



AL-QUDWAH

ISSN(P): 2959-2062 / ISSN(E): 2959-2054

<https://al-qudwah.com>



***An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific
Ayahs of Quran for Interfaith Harmony in Pakistan***

ABSTRACT

This paper explores the potential of Quranic injunctions regarding interfaith harmony as a foundation for fostering peace and unity in Pakistan, a country marked by religious and cultural diversity. By integrating traditional interpretive methods, such as linguistic analysis, historical context, cross-referencing of Tafseer and Hadith, scholarly consensus, and analogical reasoning, this study also incorporates modern approaches like contextual and socio-political analysis, interdisciplinary methods, and a focus on universal values. The goal is to demonstrate how the Quranic teachings can promote a culture of mutual respect and understanding among different religious communities. These teachings can serve as a guide for addressing contemporary issues of global brotherhood, pluralism, and interfaith collaboration. Furthermore, the paper argues that the Quran's emphasis on dialogue, tolerance, and cooperation offers valuable insights for Pakistan's pluralistic society, where interfaith relations are a critical concern. By combining classical and modern perspectives, this study aims to provide a comprehensive framework for achieving social harmony and peaceful coexistence in Pakistan, in line with global aspirations for unity. Ultimately, it suggests that embracing the Quranic principles of peace and harmony can pave the way for a more inclusive and harmonious society, capable of addressing both local and global challenges.

Keywords: *Quranic injunctions, interfaith harmony, peace and harmony, socio-political analysis, pluralism, interfaith dialogue.*

AUTHORS

Dr. Hafiz Saeed Ahmad*

Assistant Professor,
Department of Religious
Studies, FC College University,
Lahore:

saeedahmad@fccollege.edu.pk

Dr. Abid Naeem**

Associate Professor,
Department of Religious
Studies, FC College University,
Lahore:

abidnaeem@fccollege.edu.pk

Date of Submission: 11-11-2024

Acceptance: 04-12-2024

Publishing: 12-12-2024

Web: <https://al-qudwah.com/>

OJS: [https://al-qudwah.com/](https://al-qudwah.com/index.php/aqrj/user/register)

[index.php/aqrj/user/register](https://al-qudwah.com/index.php/aqrj/user/register)

e-mail: editor@al-qudwah.com

***Correspondence Author:**

Dr. Abid Naeem** Associate Professor, Department of
Religious Studies, FC College University, Lahore.

Introduction & Significance of the Study

It is admitted that Pakistan was founded on religious freedom and coexistence. The same thing has been reflected in Pakistan's constitution of 1973 as article 20 asserts equal rights for minorities, religious freedom & cultural practices. Articles 8-17 of the 1973 Constitution ensure the fundamental rights of all citizens in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The father of the nation, Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Quaid-e-Azam lauded the same spirit in 1947:

"Minorities to whichever faith they may belong, they will be safeguarded. Their religious faith or belief will be secure. There will be no interference of any kind with their freedom of worship. They will have their rights and privileges and no doubt, along with it goes the obligation of citizenship".¹

Parallel to it, only the 4th sentence from the preamble of Pakistan's constitution endorses freedom, equality, and justice for everyone without any discrimination of religion, cast, creed, race, color, and area of residence around the state of Pakistan:

"Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures"²

Moreover, after a few lines of preamble, it maintains that:

"You may belong to any religion, caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State. Minorities, to whichever community they may belong, will be safeguarded. Their religion, faith or belief will be secure. There will be no interference of any kind with their freedom of worship. They will have their protection with regard to their religion, faith, their life and their culture. They will be, in all respects, the citizens of Pakistan without any distinction of caste and creed".³

On the other side, the same constitution endorsed that 'the Qur'an & Sunnah shall be the main sources to derive laws of the country and would work as a tool to safeguard the prescribed rights of everyone who embraces the citizenship of Pakistan'. So, it is crystal clear that the legal framework is entirely based on religious scripture which manifests the intersection of religion, law, and society, as quoted by Abid Hussain Shah Jilani:

"The conceptual and theoretical framework guiding this analysis rests on the intersection of religion, law, and society within the context of Pakistan. Drawing from sociological and legal theories, this framework explores how Islamic principles, as derived from the Quran and Hadith, interact with legal norms and societal dynamics in Pakistan. Utilizing concepts such as legal pluralism, constitutionalism, and religious jurisprudence, this framework seeks to elucidate the complex interplay between religious values, legal principles, and human rights within the Pakistani legal system. By examining the historical, constitutional, and practical dimensions of incorporating Islam into law, this framework aims to provide insights into the

¹ Liaquat H. Merchant, *Time to idealize Jinnah's Pakistan*, accessed on 19-11-2024 from: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1598134>

² Ardeshir Cowasjee, *The sole statesman – 4*. accessed on 8:20 pm 20-11-2024 from:

³ Julie Jones, *House of Lords: Article 18 short debate*.

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

challenges and opportunities inherent in navigating the interface between religion and law in a diAyah and pluralistic society like Pakistan”⁴

By observing the data over the last two decades in Pakistan hundreds of incidents that took place regarding violations of individuals or community rights of living, worship, and business have polluted Pakistan’s image on the global map. Of course, it is a sign of big worry and grief for national institutions, relevant ministries, and Pakistan’s academia in general & religious scholarship specifically, still, many incidents were not registered or reported by the media and not recorded by the Police. The Center for Research & Security Studies (CRSS), an Islamabad-based non-profit think tank, calculates as many as 1524 incidents that lead to several casualties and injuries. ⁵

Consequently, the country is facing challenges in maintaining inter-faith harmony. So, the need of the hour is to consult the Holy texts of Islam because the vast majority belongs to Islam, and by educating them on the Quran, Islam’s primary book, which presents many Ayahs that urge followers of Islam for peace, tolerance, and justice. This effort may bring a change of mindset and behaviors towards minorities which shall pave the way to interfaith harmony.

