The Role of Ethics in Securing Global Peace[*]

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Abstract

Peace is not only a fundamental human need but has also been an essential human aspiration throughout its history on Earth. This is because the realization of all noble human values is only possible within a calm environment, free from conflict, insecurity, and strife. This issue has been considered by most thinkers and schools of thought since ancient times, yet the global peace models presented have lacked sufficient effectiveness and have been largely unsuccessful in securing peace, as evidenced by the occurrence of world wars. Alongside the theories put forth by these schools of thought, Islamic ethical frameworks regard peace-seeking as both attainable and necessary. Given this background, the question arises: what role does ethics play in securing global peace? This study, employing an analytical-descriptive method, posits that ethics, rooted in strong Islamic principles, centered on sound ethical foundations, and adopting a holistic and perfection-oriented perspective on human nature and needs, emphasizes human well-being and fulfillment in the context of peace. The research findings propose the

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following ethical pathways for global peace: engaging in positive dialogue, establishing shared beliefs, promoting peaceful policies, facilitating cultural dialogues, adopting criteria for interaction, recognizing shared innate tendencies, and embracing a purposeful world. Islamic ethics, with a comprehensive approach to human nature (encompassing both good and evil), an understanding of politics (its mixed positive and negative nature), and international relations (combining peace and war), has managed to provide a relatively precise interpretation of the nature of international relations. This interpretation is rooted in the principle of moderation, a rational foundation in Islam as a universal doctrine. Furthermore, we observe a justice-centered discourse within the Islamic approach to international relations, in terms of exalted human values, which is absent in other schools of thought. Justice holds a particularly esteemed position in Islam and can be described as the all-encompassing foundation of Islamic international relations theory, underpinning global peace. The Islamic approach to international relations emphasizes three interdependent and central themes: peace, justice, and jihad.

Keywords
Security, ethics, global peace, Islamic ethics, monotheistic peace.

Introduction

The concept of peace cannot be separated from human values such as justice, development, and security. Thus, sustainable global peace cannot be achieved without these values. Given that these values stem from ethics, neglecting ethics and ethical concepts leads to wars and conflicts. Accordingly, numerous theories on establishing peace and global security have been proposed within the field of international relations, and many organizations have been founded to promote global peace in practical terms. However, these institutions and organizations have yet to present a framework for sustainable peace. In this regard, the Islamic school of thought, which emphasizes ethics and calls humanity to peace, has provided several strategies to prevent conflict; adherence to these strategies could foster a world free of war. With this background, the present research addresses the question: what solutions does "Islamic ethics" offer for securing global peace? The study addresses this question through an analytical-descriptive approach, using library and digital resources.

Numerous articles and books have been published on the relationship between ethics and peace, which we briefly outline below.

1. Baratalipour (2015), in the article "Sustainable Peace and Global Political Justice," examines the relationship between Kant's "sustainable peace" and Rawls's "global political justice." The article demonstrates that the latter concept in republican idealism is influenced by the ethical foundations of Kantian sustainable peace, such as autonomy, the realm of ends, and social contractarianism. However, Rawls's political realism seeks to address Kant's ambiguity regarding bridging the gap between adherence to the categorical imperative and the political structure. Thus, he reconstructs his later theory by avoiding the transhistorical, cosmopolitan implications of Kantian thought.

2. Jamshidi and Najafi (2016), in the article "A Comparative Study of the Concept of Sustainable Peace from the Perspective of Islam and Kantian Ethical Liberalism," note that both perspectives are centered on humanity. However, Islam addresses human needs, such as peace, with a broader and more perfection-seeking perspective.

3. Nobar-Torkaman and Dehshiri (2022), in the article "The Role of Interfaith Dialogue in Promoting Global Peace," examine this role with respect to socialization, environmental awareness, and policy transfer. Socialization fosters communication and dialogue, emphasizes shared beliefs, common horizons, and a local environment by leveraging each country's capacities. Additionally, the article highlights the role of agents alongside structure, creating a space for open dialogue, and policy transfer through peaceful policies, confronting political extremism, combating polarization, and promoting pluralism.

4. Ghorbanzadeh and Soleimani (2019), in the article "The Ethics of Peace in the Raḍawī Culture," argue that the scope of peace in the Raḍawī culture (that pertaining to Imam al-Riḍā) encompasses both the specific and general meanings of peace. In this culture, contrary to what is emphasized in the literature on the laws of armed conflict, there is no notion of preemptive legitimate defense. Here, peace is deemed sacred, and jihad is viewed as a humanitarian action aimed at promoting peace and security under divine sovereignty, rejecting oppressive rule, defending the oppressed, and combating injustice.

