

The United Colors of Islam

المساواة العرقية في الإسلام

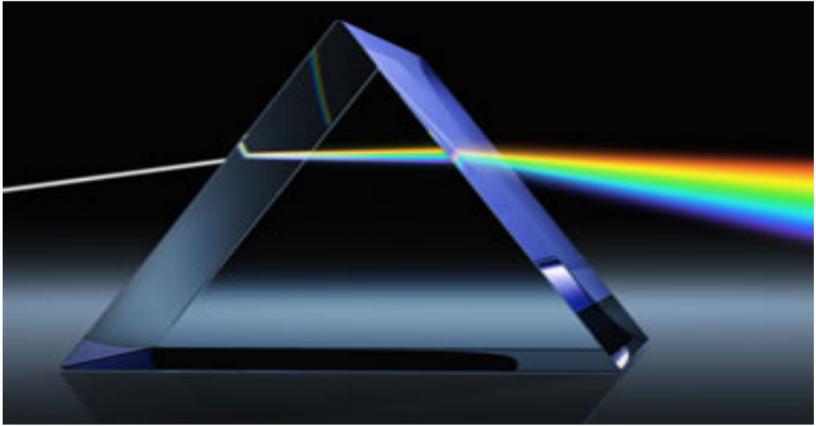
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“God said: ‘What prevented you (O Satan) that you did not prostrate when I commanded you?’ Iblees (the Satan) replied: ‘I am better than him (Adam). You created me from fire, and him You created from clay.’” (Quran 7:12)

So begins the history of racism. Satan thought himself superior to Adam on account of his origins. Since that day, Satan has misled many of Adam’s descendants into also believing themselves superior to others, causing them to persecute and exploit their fellow man. Quite often, religion has been used to justify racism. Judaism, for example, despite its Middle-Eastern origins, is readily passed off as a Western religion; but the entry of Jews into all levels of Western society actually betrays Judaism’s elitist reality. A pious reading of the bible verse:

“There is no God in all the world but in Israel.” (2 Kings 5:15)

...would be to suggest that in those days God, or God, was not worshipped except by Israelites. However, Judaism today remains centered around its boast of ‘chosen’ racial superiority.

“Say: ‘O Jews! If you pretend that you are the beloved slaves of God to the exclusion of the rest of humanity, then long for death if you are really truthful.’” (Quran 62:6)

Conversely, while most Christians are overwhelmingly non-Jew, Jesus, as the last of the Israelite Prophets, was sent to none but the Jews¹

“And (remember) when Jesus, son of Mary, said: ‘O Children of Israel! I am the Messenger of God sent unto you, confirming the Torah before me and bearing glad tidings of a Messenger after me whose name shall be Ahmad²...’” (Quran 61:6)

And likewise every Prophet was sent exclusively to his own people,³ every Prophet, that is, except Muhammad.

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘O People! I am the Messenger of God sent to you all...’” (Quran 7:158)

As Muhammad was God’s final Prophet and Messenger, his mission was a universal one, intended for not only his own nation, the Arabs, but all the peoples of the world. The Prophet said:

“Every other Prophet was sent to his nation exclusively, while I have been sent to all of humanity.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhari*)

“And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a bearer of glad tidings and a Warner to all mankind, but most of people know not.” (Quran 34:28)

1 The bible agrees. Jesus is reported to have said: ‘I have not been sent except to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.’ (Matthew 15:24). Hence, every one of his famous twelve disciples was an Israelite Jew. The one biblical passage where Jesus tells them to: ‘Go and preach unto all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.’ (Matthew 28:19), commonly quoted to prove the Gentile mission as well as the Trinity, is not found in any pre-16th century manuscript and thus considered ‘a pious fraud.’

2 One of the names of Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him.

3 And We sent to every nation a Messenger (saying): ‘Worship God (alone) and shun false deities.’ (Quran 16:36)

Bilal the Abyssinian

One of the first to accept Islam was an Abyssinian slave named Bilal. Traditionally, black Africans were a lowly people in the sight of Arabs who thought them to be of little use beyond entertainment and slavery. When Bilal embraced Islam, his pagan master had him brutally tortured in the scorching desert heat until Abu Bakr, the Prophet's closest friend, rescued him by buying his freedom.

The Prophet appointed Bilal to call the believers to prayer. The *athan* heard from minarets in every corner of the world since, echoes the exact same words recited by Bilal. Thus, a onetime lowly slave won a unique honor as Islam's first muezzin.

