law with tolerance. (Kulaynī, 1984)

1.3. Tasamuh in inviting people to religion

In many verses, the use of coercion in making people religious is denied; it is stated in the Holy Qur'ān that: "If their spurning is hard on thee, yet if thou wert able to seek a tunnel in the ground or a ladder to the skies and bring them a Sign, - (what good?). If it were Allah's Will, He could gather them together unto true guidance: so be not thou amongst those swayed by ignorance (and impatience)!" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/6/35/>).

As well as: Say: "O ye men! Now Truth hath reached you from your Lord! Those who receive Guidance, do so for the good of their souls; those who stray, do so to their loss: and I am not (set) over you to arrange your affairs" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/10/108/>). Also, say: "Ye shall not be questioned as to our sins, nor shall we be questioned as to what ye do." (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/34/25/>).

The Prophet (PBUH) said: "Take it easy on people and do not be strict, be promising and do not create hatred in them" (Hindī, 1981). It is stated in the Qur'ān that: "It be maybe thou will kill thy self with grief, that they do not become Believers" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/26/3/>).

Also, "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects Taghut (evil) and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/256/>).

1.4. Tasamuh in the peaceful coexistence of Muslims with followers of other religions

The Qur'ān seeks to establish peace between different religious communities and acknowledges religious and cultural differences. Islam emphasizes maintaining good relations between followers of different religions (Usmān, 2018: 1-7). It is stated in the Holy Qur'ān that: "It may be that Allah will establish friendship between you and those whom ye (now) hold as enemies. For Allah has power (over all things); and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/60/7/>). As well: "But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah: for He is the One that heareth and knoweth (all things)" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/8/61/>). Imam Ali (AS), the first Shia imam, also addresses Malik Ashtar in his letter: Be patient with people who are either your religious brother or people like you. (Mutahhari, 2009)

1.5. Tasamuh as a moral virtue

Many narrations emphasize tolerance, gentleness, forgiveness, that, in many cases, not only invite Muslims to be tolerant towards other Muslims but also invite them to be tolerant towards and propitiation. Imam Ali (AS) says the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) was a good-natured, soft-tempered man (Tabrisī, 1986). The above verses and Ḥadīths show that Islamic teachings often invite Muslims to be tolerant of other Muslims and followers of different religions.

2. Unallowable cases of Tasamuh in Islam

There are cases in Islam where tolerance has been condemned, and firmness and strictness have been recommended.

2.1. Decisiveness and seriousness in carrying out the divine mission

the prophets did not hesitate in conveying the divine message, nor were they afraid of the enemies enemies threats. (Nīkzād, 2006: 93-122)

2.2. Decisiveness in the fight against falsehood

as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān:

"We are clear of you and of whatever ye worship besides Allah: we have rejected you, and there has arisen, between us and you, enmity and hatred forever forever- unless ye believe in Allah and Him alone" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/60/4/>).

2.3. Seriousness in expressing religion and fighting against religious deviations

as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān: “(It is the practice of those) who preach the Messages of Allah, and fear Him, and fear none but Allah. And enough is Allah to call (men) to account” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/33/39/>) As well as: “I worship not that which ye worship, (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/109/2/>). The Prophet (PBUH) said: Keep your tongues away from slandering Ali (AS), saying that he is harsh in the way of God and is not a compromiser in the religion of God. (Majlisī, 2009)

2.4. The seriousness of the government in realizing the rights of the people and fighting oppression

is stated in the Holy Qur'ān: “So obey not to those who deny (the Truth)” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/68/8/>). They desire that thou shouldst be pliant: so, would they be pliant” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/68/9/>). As well: “We sent aforetime our messengers with Clear Signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance, that men may stand forth in justice” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/57/25/>).

2.5. The Decisiveness of the government in enforcing the divine limits

It is stated in the Holy Qur'ān that: “The woman and the man guilty of fornication, - flog each of them with a hundred stripes. Let not compassion move you in their case, in a matter prescribed by Allah” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/24/2/>).