5. Ghezelsolfa (2018), in the article "The Ethics of Peace in a Pluralistic World: A Prolegomenon to Modern Political Philosophy," argues, drawing on Kantian-Habermasian ethical ideas, that today's world, an involuntary society based on shared risks, requires a new political philosophy rooted in a dialogical approach. On this basis, the elements of peace-oriented ethics are examined and critiqued.

In these works and other publications in the fields of ethics and

politics, there is primarily a macroscopic view that addresses ethics and politics as two separate approaches. Political discussions often overlook the close connection between ethics and power, as well as the role of ethics in enhancing politics and promoting global peace. Similarly, ethical discussions tend to neglect significant political and international issues. Therefore, there appears to be a gap in the presence of an Islamic ethical model within political and ethical discourse. If properly articulated, such a model could fill the void in both fields of ethics and politics. This article employs a descriptive-analytical approach, using sources from religious texts, and is organized into four sections: defining key concepts, theories on the relationship between ethics and peace, the foundations of ethics, and ethical strategies for achieving peace.

1. Conceptual Framework

Conceptual analysis of key terms forms the foundational and indeed one of the most crucial parts of any research. Therefore, this article begins by analyzing the essential and fundamental concepts.

1.1. Concept of Ethics

Ethics is defined as a state of the soul that, without thought or deliberation, prompts a person to action (Ibn Miskawayh al-Rāzī, 2006, p. 30). In another definition, Motahari accepts an understanding of ethics that addresses both how to act and how to be; the "how to act" pertains to human actions, including speech, while the "how to be" relates to inner attributes and dispositions (Motahari, 1994, p. 22). These encompass the fourfold relationships—between a person and themselves, with God, with others, and with nature—organizing them along their ideal paths, organizing ethics of worship (servitude of God), personal morality, social ethics, and environmental ethics.

1.2. Peace

Peace holds a significant place in Islamic culture and political jurisprudence, emphasized in Quranic texts and hadith literature as a fundamental legal and political principle guiding interactions with others. In jurisprudential terms, peace refers to a contract that resolves disputes and conflicts between two parties. It is noteworthy that peace does not necessarily occur only after conflict (conflict resolution); rather, it can serve as a preventive measure, occurring before any conflict arises (conflict prevention) (Najafī, 2009, vol. 26, p. 211). In political parlance, peace refers to the peaceful coexistence of nations, regardless of any prior history of conflict or disagreement (Beheshti, 2015, p. 40). Indeed, peace is a human value and an ethical virtue (Tolouee, 2006, p. 665). In the Quranic tradition, while *sulḥ* and *silm* (both meaning peace) are often contrasted with war (Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī, 1991, p. 240), they carry a broader meaning, encompassing not only the absence of war but also the presence of tranquility, security, and the absence of discord, hostility, danger, and threat.

2. Foundations of Islamic Ethics

The primary and fundamental obstacle to global peace is the disregard for core values and ethical virtues, particularly the cornerstone of justice. A long-standing adversary of justice is the lack of faith in religious principles, especially the foundational principle of monotheism. Ethical foundations are built on numerous theological, philosophical, and mystical principles. This study briefly and concisely highlights some of these principles that play a role in establishing and promoting global peace.

2.1. Human Dignity

According to Quranic verses, religious beliefs, and Islamic teachings, humanity is regarded as the pinnacle of creation and the

only being endowed with inherent dignity, meriting the grand honor of divine vicegerency (*al-khlāfa*): "Indeed, We have dignified the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, provided them with good and wholesome sustenance, and given them superiority over many of those We created" (Quran, 17:70). In the Islamic view, all humans are inherently dignified, equally sharing in this dignity. In contrast, materialistic schools of thought regard human dignity within the confines of worldly interests, valuing it only as long as it yields tangible, sensory benefits. However, from the perspective of revelatory teachings, the dignified individual perceives attachment to worldly values as insignificant when confined solely to worldly gains (Daylamī, 1991, vol. 1, p. 25). Consequently, such a person refrains from prohibitions and behaviors that diminish them, such as oppression and selfishness, which are roots of undesirable conflicts (Nūrī, 1987, vol. 11, p. 268).