Scope & Method of Study

Keeping in view the growing rate of population in Pakistan which as per the records of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2024, has reached around 245 million. In Pakistan, where the state religion is Islam, more than 96% of the population is Muslim while around 3-4 % constitute minorities which include Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis, scheduled casts⁶ and other religions.⁷

It is a great challenge to develop a harmonious and peaceful environment because of the low level of respect for the laws and poor rate of implementation, the lack of respect for police and other institutions due to corruption and bad governance, and the increasing poverty rate. Hence, religious academia needs to come in front, lead, and introduce guidelines from the Holy Scriptures that can pave the way for the majority population to recognize the true message of the Holy Quran about respecting the rights of minorities and understand its significance here and hereafter.

The Holy Quran, indeed, has as many as, at least, ten different passages that appreciate & acknowledge the diversity of faith as part of the God’s plan. In this paper, the passages from Surah al-Baqarah, al-Imran, al-Nisa, al-Maedah, al-Ana’am, Hud, al-Hajj, al-Ankabut, al-Shura, Fussilat, al-Hujurat, and al-Mumtahinah will be carefully examined in the light of classical and modern Tafsir literature by using different Tafsir methods. These Surahs contain the Ayahs which advocate that diversity is a manifestation of God’s will, avoiding animosity and hostility toward non-Muslims, positive interactions and equitable treatment with them,

⁴ Shah Jillani, M.A.H. (2022). The Intersection of Islam, Quran, Hadith, and Pakistani Law: A Comprehensive Analysis. *Traditional Journal of Humanities, Management, and Linguistics*, January-June 2022, (Vol. 01, No. 01), 33 – 42.

⁵ The data has been accessed on 25-12-2024 from: <https://crss.pk/pakistans-violence-related-fatalities-mark-a-record-6-year-high-56-surge-in-violence-recorded-in-2023-crss-annual-security-report/>

⁶ A group of people who have been socially, economically, and educationally disadvantaged, and who have been victims of oppression and untouchability.

⁷ Accessed on 21-12-2024 from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_in_Pakistan

engaging them in a respectful and understanding manner and, ultimately a peaceful and friendly environment will be achieved.

In addition, these passages from Islam's Holy scripture promote global norms and values like justice, compassion, impartiality, and mutual respect by fostering educational initiatives to better understand di'ayah religious perspectives so that Pakistani society can build a harmonious and inclusive environment. Implementing these Quranic principles can help bridge divides and strengthen interfaith relationships in Pakistan.

For this study, the qualitative method will be employed to analyze the content of selected Quranic Ayahs. It would use a comparative approach of traditional Quranic interpretations from the literature of classical and modern exegesis. The main objective of the analysis is to unveil how these interpretations can be applied to promote inter-faith harmony in Pakistan.

Discussion

Here we'll discuss those global values and norms like universal brotherhood, justice & Equality for all human beings, a respectful environment for dialogue, fundamentals for peaceful co-existence & harmony, and respecting diversity and religious freedom, in the light of selected passages of the Holy Qur'an along with the commentaries of classical and modern times by applying different methods of Tafsir, the selected Ayahs from Surah al-Baqarah, al-Imran, al-Nisa, al-Maedah, al-Ana'am, Hud, al-Hajj, al-Ankabut, al-Shura, Fussilat, al-Hujurat, and al-Mumtahinah, along with their outcomes which are as follows:

Religious Pluralism by applying cross-referencing

The issue that sparks intense discussion is whether Jannah is reserved solely for the followers of Prophet Muhammad SAW, or if Jews, Christians and others are also included? An analysis below shall unveil the point:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصْرَى وَالصَّبِيَّانَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ⁸

Translation: "Surely, those who believed in Allah, and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabians, -whosoever believes in Allah and in the Last Day, and does good deeds - all such people will have their reward with their Lord, and there will be no reason for them to fear, nor shall they grieve".⁹

Though this Ayah states all the followers of early heavenly books and Prophets shall be rewarded and the reward is known as Jannah. Still, according to the early & classical Tafsir literature, more or less, we found that Jews, Christians & Sabians shall not be rewarded at all until they submit to Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) Shariah. For instance, Imam al-Razi¹⁰ in his

⁸ Al-Quran, 2:62

⁹ Justice Mufti Taqi Usmani, English Translation of Quran-e-Karim, accessed on 21-12-2024 from:

<http://www.noorehidayat.org>

¹⁰ Imam Fakhr-al-Din al-Razi, *the commentator of Mafatih-al-Gaib known as "Tafsir-e-Kabir" or Tafsir-e-Razi*

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

famous Tafsir ¹¹ while commentating on this Ayah quotes three different narrations, from Ibn Abbas (R.A), Sufyan Thawri, and Ahl Kalam:

“According to Ibn-e-Abbas, this means those who believed in Jesus before the coming of Muhammad and then stayed away from the evils of the Jews and Christians. For example, Quss bin Sa'idah, Bahira Rahab, Habib Najjar, Zayd bin Amr, Warqa bin Nawfal, Salman Farsi, Abu Dharr Ghafari, and Wafd-e-Najashi are included. It is as if Allah Almighty is saying that those who believed before the coming of Muhammad and those who followed the false religion of the Jews and the false religion of the Christians, whoever believed in Allah, the Hereafter, and Muhammad after the coming of Muhammad, Allah has a reward for them”.¹²

Imam al-Razi goes on to say:

“According to Sufyan Al-Thawri, at the beginning of Surah Baqarah, the way of the hypocrites was explained and then the way of the Jews was explained. According to the decree of Allah Almighty, at the beginning of Ayah 62, the believers are those who believed only with their tongues but not with their hearts, as if they are hypocrites. In this way, first the hypocrites, then the Jews, then the Christians and the Sabeans were mentioned here, which means that all these people with false beliefs if they bring true faith, they will be counted as believers in the sight of Allah”.¹³

He further states:

“According to Ahlul Kalam, (The group from the 2nd century of Islam, who was engaged in polemical disputes over sources of authority in Islamic Law) the believers at the beginning of the Ayah mean those who believe in Muhammad. The middle part of the Ayah refers to the future. And if their faith is permanent, they will be rewarded”.¹⁴

As mentioned, all three explanations, narrated by Imam al-Razi, clearly specified heavenly reward only for believers of Muhammad SAW (the current Muslims) and the followers of any other Prophets or books bared from heavenly reward until they start believing Prophet Muhammad SAW. But according to the modernists, this Ayah highlights the Quranic idea that supports religious pluralism, for example, Muhammad Asad, in his famous commentary of the Quran, “The Message of Quran”, translated the part of Ayah لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ¹⁵ (*li-kullin ja'alna min-kum shir'atan wa-minhaja*) as “Unto every one of you have We appointed a different law and way of life”¹⁶ which is more flexible and gives more space to other communities. It also puts stress on moral & ethical aspects which unites all believers except the particular legalistic differences within religious communities.