“And indeed We have honored the Children of Adam...”
(Quran 17:70)

Western romantics hail ancient Greece as being the birthplace of democracy.⁴ The reality was that, as slaves and women, the vast majority of Athenians were denied the right to elect their rulers. Yet, Islam ordained that a slave could himself be ruler! The Prophet ordered:

“Obey your ruler even if he be an Abyssinian slave.” (*Ahmad*)

Salman the Persian

Like most of his countrymen, Salman was raised a devout Zoroastrian. However, after an encounter with some Christians at worship, he accepted Christianity as ‘something better’. Salman then traveled extensively in search of knowledge, from the service of one learned monk to another, the last of whom said: *‘O son! I do not know of anyone who is on the same (creed) as we are. However, the time of the emergence of a Prophet is at hand. This*

⁴ Democracy is a Middle-Eastern invention, first seen in the civilization of Ebla in 3rd millennium BC, and then in Phoenicia and Mesopotamia during 11th century BC. It did not appear in Athens until 15th century BC.

Prophet is upon the religion of Abraham.' The monk then proceeded to describe this Prophet, his character and where he would appear. Salman migrated to Arabia, the land of the prophecy, and when he heard about and met Muhammad, he immediately recognized him from his teacher's descriptions and embraced Islam. Salman became renowned for his knowledge and was the first person to translate the Quran into another language, Persian. Once, whilst the Prophet was amongst his Companions, the following was revealed to him:

"It is He (God) Who had sent among the unlettered (the Arabs) a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves... and (also to) others (i.e. non-Arabs) among them who have not yet joined them (as Muslims)..." (Quran 62:2-3)

God's Messenger then placed his hand on Salman and said:

"Even if the Faith were near (the stars of) Pleiades, a man from amongst these (Persians) would surely attain it." (*Saheeh Muslim*)

Suhayb the Roman

Suhayb was born into privilege in the luxurious house of his father, who was a client governor for the Persian emperor. While he was still a child, Suhayb was captured by Byzantine raiders and sold into slavery in Constantinople.

Suhayb eventually escaped from bondage and fled to Mecca, a popular place of asylum, where he soon became a prosperous merchant nick-named 'ar-Rumi', the Roman, due to his Byzantine tongue and upbringing. When Suhayb heard Muhammad preach, he was at once convinced of the truth of his message and embraced Islam. Like all the early Muslims, Suhayb was persecuted by the pagans of Mecca. So, he traded all his wealth in exchange for safe passage to join the Prophet at Medina, whereupon the Prophet, delighted to see Suhayb, greeted him thrice: 'Your trade has been fruitful, O [Suhayb]! Your trade has been fruitful!' God had

informed the Prophet of Suhayb's exploits before their reunion with this revelation:

“And there is a type of man who ransoms himself to earn the pleasure of God. And God is full of kindness to His servants.”
(Quran 2:207)

The Prophet loved Suhayb a great deal and described him as having preceded the Romans to Islam. Suhayb's piety and standing among the early Muslims was so high that when Caliph Umar was on his deathbed, he selected Suhayb to lead them until they could agree upon a successor.

Abdullah the Hebrew

The Jews were another nation that the pre-Islamic Arabs held in contempt. Many Jews and Christians had been expecting a new Prophet to appear in Arabia during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. Jews from the Levite tribe in particular had settled in large numbers in and around the city of Medina. However, when the much anticipated Prophet came, not as a Hebrew son of Israel, but as the Arab descendant of Ishmael, the Jews rejected him. Except, that is, for a few like Hussein bin Salam. Hussein was the most learned rabbi and leader of the Medinan Jews but was denounced and vilified by them when he embraced Islam. The Prophet re-named Husayn, 'Abdullah', meaning 'Servant of God', and gave him the glad tidings that he was destined for Paradise. Abdullah addressed his tribesmen saying:

'O assembly of Jews! Be conscious of God and accept what Muhammad has brought. By God! You certainly know that he is God's Messenger and you can find prophecies about him and mention of his name and characteristics in your Torah. I for my part declare that he is the Messenger of God. I have faith in him and believe that he is true. I (for one) recognize him.' God revealed the following about Abdullah:

“And a witness from the Children of Israel testified to this (Quran being from God) like (the Torah). So he believed while (most of) you (Jews) are too proud (to believe).” (Quran 46:10)

Thus, in the ranks of the Prophet Muhammad’s Companions could be found Africans, Persians, Romans and Israelites; representatives of every known continent. As the Prophet said:

“Indeed, my friends and allies are not the tribe of so and so. Rather, my friends and allies are the pious, wherever they may be.” (*Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Saheeh Muslim*)

This universal brotherhood preached by Islam was championed by the Prophet’s Companions after him. When the Companion, Ubada bin as-Samit, led a delegation to Muqawqis, the Christian patriarch of Alexandria, the latter exclaimed: ‘Get this black man away from me and bring in his stead another to talk to me! ... How can you be content that a black man should be the foremost among you? Is it not more fitting that he be below you?’ ‘Indeed no!’, Ubada’s comrades replied, ‘Though he is black as you see, he is still the foremost among us in position, intelligence and wisdom; for black is not despised among us.’