In Islam, the one who is truly dignified and worthy of greater respect is the one with higher piety or God-wariness (Quran, 49:13). Thus, this principle of dignity, a Quranic and ethical foundation, underlies all human rights and respect for the life, property, honor, and reputation of individuals. According to the verses supporting this principle, all people share a common ancestry and are, in essence, brothers and sisters. Given this shared lineage, all forms of racial, linguistic, regional, and gender discrimination are rejected. Every individual, nation, and country should possess equal rights and live together peacefully, with mutual respect and harmony. This principle necessitates friendly, humane relations rather than enmity and hostility among people (Khamenei, 2002, p. 43).

2.2. Equality in Creation

The concept of human equality is now recognized as a cornerstone of human rights. This principle has a long-standing history, with roots

tracing back approximately 2,500 years, from the time of the Sophists and Plato to the present day. Yet, many conflicts and divisions stem from pride, tyranny, and a sense of superiority. Reflecting on the similarity and equality in human creation reveals the illusionary nature of superficial distinctions and honors that drive humans toward pride, confrontation, discord, and strife (Quran, 4:1). Islam attributes the origin of human creation to a singular source. Thus, God introduces visible differences among people as a means of recognition and understanding while ascribing superiority solely to piety (Quran, 49:13).

In the Islamic worldview, humanity's origin is not attributed to a random set of natural factors leading to a superior being, but rather to God's will, with humanity designated as the divine representative on earth. As God states to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a vicegerent" (Quran, 2:30; Imam Khomeini, 2009, p. 78). This significant point, acknowledged across all heavenly religions, undeniably plays a crucial role in resolving conflicts and preventing wars within human societies. God's emphasis on the unity of creation and the rejection of any racial or ethnic superiority offers an effective strategy for promoting peace and stability. Given that the Islamic legal system is based on the will of a wise, just, and knowledgeable God, the conditionality of equal rights and responsibilities is indeed the most just and realistic form of conditionality (Center for Open Education, 2020, p. 34).

2.3. Principle of Monotheism

Monotheistic thinking serves as a foundational and essential concept that nurtures the tree of human prosperity and perfection, allowing branches of human values and noble ethics to flourish, ultimately benefiting humanity with their fruits (Ṭabāṭabāʾī, 2017, vol. 3, p. 19). In the Islamic worldview, monotheism forms the basis of humanity's perspective on the world, and adherence to its principles plays a significant role in preventing conflicts and wars. Numerous religious

sources attest that the core of the prophets' message throughout history has been monotheism, with all their teachings rooted in this fundamental principle.

Monotheism is both the starting and the endpoint, guiding all human actions and inclinations across various realms. Followers of monotheism see fostering unity based on human dignity as their primary mission. Hence, Islam grounds its political strategy on preserving peace, calling its followers to the "Abode of Peace" (Dār al-Salām). The monotheistic foundation not only eliminates external ideological diversity but also serves as the primary axis for aligning legislative laws, as all Islamic laws are structured around monotheism, resulting in no inherent contradiction or discord among them. Thus, in a society where human relationships, including obedience, are organized according to unifying divine teachings, many wars and conflicts will fundamentally be averted. In essence, it is only monotheistic thought that possesses the capacity to bring society toward true peace.

3. Philosophical Anthropological Foundations

Schools and perspectives in philosophical anthropology differ in their explanations of human nature and innate traits. Based on these differences, varied responses have been offered on how to rid human society of violence and conflict. According to certain beliefs and attitudes in philosophical anthropology, one cannot realistically hope for a future or society entirely free of violence. From some viewpoints, the most achievable outcome for peace-seeking efforts lies not in fully eradicating violence and conflict from human relations—an endeavor seen as extremely challenging or impossible—but in reducing their prevalence. In a third perspective, violence, insecurity, and war arise from external and internal factors influencing humans, stemming from social norms, ideologies that foster violence,

and conflicts of interest among individuals and groups. According to this view, it is possible to eliminate violence from the structure of human societies and build a social system free of destructive conflicts, replacing hostility with cooperation.