This Ayah emphasizes the Quranic concept that supports religious pluralism. In fact, not only does this Ayah, but also other Ayahs from Surah Maedah, such as 5:48 and 69, significantly contribute to the idea of religious pluralism. In Ayahs 2:62, 5:48, and 5:69, the Quran extends

¹¹ Fakhr-al-Din al-Razi, *Mafatih-al-Gaib*. known as “*Tafseer-e-Kabir*” or *Tafseer-e-Razi* (Lahore: Dar-al-Fikr, 1st edition, 1981)

¹² al-Razi: *Mafatih-al-Gaib*, 3/111-113.

¹³ al-Razi: *Mafatih-al-Gaib*, ?

¹⁴ Fakhr ad-din Razi: *Mafatih-ul-Gaib* 3/112.

¹⁵ Al-Quran, 5:48.

¹⁶ Muhammad Asad: *The Message of the Qur'an*, accessed 22-12-2024 from: <https://muhammadasad.com/5/48> /Muhammad Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an* (London: The Book Foundation, 2008)

its promise to the followers of various religions, explicitly including three groups—Jews, Christians, and Sabians—who are recognized as believers for three key reasons: their belief in God, the afterlife, and the performance of good deeds. The point that ensures the level of authenticity of this idea is that the 2:62 was revealed in the early Medinan period whereas the Maedah was regarded among the last revealed Surahs.

The same statement indicates that the order was not abrogated from the beginning to the end. Moreover, when we look at 5:48, there are three terminologies to be noticed; a. the word شِرْعَةً (*shir'ah*), b. مِنْهَاجًا (*Minhaj*) and 3. وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ (*Mashiyat-e-ilahi*). "Even without conducting a detailed analysis of this Ayah, its meaning becomes clear through a simple translation. If we focus on the Ayah, 'لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا' ('li-kullin ja'alna min-kum shir'atan wa-minhaja'), and extract the words 'Shir'ah' (شِرْعَةً) and 'Minhaj' (مِنْهَاجًا), we can understand their significance. The next part of the Ayah, 'وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ' ('wa-law shaa'a-llahu'), contains the word 'shaa'a' (شاء), referring to the will of God. The Ayah then states, 'لَجَعَلَكُمْ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً' ('laja'ala-kum ummat-nw wahidat'), meaning 'Had Allah willed, He would have made you a single community.' Following this, Allah answers the fundamental question of why there is diversity: 'لِيَبْلُوَكُمْ فِي مَا آتَاكُمْ فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْخَيْرَاتِ' ('li-yabuwa-kum fi-ma aata-kum fastabiq-ul-khairaat'), which translates as: 'But (He did not), so that He may test you in what He has given to you. Strive, then, to excel each other in good deeds.' Interestingly, the same notion of God's will for diversity is his plan to make humans thrive and compete with each other in doing good deeds or to make everyone examined for choosing the right path, making the right decisions, and living respectfully while having differences, is repeated in Surah al-Ana'am and Surah Hud, as stated below:

لَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَمَعَهُمْ عَلَى الْهُدَىٰ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ¹⁷

Translation: "Had Allah so willed, He would have brought all of them to the right path. So, never be one of the ignorant".¹⁸

لَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَلَا يَرَاؤُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ¹⁹

Translation: "Had your Lord willed, He would have made all the people a single community. But they will continue in their differences".²⁰

The concept of tolerance is truly intriguing; religious pluralism should not merely be tolerated, but must also be respected. Many Muslim scholars have considered this Ayah the virtual manifesto of the Quranic vision of religious pluralism. Religious pluralism is the divine mystery that has to be accepted to establish smooth inter-communal relations in public life.

Another contemporary Quranic exegete, Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani interprets Ayah 2:62 in the following words:

"The point made in this Ayah is that, despite the rebellious attitude of the Israelites mentioned in previous Ayahs, they should not be disappointed of Allah's mercy, and should not presume

¹⁷ Al-Quran, 6:35.

¹⁸ Taqi Usmani, English Translation of Quran-e-Karim, accessed on 21-12-2024 from: <https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran>

¹⁹ Al-Quran, 11:118.

²⁰ Taqi Usmani, English Translation of Quran-e-Karim, accessed on 21-12-2024 from: <https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran>

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

that their repentance is no more acceptable. If they repent by accepting Islamic faith, they will certainly be forgiven for their past, because Islam is not restricted to a particular nation, or a particular race or ethnic community. Its invitation is common to all. No matter how a man has been behaving earlier, so long as he submits to Allah's commandments in his beliefs and deeds, he is acceptable to Allah and will get his reward, even though he has been a Jew a Christian, or a Sabian. The essential requirement is that he believes in Allah which includes belief in His Oneness and in all the Prophets He sent, the last of them being Sayyiduna Muhammad PBUH, and in the Hereafter.”²¹

To get a complete sense of this later part of Ayah, now we'll learn and discuss the terms “Shir’ah (شرعة)” & “Minhaja (منهاجا)”, according to Imam Raghav Isphahni in his Mufaradat-ul-Quran:

