

# The Holy Qur'ān Talks the Rights of Persons with Special Needs

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**Abstract-** This research focuses on the Qur'ānic approaches in caring persons with special needs; their education, religious, health, moral, psychological as well as social rights. The aim of this research was discovering the rights of persons with special needs in the Holy Qur'ān. As a result, the research attains the verse 24:61 talks regarding rights of this group of people. It highlights what to care, who is responsible for caring them, what are the methods used, and the aspects of their care. The Qur'ān does not use the word 'disable'. It uses the blind, daft, lame, and sick to establish their rights in family and society in a country.

**Index Terms-** disability, human rights, education rights, social security, basic rights, persons with special needs

## I. INTRODUCTION

Persons with special needs are those people who are suffering from an illness, injury or condition that makes it difficult for them to do some work that other people do easily<sup>1</sup>. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that there are more than one billion people with disabilities. They present about 15 per cent of the total population<sup>2</sup>. The history of West shows the phenomenon of neglect and harassment to persons with special needs that culminated in killing the disabled babies in few ancient European societies. The superstitious beliefs were responsible for this setback. For instance, it was believed that people those were suffering from intellectual and disabilities were possessed by devil and evil spirits. Even philosophers and scholars held such belief<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Md. Sirajul Islam, Sofiah Samsudin (2020). People with Special Needs in Ancient Societies: A comparative Study between few Early Philosophers and Islam. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 10(5). DOI:10.29322/IJSRP.10.05.2020.p10137

<sup>2</sup> Lebe, S. S., Mulej, M., Zenko, Z., & Sardi, V. (2014). Systemic thinking for socially responsible innovations in social tourism for people with disabilities. Kybernetes.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad, M.Y. The Prophet's Care for People With Special Needs, Available in <http://www.usislam.org/islamiyouth/Muhammad/Prophet's%20Care%20for%20People.htm>, Retrieved on 5 September, 2013.

Before 2000 of the Common Era with the cult of the 'body beautiful', the infanticide of disabled babies becomes common. Likewise, in Rome children with special needs are drowned in the Tiber, and people who considered being 'mentally defective' are prohibited from marrying<sup>4</sup>.

Before revealing the Holy Qur'ān to the last Messenger of Allah (May Allah peace be upon him) there are persons with special needs were depriving from their fundamental rights; there was not life right for those group of people in ancient society<sup>5</sup>. People of Madinah used to prevent the lame and blind people from sharing food with them because they are deemed and repulsive<sup>6</sup>. Almighty Allah reveals in the Holy Qur'ān a legislative verse (24:61) to eradicate this discrimination among human as well as establish rights of persons with special needs.

## II. THE FOUNDATION IN CARING THE PARSONS WITH ESPECIAL NEEDS IN THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

Almighty Allah reveals legislative verse in the Holy Qur'ān to eliminate from society superstitious belief; discrimination; cruel act; harsh dealing; rude behavior; brutality towards persons with special needs. The divine legislation to establish rights of persons with special needs and to enhance interaction between persons and persons with special needs by eradicating the discrimination and over caution of few people. Almighty Allah proclaims the legislation:

*"There is no blame on a blind person, nor is there any blame on any lame one, nor is there any blame on a sick person,*

<sup>4</sup> Andrew H. (2013) A Disability History Timeline The struggle for equal rights through the ages.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Mus'ad Yaqut, The Prophet's Care for People With Special Needs, Available in: <http://www.usislam.org/islamiyouth/Muhammad/Prophet's%20Care%20for%20People.htm>, accessed on 05/September/2013.

<sup>6</sup> Md. Sirajul Islam, Sofiah Samsudin (2020). People with Special Needs in Ancient Societies: A comparative Study between few Early Philosophers and Islam. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 10(5). DOI:10.29322/IJSRP.10.05.2020.p10137

*nor on yourselves in that you eat (something) from your own homes or from the homes of your fathers or the homes of your mothers or the homes of your brothers or the homes of your sisters or the homes of your paternal uncles, or the homes of your paternal aunts or the homes of your maternal uncles or the homes of your maternal aunts or from the places the keys of which you have under your control, or from (the home of) your friend. There is no sin on you if you eat together or separately. So when you enter homes, greet one another with Salam, a greeting prescribed by Allah, which is blessed, pleasant. This is how Allah explains the verses to you, so that you may understand”* (Al- Qur’ān 24:61)<sup>7</sup>.