The approach to understanding the role and status of humans reveals the basis upon which human relationships are defined. In essence, our inclination toward war or peace depends on the image we have of humanity—an image shaped by philosophical anthropology. How we view humanity, beyond affecting our understanding of human existence and role within creation, is also a key factor in shaping social laws. In Islamic philosophical anthropology, based on divine revelation, all aspects of human existence are fully considered, addressing physical, spiritual, worldly, and otherworldly dimensions. Islamic philosophical anthropology, in addition to structuring a knowledge system about humanity, offers reliable and infallible teachings not found in secular approaches. This perspective holds that humans possess a divine spirit and origin. Thus, in Islamic thought, the principle of peace is rooted in the fundamental nature of humanity.

4. Ethical Solutions for Global Peace

Ethics and adherence to moral principles serve as the primary means of preventing individuals from engaging in war and causing insecurity. In other words, religious teachings play a controlling role, restraining people from rebellion and violence. Accordingly, ethics prescribes certain strategies for peace, a few of which are highlighted in what follow.

4.1. Engaging in Positive Dialogue by Strengthening the Ground of Communication

God calls upon humanity to speak kindly to others: "And speak kindly to people" (Quran, 2:83). In this regard, religious diplomacy

represents a step toward peacebuilding rather than conflict, contributing to the advancement of global security and peace. A significant advantage of emphasizing religious diplomacy is the broader spectrum of active participants we engage with, in contrast to fundamentalist groups. This approach allows us to operate without the usual financial, logistical, or specialized constraints. Fundamentalist groups often operate within rigid, inflexible ideologies, whereas today, countries across the world can enter this broader field through religious diplomacy. The agents of religious diplomacy include states, individuals, and groups engaging bilaterally or multilaterally, either formally or informally, with a wide range of resources and tools (Jafarifar & Majidi, 2018, p. 6). Therefore, achieving global peace necessitates interfaith dialogue, fostering mutual understanding, and uniting around a shared objective. The Quran, the holy scripture of Muslims, repeatedly calls for unity among divine religions and encourages unity around common principles. Regarding faith in all prophets and holy scriptures, God states: "The Messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and so do the believers. They all believe in God, His angels, His books, and His messengers: 'We make no distinction between any of His messengers.' And they say, 'We hear and we obey. [Grant us] Your forgiveness, our Lord. To You alone is the final return'" (Quran, 2:285).

Accordingly, in all divine religions and revealed laws, righteous deeds and unconditional adherence to religious commandments are considered the true measures of faith and spiritual insight. The New Testament also consistently urges Christians to observe religious laws and adhere to spiritual and moral regulations (Matthew, 5:17-18).

4.2. Reinforcing Common Doctrinal Grounds

Islamic ethics emphasizes shared principles found in all religions, which need to be communicated and promoted. One of the most

essential aspects of dialogue—especially interfaith dialogue—is identifying common ground. When Prophet Muhammad corresponded with leaders of non-Muslim nations, he emphasized these shared values, an approach rooted in the Quranic verse: "Say, 'O People of the Book! Come to a common word between us and you: that we shall worship none but God, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him'" (Quran, 3:64). Accordingly, all divine religions share certain fundamental principles: (1) Belief in monotheism and the worship of one God, (2) belief in the afterlife, (3) belief in the unseen: recognizing that aspects of existence lie beyond the reach of the five senses, (4) humanitarian principles: all divine religions are centered on human development, with teachings that address human qualities and needs, (5) belief in prophethood: faith in the messengers sent to guide humanity, (6) belief in a savior and a promised redeemer, (7) moral and ethical values: all religions emphasize ethical values, including community purification, care for the needy, justice, and equality (Fouzi, 2010, p. 523). Furthermore, the three monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—hold shared beliefs about God, creation, revelation, the afterlife, and salvation, and all possess a sacred book. They also share values like respect for all human beings (Ebrahimi& Sotoudeh, 2010, p. 16). Such ethical principles flourish in a peaceful environment, which is why monotheistic religions uphold the ideal of a peaceful world as essential for human perfection.

4.3. Highlighting Peaceful Policies

Islamic ethics emphasizes a peaceful world and the concept of humanity as *Khalīfat Allāh* (God's vicegerent on Earth). This vicegerency takes shape in a climate of peace and ethical conduct, where peace and justice serve as the foundation for a morally developed human being. Even some Western thinkers see ethics and peace as inseparable; for instance, Hans Küng views the primary

function of ethics as the realization of global peace, arguing that only a global ethic can achieve this. In his view, religions contain universal moral principles and norms, and by highlighting these, we can foster a global ethic (Küng, 1998, p. 34).