“الشَّرْعُ: نهج الطَّرِيق الواضح. يقال: شَرَعْتُ لَهُ طَرِيقًا، والشَّرْعُ: مصدر، ثم جعل اسما للطريق النهج فقول له: شَرَعْتُ، وشَرَعْتُ، وشَرِيعَةً، واستعير ذلك للطريقة الإلهية. قال تعالى: لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا [المائدة/48]. فذلك إشارة إلى أمرين: أحدهما: ما سَخَّرَ اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ كُلَّ إِنْسَانٍ مِنْ طَرِيقٍ يَتَحَرَّاهُ مِمَّا يَعُودُ إِلَى مَصَالِحِ الْعِبَادِ وَعِمَارَةِ الْبِلَادِ.”²² لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا: قال تعالى

The Commentary clearly states that “shira’ah or Shari’ah” refers to “Tariqah-e-Ilahiyah”, and of course, any person who belongs to any religion believes that he/she is following heavenly path and the term “minhaja” refers to “at-tariq-ul-wazih” means the clear path which ensures salvation. Consequently, the Ayah indicates that giving respect and space to everyone is essential.

Imam Razi in his Tafseer-e-Kabir endorses the same point as he explains with reference to Lisan al-Arab²³ as well:

“(النهج) في اللغة بمعنى الطريق الواضح، فقد ورد في لسان العرب، طريق نهج، بفتح النون، وسكون الهاء: بين، واضح، ومنهج الطريق”²⁴

So, if the Quranic terms like mihaj and shi’rah has open meanings not subjective like Dr. Tahir ul Qadri has very transparent and open opinion as he translates 2:62:

"Indeed, those who have believed (in Muhammad [blessings and peace be upon him]) and those (before) who became Jews and the Christians and the Sabians—whoever (among them) believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds—their reward is certainly with their Lord. And there will be no fear for them, nor will they grieve."²⁵

²¹ Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani, The Meaning of the Noble Quran (Karachi: Maktaba Ma’atiful Quran, 2010) 22.

²² Imam Raghav Isphahani, Tafseer Mufaradat al Qur'an (Lahore: Islami Academy, 2020)1/563.

²³ Muhammad ibn Mukarram Ibn Manzur al-Ifriqi, *Lisan-al-Arab* (Beirut: Dar-Sader, 1993)15/288.

²⁴ Al-Razi, *Mafatih-ul-Gaib*, 3/111-113.

²⁵ Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri, *Irfan ul Quran* (Lahore: Minhaj-ul-Quran Publications, 2009) accessed on 25-12-2024 from: <https://www.irfan-ul-quran.com/english/Surah-al-Baqarah-with-english-translation/ruku/8>

This translation underscores the inclusivity of divine mercy and the importance of faith and righteous actions across different religious communities. He continues to highlight the same reflection in 5:48 too:

“For each of you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way. If Allah had willed, He would have made you one nation (united in religion), but (He intended) to test you in what He has given you; so strive with one another in good deeds.”²⁶

This translation highlights the Quran's role in confirming and safeguarding previous revelations and emphasizes the diversity of religious laws as a means of testing humanity, encouraging competition in virtuous deeds.

Javed Ahmed Ghamdi, a modern Muslim scholar offers nuanced interpretations of Quranic Ayahs 2:62 and 5:48, emphasizing the universality of faith and the Quran's role as a guardian over previous scriptures as he endorses the same as Dr. Qadri, on such occasions. Ghamidi interprets this Ayah as emphasizing the inclusivity and universality of salvation, contingent upon genuine faith in Allah and righteous conduct, regardless of religious affiliation.²⁷ He elaborates that the Quran does not condemn the People of the Book for not accepting Islam, even when the Prophet was among them.

As summary, the interpretation of Quranic Ayahs 2:62 and 5:48 differs significantly between traditional and modern commentators due to their varied contexts, methodologies, and theological priorities as we studied in a comparison of these approaches. The following table presents a more thorough explanation:

| Aspect | Traditional Approach | Modern Approach |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Context | Emphasis on historical context and supremacy of Islam. | Contextual relevance to modern interfaith dialogue. |
| Inclusivity | Limited inclusivity, with salvation tied to formal Islamic belief. | Broad inclusivity, focusing on faith and deeds. |
| Role of Quran | Overriding and abrogating previous scriptures. | Confirming and safeguarding the core of prior messages. |
| Interfaith Dynamics | Asserting the dominance of Islamic law. | Encouraging coexistence and moral competition. |

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Javed Ahmad Ghamidi, *Al-Bayan: An Annotated Quran Translation (Volume 1)* eng. Trans. Dr. Shehzad Saleem, (Lahore: Al-Mawrid, 2017) accessed on 25-12-2024 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkiNniYW0Rs&list=PLvDnnkYLWQcAPC78PcSjpB1cwq2KvgR8&index=67>

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

Common & Equal Grounds by applying linguistic analysis

As we progress and explore the next Ayah to seek the common and shared grounds in order to achieve interfaith harmony, this is 3:64 which is a profound call for unity and dialogue rooted in shared values and mutual respect. The linguistic structure, including the use of *kalimat sawā'in* and inclusive addresses, highlights the Quran's emphasis on common grounds between Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. It lays a foundation for interfaith harmony, focusing on equality, monotheism, and social justice, see below

قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِّنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ²⁸

Translation: “Say, “O people of the Book, come to a word common between us and between you, that we worship none but Allah, that we associate nothing with Him and that some of us do not take others as Lords instead of Allah.” Then, should they turn back, say, “Bear witness that we are Muslims”.”²⁹

In the reflection of the Ayahs before this, a delegation of the Christian community visited the Holy Prophet. The Prophet of Islam not only let them stay in the Holy Mosque (Masjid Nabawi) but hosted them with compassion and civility. However, there was a point when both parties almost reached the point of no return. Allah SWT instructed the Muslim community to engage with them on common grounds, saying, 'سَوَاءٌ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ' ('*swaa'e'm bainana wa-baina-kum*'), while treating them with respect and acknowledging them as a party. Simultaneously, this approach lays the foundation for initiating a dialogue that can pave the way for inviting others to the truth (*Da'awa & Tabligh*). Mawlānā Mawdūdī and Mufti Muḥammad Shafī have highlighted the same views while reflecting on the historical background of the specific guidelines for how to engage people of other faiths:

“The invitation here is for the two parties to agree on something believed in by one of them, the Muslims, and the soundness of which could hardly be denied by the other party, the Christians. For this was the belief of their own Prophets and had been taught in their scriptures”.³⁰

This Ayah: تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ unfolds an important principle of *Tabligh* (Preaching) and *Da'wah* (Preaching Islam). The principle requires that a person, who desires to carry his call to a group with beliefs and ideas different from his own, should follow a particular method. That method is to induce that group to unite only on what they both can agree to, for instance, when the Holy Prophet ﷺ gave the Byzantine ruler, *Hiraqal (Heraclius)* the call to Islam, he picked up a particular point on which there was mutual agreement, i.e., on the Oneness of Allah Almighty”.³¹

So, both Quranic interpreters agreed that this Ayah shed light on the significance of the principles of *Tabligh* (Islamic Preaching System) while engaging people from other faiths

²⁸ Al-Quran 3:64.

²⁹ Taqi Usmani, English Translation, accessed on 24-12-2024 from: <https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran>

³⁰ Mawlānā Mawdūdī, *Tafhim ul Quran, eng. Trans Towards Understanding the Qur'an.* by Zafar Ishaq Ansari (Lahore: The Islamic Foundation, 2006)1/276

³¹ Mufti Muhammad Shafi, *Ma'arif al Quran*, English translator: (Karachi: Maktaba Darul Uloom, 2010)1/398.

which cannot be achieved without giving everyone a level playing field for discussion and laying a common & equal ground.

Explaining the Ayah, Muhammad Asad includes Jews along with the Christians in the above Quranic invitation:

“Lit., "that we shall not take one another for lords beside God". Since the personal pronoun "we" obviously applies to human beings, the expression "one another" necessarily bears the same connotation. In its wider implication, the above call is addressed not merely to the Christians, who attribute divinity to Jesus and certain aspects of divinity to their saints, but also to the Jews, who assign a quasi-divine authority to Ezra and even to some of their great Talmudic scholars (cf. {9:30-31}).”³²

Below is the diagram which will show the difference of the two approaches towards the understanding of 3:64:

| Aspect | Traditionalists | Modernists |
|------------------------|---|--|
| "كَلِمَةٍ سِوَاءٍ" | A theological call to return to pure monotheism (Islam). | A broad ethical and spiritual principle for harmony. |
| Rejection of Shirk | Critique of doctrines like the Trinity or Ezra as "Son of God." | Emphasis on shared rejection of idolatry and polytheism. |
| Taking Humans as Lords | Condemnation of religious hierarchies and clergy systems. | Critique of authoritarianism and emphasis on equality. |
| Goal of Dialogue | Invitation to Islam as the ultimate truth. | Promotion of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. |
| Tone and Emphasis | Assertive, with an ultimate call to convert. | Cooperative, focusing on shared values and dialogue. |

Justice & Un-bias behavior by applying Scholarly consensus and analogical reasoning

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا ۚ وَإِن تَلَوَّا أَوْ تَعَرَّضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا³³

Translation: “O you who believe, be upholders of justice -witnesses for Allah, even though against (the interest of) your selves or the parents, and the kinsmen. One may be rich or poor,

³² Muhammad Asad, The Message of the Qur'an (London: The Book Foundation, 2008) 114.

³³ Al-Quran 4:135.

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

Allah is better caretaker of both. So do not follow desires, lest you should swerve. If you twist or avoid (the evidence), then, Allah is all-aware of what you do”.³⁴

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۗ اِعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ
وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ³⁵

Translation: “O you who believe, be steadfast for (obeying the commands of) Allah, (and) witnesses for justice. Malice against a people should not prompt you to avoid doing justice. Do justice. That is nearer to Taqwa. Fear Allah. Surely, Allah is All-Aware of what you do”.³⁶

While explaining the above Ayahs the classical interpretations focus on the imperative of maintaining justice even in the face of adversity or prejudice while, contemporary scholars stress the application of this principle in modern legal and social contexts to ensure fair treatment of all religious communities by Implementing legal reforms that protect the rights of religious minorities and ensure equal treatment under the law.

Both Ayahs, one from Surah al-Nisa and the other from Surah al-Maedah, convey the same message and use nearly identical wording except a little arrangement of words. In al-Nisa قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ “*Qawwameen-a- bil-qisti shuhada-a lillah*”, and in al-Maedah قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ “*Qawwameen-a- lillahi shuhada-a bil-qist*”. Yet their subject is almost the common denominator between them, that no compromise on exercising and serving justice with letter & spirit, even if it is the matter of someone closer to you like *Waldain* (the parents), and according to Maedah even if your opponent party is on the truth, you cannot quit justice because the beneficiary would be your enemy. Now a question arises: If the message is the same, why are there two different Ayahs? Of course, a person violates the requirements of justice either because of love & affection or hatred & enmity, the first Ayah deals earlier and the second Ayah deals later as mentioned by:

“The only difference is that justice is normally impeded, obstructed, or compromised by two things. Firstly, by love, kinship, friendship or link with someone which pushes the witness to testify in his favor... Secondly, justice is impeded by hostility towards someone who may take the witness to testify against him, while it could also cause an unfavorable judgment given by the judge or Qadi”.³⁷

Of course, if such close relationships cannot justify violation or hostility towards anyone, then how can it be acceptable to commit injustice against someone based on their religion and religious practices? Moreover, Maulana Mawdudi maintains that this is not only duty for an individual to practice but this must be institutionalized:

“It has been clearly stated that establishing, and maintaining justice and being steadfast on it is not simply the duty of governments and courts. The instruction has been given to every human being obligating him or her to fulfill the demands of justice by being personally firm about it

³⁴ Taqi Usmani, English Translation, accessed on 24-12-2024 from:
<https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran>

³⁵ Al-Quran 5:8.