“Truly, the Believers are but brothers...” (Quran 49:10)

It is the Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, which remains the ultimate symbol of the oneness and brotherhood of man. Here, rich and poor from all nations stand and bow in unison before God in what is the largest gathering of humanity; testifying to the Prophet’s words when he said:

“There is truly no excellence for an Arab over a non-Arab; or for a non-Arab over an Arab; or for a white man over a black man; or for a black man over a white man; except through piety.” (*Ahmad*)

And this confirms the Quran, which says:

“O humanity! We have created you from a single male and female and have made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another (not that you have pride over one another). Verily, the most honorable of you in the God’s Sight is the one most pious...” (Quran 49:13)

As for nationalism, with its factionalizing of Muslims along ethnic and tribal lines, it is considered an evil innovation.

“If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your tribe, the wealth you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving hard in His Cause, then wait until God brings about His Decision. And God guides not a rebellious people.” (Quran 9:24)

The Prophet said:

“... whoever fights under the banner of the blind, becoming angry for nationalism, calling to nationalism, or assisting nationalism, and dies: then he dies a death of jahiliyya (i.e. pre-Islamic ignorance and disbelief).” (*Saheeh Muslim*)

Rather, the Quran says:

“While those who disbelieved placed in their hearts pride and haughtiness - the pride and haughtiness of jahiliyya, God sent down His tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the Believers...” (Quran 48:26)

In fact, the Muslims in and of themselves constitute a single body and supra-nation, as the Prophet explained:

“The parable of the Believers in their mutual love and mercy is like that of a living body: if one part feels pain, the whole body suffers in sleeplessness and fever.” (*Saheeh Muslim*)

The Quran confirms this unity:

“Thus, We have made you (Believers into) a (single) justly-balanced community...” (Quran 2:143)

Perhaps one of the greatest barriers to the acceptance of Islam by many Westerners is the fallacy that it is primarily a religion for Orientals or dark-skinned people. No doubt, the racial injustices against many blacks, be they Abyssinian slaves of pre-Islamic Arabia, or 20th century Afro-Americans, has prompted many to embrace Islam. But this is beside the point. The Prophet Muhammad was himself of whitish complexion, described by his Companions as being ‘white and ruddy’ - a description many tens of millions of believing Arabs, Berbers and Persians share. Even blue-eyed blondes are not so rare amongst Near Easterners. Furthermore, Europe has more indigenous white Muslims than it has ‘colored’ immigrants. The Bosnians, for example, whose numbers were decimated at the end of the 20th century but who, due to their heroism and tradition of tolerance, have contributed most to Balkan peace and stability. Albanians too, descended from Europe’s ancient Illyrians, are also largely Muslim. In fact, one of the 20th century’s leading Muslim scholars, Imam Muhammad Nasir-ud-Deen al-Albani, was, as his title suggests, Albanian.

“Truly, We created humans in the best stature.” (Quran 5:4)

Whites have been called ‘caucasian’ ever since anthropologists declared the Caucasus Mountains, home to Europe’s highest peaks, to be the ‘Cradle of the White Race.’ Today, the natives of these mountains are Muslims. Amongst many a lesser-known tribe of fierce mountaineers and fair maidens are the Circassians famed for their bravery and beauty and who, as Mamluke rulers of Syria and Egypt, helped defend the civilized world and safeguard its holy lands from the ravages of the Mongol hordes. Then there is the brutalized Chechen, arguably the most unwieldy of all God’s creatures, whose tenacity and resistance has helped them avoid the fate of the Circassians. Meanwhile, over 1,000,000 American and North European Caucasian whites - Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Germans, Scandinavians and Celts included - now profess Islam.

In fact, Islam peacefully entered parts of Europe before Christianity, when: ‘In times long ago, when the Russian Slav had not yet started to build Christian churches on the Oka nor conquered these places in the name of European civilization, the Bulgar was already listening to the Quran on the banks of the Volga and the Kama.’ (Solov’ev, 1965) [On 16 May 922, Islam became the official state religion of the Volga Bulgars, with whom today’s Bulgarians share a common ancestry.]

Every faith besides Islam calls for the worship of creation in some way, shape or form. Moreover, race and color play a central and divisive role in almost all non-Islamic belief systems. A Christian’s deification of Jesus and the saints or a Buddhist’s deification of Buddha and the Dalai Lamas has people of a particular race and color being worshipped in derogation of God. In Judaism, salvation is withheld from the non-Jew Gentile. Hinduism’s caste system likewise checks the spiritual, socio-political and economic aspirations of the ‘unclean’ lower castes. Islam, however, seeks to unite and make one all the creatures of the world upon the Unity and Oneness of their Creator. Thus, Islam alone liberates all peoples, races and colors in the worship of God alone.

“And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the (wonderful) differences of your languages and colors. Verily, in that are indeed signs for people of sound knowledge.” (Quran 30:22)