Human nature tends to be drawn to like-minded individuals, but people with a shallow outlook often seek validation only from those who mirror their views and reject those who think differently. This behavior reflects a lack of intellectual and moral maturity. In contrast, wise individuals who have achieved intellectual and ethical growth focus on their own improvement and value constructive criticism over unearned praise, welcoming advice and guidance from others. This openness—essentially an indicator of reason and intellectual growth—eliminates conflict and creates conditions for peaceful coexistence. Hence, Imam al-Riḍā, the eighth Shiite Imam, regarded friendship with others as "half of wisdom," saying, "A person's friend is his reason, and his enemy is his ignorance" (Ibn Shuʿba, 2003, p. 364).

Ignorance and lack of awareness lead to social injustice. When people are unaware of the deeper issues around them, it allows others to exploit their rights. Imam Khomeini observed that throughout history, the troubles that have arisen were often due to people's ignorance, which has been exploited against their own interests (Khomeini, 1998, vol. 13, p. 452). Therefore, the greatest obstacle to global peace is the power dynamics and dominance of hegemonic powers, making the moderation of power essential. One key approach to moderating power is to bring it under the guidance of ethics. Placing power within an ethical framework helps prevent its use in unjust, oppressive, and arrogant ways.

4.4. Justice

Justice is a key ethical principle and the foundation of civilization itself. Justice requires a humble and fair approach toward all

individuals, genders, and ethnicities. Without justice, achieving peace and security is unimaginable. However, for justice—essential for peace—to prevail, a spirit of resistance against global oppressors must be fostered among nations. Imam Khomeini criticized the current world order, which, he argued, creates much of the disorder, inequality, and discrimination present today. He sought to awaken human conscience to the pervasive injustice in the global system (Khomeini, 1998, vol. 1, pp. 199-200). He warned that submission to oppression (*inẓilām*) only intensifies global injustice and lawlessness. He emphasized: "Submission to oppression is worse than oppression itself; protest, deny, and speak out. A counterbalance to their propaganda must be established to expose and refute every falsehood they propagate" (Khomeini, n.d., vol. 3, p. 106).

Another aspect of global justice is the need for an equitable distribution of power. Unchecked power inevitably leads to corruption. A major barrier to justice in politics and international relations is the dominance of hegemonic systems and authoritarian regimes that seek to control the global community. Today, power is unevenly distributed worldwide, creating an international system divided into strong and weak nations. Achieving a fair distribution of global power requires reform within the United Nations, with member countries recognizing the need for change. Once these changes occur, international political justice can be realized, laying the groundwork for global peace. Imam Khomeini observed that power-seeking, oppressive countries, by abandoning human reason—a divine faculty—and following the path of evil, perpetrate countless crimes against humanity. Human reason inclines toward good and justice, while the ego, swayed by satanic whims, gravitates toward evil and injustice. When hegemonic powers lack the spiritual strength (reason and discernment) to control their own minds and actions, they are

driven by a thirst for power and base desires, resulting in acts of oppression and injustice. In Imam Khomeini's view, such power holders are the "wretched of the world" (Khomeini, 1998, vol. 11, p. 268).

In the absence of common sense and ethics, powerful nations tend to embrace an arrogant authoritarianism (Khomeini, 1998, vol. 12, p. 144) and a mindset of domination, which leads to widespread suffering and injustice (vol. 18, p. 206). From Imam Khomeini's perspective, this lack of ethics is further intensified by other egotistical traits, such as self-love (vol. 16, p. 458), selfishness (pp. 161-162), and a desire for power (p. 459).

Alongside political justice grounded in ethics, economic justice is essential—a principle emphasized in religious teachings. Ethical utilitarianism, a significant ethical theory, suggests that the correct action is one that brings the greatest benefit to society (Atrak, 2004, p. 265). However, this theory can lead to conflicts, creating divisions between rich and poor, colonizer and colonized. In contrast, the concept of divine ethics in Islam integrates materialism with spirituality, advocating for spiritual values, ethics, and self-purification (Khomeini, 1998, vol. 7, p. 531). Here are some ways justice lays the foundation for global peace:

1. Awakening and self-confidence among nations.
2. Individual and social transformation.
3. Global transformation: The foundation of global transformation is personal transformation. This involves self-awareness and a return to one's true identity, rooted in innate nature and humanity, and an adherence to moral and human principles inherently entrusted within individuals. By understanding these values, people establish justice within society. Therefore, one must pursue transformation and strive for the creation of a just society with a universalist perspective to foster peace. Islamic political thought emphasizes this universal commitment to

justice, underscored by a sacred governance.