³⁶ Taqi Usmani, English Translation, accessed on 24-12-2024 from:
<https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran>

³⁷ Maulana Mawdudi, Tafhīm al-Quran

and, at the same time, by making efforts that others too, stay equally firm about seeing justice done".³⁸

While explaining the same Ayahs, Mufti Muhammad Shafi also summarizes his long commentary by describing both reasons:

"In short, both Surah Al-Nisa and Surah al-Ma'idah carry two elements of guidance. The first commands full adherence to justice, whether dealing with friends or foes. No weakness should be shown on account of any relationship, friendly or hostile. The second instruction in these two Ayahs is that no one should avoid recording true evidence and stating the truth in honesty with Allah so that the decision-makers face no difficulty in arriving at a true, sound, and just decision".³⁹

But the modern interpreters interpret these Ayahs in a way that brings an emphasis on individual rights and justice beyond the religious faith and creed as the table below shows:

| Aspect | Traditional Approach | Modern Approach |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| Contextual Focus | Legal and communal frameworks, with justice as a societal obligation. | Individual, societal, and global justice with ethical universality. |
| Scope of Application | Primarily judicial and interpersonal relationships. | Broader, including global justice, human rights, and social equity. |
| Bias Consideration | Internal biases (family ties, wealth) and community harmony. | Internal and external biases, including systemic discrimination. |
| Interpretative Lens | Historical and jurisprudential, emphasizing obedience to divine law. | Ethical and reformist, emphasizing moral and societal progress. |
| Practical Examples | Application in Islamic courts and governance. | Application in modern legal systems, human rights advocacy, and global diplomacy. |

However, this is not limited to only these Ayahs but several Quranic passages strengthen this argument, for instance, Surah Al-Hadid:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Mufti Shafi, Ma'arif al Quran, 3/198.

⁴⁰ Al-Quran, 57:25.

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

Translation: “We have sent Our messengers with clear signs and We have sent with them the Book and the Balance, so that people stand firm with justice and we sent the iron in which there is great awe, and benefits for people”⁴¹

This Ayah asserts a common goal for humanity and that is to practice justice for peaceful co-existence.

Moreover, the following Ayah of Surah al-Baqarah states:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ⁴²

La ikraha fi-ddini qad tabayyana-rrushdu min-al-ghayyi”

Translation: There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong.⁴³

This Ayah affirms religious freedom and plurality, which is why traditional scholars regard it as a foundational principle of religious freedom in Islam. Traditional Quranic commentaries, deeply rooted in classical Islamic tradition, often drew on established sources such as Hadith, Sunnah, the opinions of the early generations (*Salaf*), and their methodology, which emphasized contextual factors like *Asbab al-Nuzul* (circumstances of revelation). These commentaries also relied heavily on Hadith, the sayings of the *Sahabah* (companions), and *Tabi'un* (successors), as well as textual and linguistic analysis of Quranic terms (e.g., the word "Ikrah," meaning compulsion). Their focus was on the historical context, with many commentators interpreting this Ayah in relation to Medina, where non-Muslims (such as Jews and Christians) were allowed to live freely under Muslim rule. They also emphasized the theological implications, affirming the principle that faith cannot be imposed, as belief requires sincerity, which cannot be coerced. For example, Tafsir al-Tabari (d. 923 CE) often highlighted narrations that explained the Ayah in the context of how Muslim converts treated their children. He mentions that converts were advised not to compel their children to abandon their prior faith forcibly. He discusses this Ayah in almost ten pages and narrates many narrations of Ansar (the hosts of Muslim immigrants from Makkah) asking about their children whether they are allowed to force them to embrace Islam or not? This Ayah was revealed in response to their urgent questions. However, he concludes that its application is specific to that particular context and not timeless, or that it was later abrogated when Muslims were permitted to engage in Qital.⁴⁴ Consequently, in its apparent meaning, this Ayah could be seen as a hindrance to the application of Jihad. Therefore, some commentators consider this Ayah stands abrogated. For example:

وقال آخرون: هذه الآية منسوخة، وانما نزلت قبل ان يعرض القتال⁴⁵

⁴¹ Taqi Usmani, English Translation, accessed on 24-12-2024 from:

<https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran>

⁴² Al-Quran, 2:256.

⁴³ Taqi Usmani, English Translation, accessed on 24-12-2024 from:

<https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran>

⁴⁴ A form of Jihad, that applied to a physical fight on the battlefield, known as Jihad bil saif, the last and ultimate option to do or die for the sake of Islam.

⁴⁵ Abu Ja'far Muhammad Ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan fi Ta'wil al-Quran OR Jami-al-bayan an ta'awil I Aay-il-Quran* known as Tafsir Tabari (Cairo: Markaz al-Buhuth wa-Diras, 1st edition, 2001) 4/553.

However, he concludes this discussion by prioritizing that this is Ayah is not abrogated but specific to the context as he maintains:

واولى هذه الاقوال بالصواب قول من قال: نزلت هذه الآية في خاص من الناس.⁴⁶

Imam al-Qurtubi (d. 1273 CE) in his famous Tafsir, Tafsir al-Qurtubi focused on the legal implications, discussing how this Ayah applies to the treatment of non-Muslims under Islamic rule. While, the Modern interpreters tend to contemporary concerns in mind, its universal relevance to modern values such as freedom of conscience, human rights, and interfaith harmony as they advocate for this principle to be upheld in contemporary societies to allow for true religious freedom of all individuals and communities in Pakistan and abroad. The modern approach differs from the traditional one because the traditional style is characterized by a detailed, hierarchical structure that cites multiple layers of classical sources, with less emphasis on engaging with broader philosophical or ethical dimensions. For example, Muhammad Asad's (d. 1992) style of interpretation is based on applicability and timelessness, while Fazlur Rahman's (d. 1988) focuses on Ayah like 2:256 as an articulation of the Quran's stance against coercion in all aspects of human life, linking it to Quranic ethics in a style of engagement with modern academic tools, including hermeneutics and contextual reinterpretation as well as broader philosophical analysis to address current global issues.