### III. REASON OF REVEALING THIS VERSE

Al-Ṭabarī (839 CE - 923 CE) said that there are different concerning among the scholars about the interpretation of this verse in the sense in which reason was revealed in it. Some of them said, it was reveal on permit for Muslims in eating with the people with special needs such as the blind, lame, sick and so on. It is because they (non-special needs Muslim) were abstained from to eat with them from their food, fearing for they may come in eating with them of their food is something which Allah forbids them<sup>8</sup>. Almighty Allah says:

*“O you who believe, do not devour (eat) each other’s property by false means (unjustly) unless it is trade conducted with your mutual consent. Do not kill one another. Indeed, Allah has been Very-Merciful to you”* (Al- Qur’ān 4: 29).

Ibn Abbas said: when revealed the verse: “O you who believe, do not devour (eat) each other’s property by false means (unjustly)” (Qur’ān 4:29). Muslims said that Allah forbids us to eat our money, asset foods ourselves with injustice. In fact, food is the best funds; it is not permissible for one of us to eat at one without justified way. Therefore, the people abstained from that, afterwards Almighty Allah reveals the verse (24:61).

Al-Dihhaq said: Before coming the Prophet (may Allah peace be upon him) to Madinah, the people of Madinah were neither mixing in their food the blind nor the patient. Some of them said they are dirty and disgust. Some of them said, the patient does not meet the food as meet the healthy person, and the lame cannot competition on the food, and the blind cannot see the good food. Therefore, Almighty Allah reveals, “there is no sin on you” having food with patient and the blind and the lame. It means O people it is not blame upon you in blind, lame, and patient to eat with them and they with you<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Al-Qur’an, Surah an-Nur 24:61), Translator Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd Abū Ja‘far 2000. Jām‘i al-Bayān fī Ta‘wīl Al-Qur’an, Review by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shakīr, publisher: Muassasatu al-Risalah, 1st edition. Vol.19. P. 219.

<sup>9</sup> Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd Abū Ja‘far 2000. Jām‘i al-Bayān fī Ta‘wīl Al-Qur’an, Review by Aḥmad Muḥammad Shakīr, publisher: Muassasatu al-Risalah, 1st edition. vol.19. p219.

<sup>10</sup> Al-Nuhas, A.J (2001). Ma’ni al-Qur’an, Vol. 4, P. 557.

Abydullah Ibn Abdullah said: when the people were going to the battle, paid their keys to the persons with special needs, and led them to having the food from their house, but those did not do it. On this matter Almighty Allah reveals this verse<sup>10</sup>.

In addition, there were the *Ansars* those abstained from having the food together the blind, the lame and the patient. They were saying with ethically that we can see the good food but he (blind person) cannot not see the good food, and the lame do not able to sitting therefore he cannot take the food that can take the normal man, and the patient weakens in eating. Hence, they abstained from the persons with special needs in having food with them (in fearing may they (Ansar) eat more and good food then persons with special needs, and they may cannot eat with freedom<sup>11</sup>. In this case, Almighty Allah reveals this verse.

