

Progressive Islam in Practice

ISLAM & RACISM

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Narrated Musnad Ahmad bin Hambal "O people, your Lord is one and your father Adam is one. There is no favor of an Arab over a foreigner, nor a foreigner over an Arab, and neither white skin over black skin, nor black skin over white skin, except by righteousness. Have I not delivered the message?"

PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)



WHAT ARE RACISM & RACIAL BIAS?

RACISM

The belief that a group of humans possess different inherited attributes based on their race that make them inherently superior or inferior based on their racial categorization.

IMPLICIT BIAS

Feelings, attitudes, or beliefs and behaviors related to these beliefs that an individual unknowingly or unconsciously holds about a racial group.

EXPLICIT BIAS

Feelings, attitudes, or beliefs and behaviors related to these beliefs that an individual knowing or consciously holds about a racial group.



HOW DOES RACISM MANIFEST IN THE MUSLIM WORLD?

- State-sanctioned racism directed at Malaysia's minority Chinese & Indian populations results in economic discrimination & higher rates of policing and incarceration
- In Somalia, Somali Bantus face discrimination from the lighter skinned ethnic Somalis who are indigenous to the region.
- In Libya the violent, racially motivated attacks on the migrants from sub saharan is a part of a long history of racism towards those who are not light-skinned Arabs.
- Black Muslims in the US face intense discrimination and stereotyping within the Muslim community



HOW DOES RACISM MANIFEST IN THE MUSLIM WORLD? CONT.

- In Oman, descendants of servant tribes and slaves experience widespread discrimination, decades after slavery was declared illegal
- Maids & migrant workers from South and Southeast Asia in Saudi Arabia are persecuted victims of racism facing exploitation, wage theft, and physical abuse
- In Mauritania, state sanctioned policies see severe discrimination based on race amounting to an undeclared apartheid
- The Sudanese government's pro Arab campaign was associated with apartheid like policies and ethnic cleansing of Sudan's Non-Arab populations



WHAT DOES THE QUR'AN SAY ABOUT DIVERSITY?

The Holy Qur'an specifically states that distinction of races and ethnic groups was an intentional act by Allah (SWT) to encourage us to experience these differences and enjoy in the blessing and joys that come from such divine diversity.



DIVERSITY IN THE QUR'AN

And of Allah's signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge. (30:22)

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted. (49:13)

If Allah had so willed, They would have made you a single people, but (Their plan is) to test you in what They hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to Allah; it is They that will show you the truth of the matters in which ye dispute (5:48)



WHAT DOES THE QUR'AN SAY ABOUT ANTI- RACISM?

Not only does the Qur'an command us to celebrate diversity, but it also calls on all Muslims to be active and vocal against the persecution of this diversity, regardless of the source of oppression and persecution or the target of oppression.



ANTI-RACISM IN THE QUR'AN

O you who believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witness in justice, and do not let the hatred of people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah. Indeed, Allah is [fully] aware of what you do. (5:8)

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, 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. (4:135)

O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name [i.e., mention] of disobedience after [one's] faith. And whoever does not repent - then it is those who are the wrongdoers. (49:11)



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