The same can be seen in the table below:

| Aspect | Traditional Commentators | Modern Commentators |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Contextual Focus | Historical context (e.g., Medina period) | Universal principles (e.g., human rights) |
| Sources | Primarily Hadith, Sunnah, and Salaf opinions | Historical and philosophical reasoning |
| Scope | Jurisprudential and theological implications | Ethical, global, and interfaith dimensions |
| Engagement | Textual and legal | Philosophical and modern socio-political |
| Purpose | Reinforcing traditional Islamic frameworks | Addressing contemporary challenges |

Universality and the world's alliance against cruelty and oppression

There is no doubt that the era we live in has become a global village, where events occurring in one corner of the world affect the society, economy, politics, and security of the entire world. The interests of every country are connected to other countries in some way or another. Especially after the events of 9/11, all the nations of the world are very sensitive about their security, and since the last century, the world has seen the alliance of major countries in the

⁴⁶ Ibid.

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

name of its protection. Now, it seems that everything is seen from a global, universal perspective. Therefore, modern commentators, while interpreting the Ayahs of the Holy Quran that are about jihad or fighting, do so by keeping in mind global and universal requirements, and there is no exaggeration in this because these Ayahs also contain this breadth that we can harmonize with the requirements of the global environment. For example, take Ayah number 40 of Surah Al-Hajj, which not only speaks of the protection of the places of worship of other religions of the world in literal and spiritual terms, but the interesting thing is that this is the Ayah that became the first evidence for the obligation of jihad, and in it, the permission of jihad with the sword or fighting has been conditioned by a specific aspect of oppression, that is, when you are expelled from your homes and your lands are occupied as if this obligation is limited only to personal defense, which also proven by the first word of the Ayah “udhina” اذن refers to the fightback and it is obvious that this is a basic human right and this is a universal and universal truth. The Quran also explains the true purpose and meaning of jihad here and speaks of such a collective effort that will not only ensure that everyone's places of worship are safe, but also that all people will remain peaceful and society will remain free from corruption and oppression. Here is the Ayah:

“Had Allah not been repelling some people by means of some others, the monasteries, the churches, the synagogues and the mosques where Allah’s name is abundantly recited would have been demolished. Allah will definitely help those who help Him (by defending the religion prescribed by Him.) Surely Allah is Powerful, Mighty”. (22:40)⁴⁷

This Ayah lauds the spirit global unity against oppression and aggression against humanity, just because of this Islam is considered This Ayah lauds the spirit of global unity against oppression and aggression against humanity, just because of this Islam is considered more than a religion; it is a deen of nature, it is revealed to address the natural needs, its root meanings are; peace, safety, security, protection, submission, and surrender, look! How does this Ayah support this claim? For this, we’ll do a linguistic analysis of the following words: “zulimu, dafu-llahi-nnasa, sawami’e, biyau-n, salawat, masjid”.

The word “Zulimu” refers to the oppressed community that may belong to any religion, cast, creed, or color, detailed argument is coming; the term “ dafu-llahi-nnasa” means “Allah SWT shall support and help them defend themselves against oppression & aggression, whosoever may be”. the next term is Sawami’e (صَوَامِعُ) is the plural of saumi’ah(صَوْمِعَةٌ) , which means a monastery that is a place of worship meant for Christian monks and hermits, the biyau-n (بِيْعُ) is the plural of beea’h (بَيْعَةٌ) , which means a Christian church and salawaat(صَلَوَاتُ) is the plural of salut (صَلَوَاتُ) , which means a Jewish synagogue. And of course, Masjid (مَسَاجِدُ) is the place of worship of Muslims.

This Ayah gives license for an Abrahamic alliance for global peace & protection to all the followers against any oppression by the infidels, the philosophy of the alliance is simple; mentioned in the word “Zulimu” a fi’el-e-Majhul, (verb in the passive voice) in plural form, the 3rd verb among the set of past verbs, total number count 14, so this word referred to the oppressed community and urge people to support this alliance against the oppressors who expelled the innocent people from their homes and occupied their land.

⁴⁷ Justice Mufti Taqi Usmani, English Translation, Quran-e-Karim
<https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran> accessed on 24-12-2024 11:00 PM

Interestingly, Mufti Muhammad Shafi sahib in his Tafseer, said; that the protection is only for the people of the book's worship places, and more specifically, for the time before be'ethat-e-Nabwi (Prophet Muhammad's announcement of his Prophecy) but we're unable to find any argument that support his opinion, except that; there are alterations in their Holy books, see below:

"This Ayah refers to such places of worship only and does not include the sacred places of those religions which were not founded on Prophet-hood and revelation (such as the fire-worshipping Magians, or the idol-worshiping Hindus) because they were at no time considered places deserving of respect".⁴⁸

This may be a popular opinion for traditional religious classes in the subcontinent but modern scholars & commentators like Muhammad Asad & others have different opinions altogether, now at that point of discussion It is imperative to add a passage from Surah Mumtahina, Surah 60, juz 28, here which discusses the same philosophy; fighting against oppression only and when the oppressors force people to evacuate and expel them from their lands otherwise do justice and live peacefully with everyone who may belong to any religion, the below Ayahs reads:

"It is hoped that Allah will bring about love between you and those of them with whom you have enmity. Allah is Powerful, and Allah is Most forgiving, Very-Merciful. Allah does not forbid you as regards those who did not fight you on account of faith, and did not expel you from your homes, that you do good to them, and deal justly with them. Surely Allah loves those who maintain justice. Allah forbids you only about those who fought you on account of faith, and expelled you from your homes, and helped (others) in expelling you, that you have friendship with them. Those who develop friendship with them are the wrongdoers". (60:7-9)⁴⁹

The common reason in both passages is that fighting for your defense is allowed when oppressors make you evacuate from your homes and occupy your land which reflects from the words "Allazeena ukhriju min diyarhim" in Hajj:40 & "walam yukhriju-kum min diyari-kum 60:8" and "wa-akhraju-kum min diyari-kum 60:9" all three Ayahs contain "Ikhraj" as a driver, basically from "Kha, Raa, Ja" originally Kharooj means self-evacuation without force, but when promoted to baab-e-if'aal the meaning jumps to next degree means forcefully evacuation, So, permission for fighting is purely based on the global principle of self-defense which is a great manifestation of Quran's concept of peace and harmony in every society and era.