2.6. Determination against the enemies of Islam and the enemies of Muslims who incite sedition

It is stated in the Holy Qur'ān that: “O Prophet! Strive hard against the Unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be harsh with them. Their abode is Hell- an evil refuge (indeed)” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/66/9/>). As well as: “Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/190/>). As well as: “O Prophet! strive hard against the Unbelievers and the Hypocrites, and be firm against them” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/9/73/>).

2.7. Determination in denying and rejecting the guardianship of infidels over Muslims

It is stated in the Holy Qur'ān that: “And never will Allah grant to the unbelievers a way (to triumph) over the believers” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/4/141/>). As well as: “Those who take for friends unbelievers rather than believers: is it honor they seek among them? Nay,- All honor is with Allah” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/4/139/>). As well as: “O ye who believe! If ye listen to a faction among the People of the Book, they would (indeed) render you apostates after ye have believed!” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/3/100/>).

3. Typology of Tasamuh

The concept of Tasamuh can be divided into different dimensions:

3.1. In terms of the type of action in Tasamuh

Negative tolerance and positive tolerance: Negative tolerance is not interfering in the beliefs and way of life, cultural interests, and worship of the people. Positive tolerance is the protection of people's rights and freedoms to achieve life goals and enjoy equal opportunities in society (Mahmūdī, 1997). Positive tolerance is the evolved meaning of tolerance in which the tolerant agent not only accepts the principle of differences but also considers it natural to strive for their growth and deems any thought, action, and method that can control and reduce these differences to be incorrect.

3.2. In terms of territory

In terms of territory, Tasamuh in morality and in politics are also divided. In terms of morality, on the one hand, is used as a moral quality, which means easy taking, chivalry, etc., and on the other hand, it refers to not preventing the moral beliefs and behaviors of individuals. Accordingly, anyone can have any moral beliefs and behavior, and others should not bother him (Fathalī, 1999). The Prophet (PBUH) said: My Lord has commanded me to be patient with people, just as He commanded me to

perform my duties (Kulaynī, 1984). It is also stated in a Ḥadīth that: Gabriel came to the Prophet of God (PBUH) and brought the following message from God: “O Muhammad! “Your Lord will greet you and say to you, 'Be patient with my servants (Hurr ‘Āmilī, 1993). Political tolerance goes back to government behavior, and it shows the government's tolerance of opposition groups and individuals, which includes freedom of expression, the existence of political parties, and the component of criticism (Fathalī, 1999). Imam Ali (AS) says: A just policy is based on three things: tolerance with foresight, realization of rights with justice, and forgiveness with moderation. (Tamimī Āmidī, 1990)

3.3. In terms of identity

Identity tolerance refers to tolerance for involuntary characteristics, such as gender, race, color, and culture of their owners and it is a kind of herald of the peaceful coexistence of human beings. As God says: “O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/49/13/>).

4. Scopes of Tasamuh

Tolerance is a relationship exercised from a position of power. The strongest factor of tolerance in terms of power is the government, which determines the scope and extent of tolerance. Tolerance can be divided into three domains: divine law, social law, and individual law.

4.1. Tasamuh in divine law

In Islamic thought, everything is based on the "right of God." On the other hand, God's relationship with man is based on divinity, mercy, and compassion. For this reason, he introduces the Prophet as a mercy for the world. “We sent thee not, but as a Mercy for all creatures” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/21/107/>). Also, in verse: “It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them. Wert thou severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about thee: so pass over (their faults), and ask for (Allah's) forgiveness for them, and consult them in affairs (of the moment)” (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/3/159/>). The source of the Prophet's gentle treatment of people is the mercy of God. In practice, the Prophet invited the stubborn and idolatrous people who persecuted the Messenger of God (PBUH) and the believers to Islam through love and forgiveness and favored them. (Tabarī, 1974)

4.2. Tasamuh in social laws

Tolerance, meaning the denial of institutional violence, is presented in the Islamic view as a moral-doctrinal principle that can be a way to resist injustice and oppression. Therefore, for this issue to be effective, it must penetrate the political and social structures of society (Bakhshāyī zādīh, 2011: 157-178). Tolerance has various manifestations in social law, including:

4.2.1. Equality

God says in the Holy Qur'ān: “O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes that may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)”.