4. Connecting politics and spirituality: In religious texts, politics is not separate from transcendent ethics and spirituality.

5. Connecting politics with ethics: politics can be considered genuine only if the goal of a political system is human prosperity, as it would then harmonize with ethics (Khomeini, 1998, vol. 15, p. 6).

4.5. Dialogue of Cultures: Criteria for Interaction

Any ethical standard that aims to be effective across societies and cultures must be founded on free consent or, more accurately, on consensus. The way we arrive at a set of ethical principles applicable to all societies and cultures is as crucial as the final result. Samuel Fleischacker believes that ethical norms are generally inseparable from cultural norms. He argues that cultural dialogue must embrace and respect both similarities and differences across traditions, enabling pride and pleasure in them. Fleischacker opposes legislative or philosophical approaches that fail to allow for the gradual development of understanding and respect essential to a universal ethic. Mere belief in and respect for others' right to be different is not enough; empathy and mutual understanding are needed, and this cannot be achieved through laws but only by bringing hearts and minds closer together—this should be the main goal of cultural dialogue (Koorang, 2002, p. 45).

Such dialogue can only be achieved when a sense of necessity, based on a shared sense of risk and the need for a safe place for co-existence, is present. Constructive cultural dialogue should not merely arise from the clash of opponents; rather, as Rawls states, it should be a reasonable discussion, describing a process for identifying overlapping consensus among those with conflicting moral views. This means that, first, since the aim of political discussion is to reach a

reasonable agreement, it should proceed toward that goal as far as possible. Second, when we rely on logical principles, we are prepared to agree on principles and even reconcilable differences based on fundamental issues. Finally, commitment to reasoning and logic prepares us to reach a shared belief in and agreement on a good and desirable purpose, even with others who hold different beliefs (Rawls, 2004, p. 213).

Küng considers ethics as a panacea for many challenges in the modern world, assigning it a global value. Additionally, governments are not separate from culture or, more precisely, from the cultures that support them. Religious leaders, educators, academics, intellectuals, social leaders, writers, artists, lawyers, doctors, and a wide range of ordinary citizens constitute the ethical frameworks that uphold these cultures. These standards should serve as theoretical principles for a new political thought, gaining acceptance and agreement through cultural dialogue. For it is these standards that enable a far broader consensus than the formal consensus of participants in diplomatic processes.

4.6. Shared Innate Tendencies

Undoubtedly, teachings that align with human nature and meet innate, material, and spiritual needs are more effectively implemented and practiced. Seeking God, worship, a quest for justice, and peace are part of the common innate inclinations of all humans. The idea of inherent inequality among individuals, with some inherently superior to others, is a significant and impactful foundation in shaping peaceful thought and strategies. For peace and reconciliation between unequal groups in terms of rank, status, and nature—even if possible—would be unjust and inappropriate.

In contrast to the view of inherent inequality among humans, another group of thinkers, human schools of thought, and all divine

religions uphold the intrinsic unity of humanity, rejecting racial differences as indicative of essential or qualitative distinctions. Islamic thought and the Quranic revelation explicitly emphasize the inherent unity and equal creation of human races. The Quran acknowledges the reality of physical racial differences and the diversity of languages and dialects, but it neither considers these differences as indicative of essential inequality nor a basis for racial superiority. The Quran's equal regard for the creation of individuals and the essential unity of various human races has led to a uniform legal system and the right of all individuals to participate in determining their socio-political destiny. Ultimately, the teachings describe peace, security, and a cooperative, threat- and discrimination-free environment as desirable and attainable in the culmination of human history.

4.7. Resolving International Disputes

Islamic ethics emphasizes resolving international conflicts based on a peace-oriented view grounded in peaceful coexistence. To achieve lasting peace and establish social security and stability, Islam seeks to eliminate sources of tension, conflict, and discord. Acknowledging the reality that war and strife often stem from human tendencies for self-interest, power-seeking, and dominance, Islam aims to address and resolve these issues. In this respect, it employs ethical and humane guidelines to eradicate the roots of conflict and hostility and offers appropriate methods for conflict resolution. The foundation of Islamic foreign policy in addressing disputes lies in refraining from violence when peaceful alternatives are available, as purposeful peace is highly valued in Islam, and every effort should be made to establish it. The Quran disapproves of domination over peacemakers, stating: "If Allah had willed, He would have given them power over you, and they would have fought you" (Quran 4:90).