Dialogue and rules of engagement by applying linguistic analysis

Now the biggest challenge in the modern era is to engage others with respect, even in disagreements while having shared beliefs to foster understanding and avoid hostility unless justice demands a firmer stance and maintenance of high standards by responding to negativity with positivity and moral excellence to strive to convert hostility into friendship through ethical behaviour. These are the core Islamic teachings reflect from the Ayahs below:

⁴⁸ Mufti Muhammad Shafi, *Ma'arif ul Quran* (Karachi: Maktaba-e-Darul-Uloom, 2009)6/10

⁴⁹ Justice Mufti Taqi Usmani, English Translation, Quran-e-Karim

<https://www.noorehidayat.org/index.php?p=quran> accessed on 24-12-2024 11:10 PM

An application of Traditional & Modern Methods in Specific...

“Do not debate with the people of the Book unless it is in the best manner, except with those of them who commit injustice. And say, “We believe in what is sent down to us and sent down to you, and our God and your God is One, and to Him we submit (ourselves)”.(29:46)⁵⁰

“Good and evil are not equal. Repel (evil) with what is best, and you will see that the one you had mutual enmity with him will turn as if he were a close friend”.(41:34)⁵¹

Both Ayahs insist on respectful & healthy discussions with the people of other faiths, when you abide by these commandments of Allah SWT, there Both Ayahs insist on respectful & healthy discussions with the people of other faiths, there will be friendship among you instead of hatred & enmity. For instance, in the 1st Ayah, the major theme of the Ayah; is either to avoid such discussions or involve with the commitment to well-wishing searching for the truth, and maintaining high morals, the rule is devised from the 1st part of the Ayah “Wala Tujadilu ahl-al-kitabi illa billati hiya ahsan”, through linguistic analysis we find that Allah SWT has begun with nafi (Wala Tujadilu ahl-al-kitabi, don’t argue with the people of the book) here, the word, “Tujadilu” is from the section “Mujadala” means argue from both sides, specifically, the Raghīb in Mufradat notes; “الجدال المفاوضة على سبيل المنازعة والمغالبة” clearly reflects, there must be an environment where both parties have equal & fair chance to present their stance, a conducive arrangement, and next the word “ahsan” is known as ism-e-tafzeel which referred to the best & top most state of a verb, since this word is driven from “Husan” means beauty, means beauty as mentioned by Raghīb in Mufradat; “الحسن عبارة عن كل مبهج مرغوب فيه”⁵²

so “ahsan” would mean the most beautiful atmosphere to engage in dialogue and discussions. The Later Ayah (41:34) further proves the same point that the golden rule for peaceful living and existence is to communicate with a manner of civility by endorsing respect for diversity which will turn both parties into great friends consequently. Scholars like Al-Tabari interpret this Ayah as a directive to engage in respectful and constructive dialogue with people of other faiths. Modern thinkers like Tariq Ramadan emphasize the importance of inter-faith dialogue in building peaceful and cooperative societies by establishing inter-faith dialogue forums and community centers where people of different faiths can engage in meaningful conversations.

Conclusion

The analysis reveals that both traditional and modern interpretations of the Quranic Ayahs converge on the principles of peace, justice, and respect for diversity. However, modern interpretations often emphasize the application of these principles in contemporary socio-political contexts, making them more relevant for addressing current challenges in Pakistan. Achieving interfaith harmony in Pakistan requires a multifaceted approach grounded in Quranic principles. The Quran emphasizes mutual respect, understanding, and peaceful coexistence among diAyah religious communities. Achieving inter-faith harmony in Pakistan requires a comprehensive approach that incorporates both traditional and modern interpretations of Quranic Ayahs. By promoting education, dialogue, justice, and religious

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Imam Raghīb Isphahani, Tafseer Mufradat al Qur'an (Lahore: Islami Academy, 2020) 2/118.

freedom, Pakistan can foster a more inclusive and harmonious society. Future research should explore the practical implementation of these strategies and their impact on inter-faith relations in Pakistan.

Suggestions

Key Quranic suggestions for fostering interfaith harmony include:

The Quran acknowledges the recognition of diversity & existence of different religious communities and stresses the importance of recognizing and respecting these differences. Surah Al-Hujurat (49:13) highlights that diversity in religion and ethnicity is part of God's divine plan. The Quran advocates for respectful dialogue as a means to build understanding. Surah Ankabut (29:46) encourages Muslims to engage in constructive discussions with people of other faiths without hostility. The Quran emphasizes shared values such as justice, compassion, and respect for human dignity. Surah Al-Mumtahina (60:8) encourages Muslims to act with kindness and fairness towards those who do not oppose them on religious grounds. Quranic teachings advise against hostility and animosity. Surah Al-Ma'idah (5:8) urges believers to uphold justice and equity, even towards those who hold different beliefs. Education plays a crucial role in promoting interfaith understanding. Quranic teachings support the pursuit of knowledge and encourage educating individuals about different religious traditions and values. To conclude, highlighting individuals and communities that exemplify interfaith harmony can inspire others to follow suit by establishing interfaith committees and councils that include representatives from different religious communities can facilitate dialogue and address grievances and by implementing these principles, Pakistan can foster a climate of interfaith harmony, built on mutual respect and understanding, aligning with Quranic guidance.