(<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/49/13/>). Individuals, regardless of color, race, position, etc., are equal in creation; they have no superiority over each other except for piety. It is necessary to have an equal view of the human race to condemn any kind of racial privilege in individual and social relations.

As the Prophet (PBUH) said in the Hajj (pilgrimage) ,known as 'Hajjatul Wida' speech: "O people, all of you are the children of Adam, and he was also created from dust, the most valuable of you in the sight of God with the most pious of you (Ma'rūf hasanī, 1996)". He also spoke about equality in enforcing the law in a part of his speech on enforcing the divine limits about a female thief: “I swear to God, if Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad, steals, I will cut off her hand”. (Ibn Ishāq, 1982)

4.2.2. Compassion and tasamuh

The principle of friendliness and tolerance also have an important effect on managing people's affairs and regulating their social relations So that this factor is considered one of the most effective principles in human management. As Imam Sadiq (AS), sixth shia imam, said to one of his companions: Do not put pressure on people. Do you not know that the rule and the way the Bani Umayyah administered the affairs of society was by force of the sword and oppression? But governance and how we manage our affairs is with softness, kindness, sobriety, good fellowship, chastity and diligence. (Ibn Bābiwayh, 2005)

5. Qur'ānic principles of Tasamuh in dealing with non-Muslims

In fact, the most important function of the theory of tolerance is in the behavior and confrontation with opponents and even enemies. Islamic Tasamuh in dealing with non-Muslims is based on two principles:

5.1. Freedom to accept religion

Islam does not invite people to religion by force but forbids coercion because faith is a matter of the heart and is not achieved by force. If imposition is effective in accepting religion, it will lead to hypocrisy. As God says: "If it had been thy Lord's Will, they would all have believed,- all who are on earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/10/99/>). As well as: "Truth stands out clear from Error" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/256/>). There is no mention of the imposition of religion in any verse of the Qur'ān; rather, the man asks God not to impose on him anything beyond his power and tolerance: As God says: "Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/286/>).

5.2. Peaceful coexistence

Tolerance of opposing opinions is one of the basic principles of Islamic tolerance, which is another symbol of peaceful coexistence with non-Muslims, especially followers of other religions, and the source of those instructions is in the form of Qur'ānic verses and the behavior of the Imams (AS), some of which we refer to:

5.2.1. Recognition of religions that rely on revelation

Advise to establish just relations and peaceful coexistence with them, except for those who deny the truth and are hostile to Muslims. As God says: "(I have come to you), to attest the Torah which was before me" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/3/50/>). As well: "And when there came to them a messenger from Allah, confirming what was with them, a party of the People of the Book threw away the Book of Allah behind their backs, as if (it had been something) they did not know!" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/101/>). As well as: "Will ye dispute with us about Allah, seeing that He is our Lord and your Lord; that we are responsible for our doings and ye for yours; and that we are sincere (in our faith) in Him?" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/139/>). Also: "O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than Allah. "If then they turn back, say ye: "Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will)" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/3/64/>).

5.2.2. Rational dialogue and exchange

One of the important tools for achieving peaceful coexistence is logical dialogue and exchange of views in the field of thoughts and ideas. As God says: "Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/16/125/>).

6. Pluralism

Another principle of Tasamuh in liberalism is the belief in pluralism. Pluralism is a term that manifests itself in various fields (Legenhausen, 2006), so we can have areas under the name of religious, political, cultural, behavioral, normative, etc. pluralism.

6.1. Behavioral pluralism

"Behavioral pluralism" means the peaceful life of followers of all religions together; this type of pluralism is also known as religious pluralism. Followers of the theory of "behavioral pluralism" believe: "All religions in the light of a series of commonalities can live together and tolerate each other and live peacefully together" (Banchoff, 2008; Legenhausen, 2006). Behavioral pluralism is therefore accepted by reason and religion because the Qur'ān invites people to live peacefully with the followers of other religions under the umbrella of monotheism. As God says in the Qur'ān: "O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than Allah. "If then they turn back, say ye: "Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will)" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/3/64/>).