4.8. A Purposeful World

Various religions share the belief that the universe, and humanity as part of it, has a specific purpose and is governed by the wisdom and guidance of an all-powerful Creator. The Quran emphasizes the purposeful design of creation and divine justice, both stemming from divine wisdom, addressing these themes in multiple verses. The concepts of reward, punishment, and the ultimate purpose of creation suggest that the entire creation, even in its finer details, is governed by a wise purpose, with each being a creation of the supremely wise God. The purposefulness of creation and the unified end goal of humanity's journey toward absolute perfection form the foundation for harmony in laws, which in turn shapes individual and social behaviors. This principle reduces the likelihood of conflict in human perspectives and actions, diminishing the rationale for war before it arises.

The purposefulness of the universe does not imply that the quest for perfection alone prevents wars or that those who seek perfection will never engage in conflict. Instead, it signifies that existence is directed toward a higher goal, with the universe in a continuous process of attaining perfection—a foundation that fosters stability and peace among human societies. Just as every phenomenon in the universe reaches its ideal state, setting the stage for human perfection, so too will individuals, governance, and society ultimately achieve their own ideal state, aligning harmoniously with the order of existence.

Based on the purposeful design of creation and the principle of evolution, the earth too has an ultimate purpose—to reach its own state of perfection, which entails embracing the message of divine unity and Islam across the globe. This culmination is anticipated in the appearance of the Mahdi—may Allah hasten his noble reappearance (Amin Isfahani, 1997, vol. 6, p. 37). Humanity, as part of creation, can only achieve its deserved perfection under the conditions of peace and

tranquility. Thus, in Islamic thought, peace and calm are seen as the optimal paths to fulfilling the purpose of the world and humanity's creation. The plurality of creators would disrupt this order, as stated: "Had there been other gods in them besides Allah, they would have been in a state of disorder" (Quran 21:22).

Conclusion

In the twentieth century, humanity, weary from devastating wars and destruction, and exhausted from the killing and bloodshed of the world wars, turned its attention toward peace. Inspired by peace thinkers, particularly the renowned German philosopher Immanuel Kant, the League of Nations was established, followed by the United Nations. Numerous charters, agreements, and resolutions were issued. From Kant's writings on perpetual peace and similar ideas from other peace philosophers, one might infer that achieving peace is possible only through legal institutions. However, despite these efforts, the sweet fragrance of peace is still elusive; instead, the stench of blood and gunpowder lingers, and armed conflicts and violent disputes continue to erupt around the world.

This raises a serious question: What is the fundamental problem, and what is the core solution? The principal obstacle to peace is the disregard for morality, and the primary adversary of morality is disbelief in religious and ethical principles. Both the essence of religion and morality are crucial to the preservation of peace and justice. Nothing else, including the UN Charter or its resolutions, can create "justice-based peace " without these two.

In the past, kings, as adversaries of peace and deniers of ethics and justice, led humanity to death, poverty, and suffering. However, in the twentieth century, peace and morality face new, organized enemies. Today's disasters and crimes arise from a form of prejudice and racial discrimination rooted in the psychological characteristics of

Eurocentrism, mixed with Zionist religious biases. Realist theorists over the past two centuries have beaten the drums of war, leading to the deaths of millions. This political-economic faction, on one hand, believes in a unipolar world and possesses extensive propaganda and communication monopolies, and, on the other, holds concentrated military and technical power, aspiring to dominate global resources and wealth.

The ideology of this faction promotes war and aggression over peace and fraternity, pushing a divisive agenda that splits humanity into first- and second-class people, nations into North and South, and labels others as either "with us or against us." Traditional individual slavery has transformed into national and global enslavement, creating a world sunk in the quagmire of war and unrest. Islamic intellectuals are therefore called to foster Islamic ethics for peace through conferences, assemblies, or even by establishing an Ethics and Peace Organization within the United Nations.

As highlighted in this study, the only path for humanity to attain enduring tranquility and peaceful coexistence is through "unified peace," meaning a peace rooted in monotheism. The world will only taste the sweetness of security when it embraces monotheistic peace and lives under its canopy. In Islamic thought, where peace is rooted in morality and morality in monotheism, peace goes beyond merely avoiding war. Unified peace implies submission to the One God.

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