Peaceful living is not only reserved for the followers of other religions, but also the Qur'ān prescribes it in a special way for the polytheists and says: "Allah forbids you not, concerning those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/60/8/>).

In other verses, the Holy Qur'ān calls for tolerance of infidels in another phrase and says: "But if the enemy inclines towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah: for He is the One that heareth and knoweth (all things)" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/8/61/>). As well as: "Therefore if they withdraw from you but fight you not, and (instead) send you (guarantees of) peace, then Allah Hath opened no way for you (to war against them)" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/4/90/>). Some "pluralists," such as John Hick, believe that religious exclusivism requires intolerance and a lack of peaceful coexistence with followers of other religions (Mansūr, 2007); contrary to this belief, the Qur'ān points to the absence of coercion in religion and says: "Let there be no compulsion in religion" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/2/256/>). As well as: "O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do" (<https://quran.inoor.ir/fa/ayah/5/8/>).

6.2. Normative pluralism

Normative pluralism, or pluralism in behavior, means that one must be peaceful in dealing with followers of different religions (Yūsifiyān, 2011). The fundamental question in this kind of pluralism is whether the followers of other religions are also respected. And on what basis should our treatment of them be based (Misbāh Yazdī, 1999)? Islam, while abrogating the past religions, in the position of interacting with other followers of religions, raises the issue of good character in relation to them. Respect for all human beings, even those who are not saved according to our religious beliefs, is approved by Islam (Rajabī, 2016: 53-74). The issue of the peaceful life of Muslims with followers of other religions does not belong to the People of the Book; rather, religious texts present it specifically about human beings, even pagans. Of course, in terms of the conditions stated in religion (Sobhani, 2000). For this reason, Islamic scholars consider the issue of normative and behavioral pluralism to be the order of Islam and consider it different from other types of pluralism.

7. Normative pluralism in the time of the Promised Imam Mahdi (AS)

One of the most controversial issues in the field of Mahdism is how Imam Mahdi (the twelfth leader of the Shia) treated the followers of other religions during the emergence. One of those issues is normative pluralism in the Mahdi tradition. According to the Mahdavi tradition, a deep look at the teachings of the Qur'ān and the Prophet, the relationship of Muslims with non-Muslims should be based on respect and love, human freedom and dignity, respect for the rights of religious minorities, friendship and tolerance, peaceful coexistence, rational discourse. The practical life and culture of the religious leaders go beyond that and depict the reality of the apocalypse and the age of advent in another way; Imam Mahdi is not only the Imam and guidance of the Muslims but also the savior of all nations. His justice is not only for Muslims and only for the righteous but also for those who are rebellious. He manifests God's great compassion and mercy (Barqī, 1992; Mashhadī, 1999). It seems that such an Imam and leadership, while having determination against oppression, deviation, hypocrisy, infidelity, and polytheism, will support religious minorities. As the ancestor of the Prophet

(PBUH) and the Shia Imams (AS) were inspired by the verses of the Qur'ān in front of the People of the Book and even the opponents and deniers of Islam, they were like this and they recommended their followers to be kind and fair to the followers of other religions. (Majlisī, 2009; Tamīmi Āmidī, 1990; Subhānī, 1991)

8. Conclusion

Tasamuh has a moral meaning from the Islamic point of view and is usually used to describe how a person act. Islamic tolerance is an educational, jurisprudential, and mystical subject inspired by the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the Prophet (PBUH) and the Imams (AS), which is used in the field of politics and society management. The Holy Qur'ān, considered the source of the first and most reliable Islamic authority, explicitly speaks of this kind of tolerance. In explicit verses of the Qur'ān and many narrations from the Imams, the peaceful life of Muslims with followers of other religions is emphasized, although some conditions are mentioned for it.

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