### IV. RHETORIC IN THIS VERSE

The renowned interpreter Wahbah Mustafa al-Zuhayli (1932–2015) shows vary important ‘*al-balāghah*’ (rhetoric) in this verse that is ‘*Iṭnāb bi takrār lafẓ al-Ḥaraj*’ (enlargement the issue by repeating the word ‘*al-Ḥaraj*’) <sup>12</sup>. As we see in the verse Almighty Allah says: “There is no blame on a blind person, nor is there any blame on any lame one, nor is there any blame on a sick person, nor on yourselves in that you eat (something) from your own homes or from the homes of your fathers.” (Al- Qur’ān 24:61). In addition, ‘*Iṭnāb bi takrār lafẓ al-Ḥaraj, ta’kīd lil ḥukmi shr‘ā*’ (Enlargement by repeating the word ‘*al-Ḥaraj*’ a confirmation or authorization of the rule of Sharia)<sup>13</sup>. “*There is no blame on yourselves in that you eat (something) from your own homes*” (Al- Qur’ān 24:61). It mean there is nothing wrong you have to eat out of your houses, and including the homes of children, although has not mentioned them, because the house of son like the house of father as well as the wealth of son like father’s wealth <sup>14</sup>.

“*On yourselves*” to indicate that eating with those who are exempted without prejudice according to their well healthy and status, and there are required humbleness that expand on people and a statement as required by the bonds of love and relevant and affection among the people<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Al-Farrā’, Abū Zakarīyā’ Yaḥyā ibn Ziyād ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn Maṣṣūr al-Daylamī al-Farrā’ (-207 H). Ma’āni- al-Qur’ān, Dār al-Maṣriyah- Miṣr. Vol. 3, P. 223.

<sup>12</sup> *Al-Ḥaraj* mean there is no blame.

<sup>13</sup> Al-Zuhayli, Wahbah Mustafa (1418.H). Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al- ‘Aqidah wa al-Sharī‘ah wa al-Manhaj. Dār al-Fikr al-Mu‘āṣar – Dimashq, 2nd edition, Vol.18, P300.

<sup>14</sup> Al-Zuhayli, Wahbah Mustafa (1418.H). Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al- ‘Aqidah wa al-Sharī‘ah wa al-Manhaj. Dār al-Fikr al-Mu‘āṣar – Dimashq, 2nd edition, vol.18, p301.

<sup>15</sup> Al-Zuhayli, Wahbah Mustafa (1418.H). Tafsīr al-Munīr fī al- ‘Aqidah wa al-Sharī‘ah wa al-Manhaj. Dār al-Fikr al-Mu‘āṣar – Dimashq, 2nd edition, vol.18, p304.

## V. DERIVING JUSTIFIED RIGHTS OF DISABILITY FROM THE VERSE

Although the Qur'ānic statement in this verse regarding having the food with persons with special needs or individual. According to the above-mentioned interpretation by al-Zuhayli, there has an implicit indication in this verse to establish other justified rights of disability in their family and social life. For example, sympathy, love, kindness, humbleness, and so forth those fortify the relationship of people with the persons with special needs in family and society. Moreover, it will not be overdo that this verse is referring to the inclusion of them in education, religious practice, health care, moral, psychological as well as social status with other persons.

Thus, the verse has been revealed as a complete mercy on the persons with special needs to console, relieve and support them. It saved them from the most dangerous psychological diseases that may affect them if they suffer from isolation and withdrawal from the social life. In addition, the Creator conferred dignity on the children (both male and female) of Adam. Nobody has right to neglect or unjust to any child of Adam. There is no any discrimination between person and person with special needs, rich and poor, white and black in Islam. The divine knowledge established this honor of human beings. Almighty Allah says:

*"We have conferred dignity on the children (both male and female) of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance variety of good and pure things; and made them much superior to many of those whom We have created" (Al- Qur'ān 17: Verse 70).*

The early interpreter of the Qur'ān Imam al-Qurtubi (1214 AD-1273 AD) interpreted the verse *"We have honored the sons of Adam"* here "the intended of honor" is what Allah made them of the honors, virtues and beauties<sup>16</sup>.

Islam does not see disability as a barrier to total social inclusion. Islam encourages Muslims to deal with all people irrespective and equally regardless of their race, colour, language, gender and so on. This is reflected in the Holy Qur'ān that all people created from one person and there is no difference between them<sup>17</sup>.

*"O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into races and tribes, so that you may identify one another. Surely the noblest of you, in Allah's sight, is the one who is most pious of you. Surely Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (Al- Qur'ān , 49: Verse 13).*

Interpretation of the verse in Tafsir al-Jalalayn: O mankind! We have indeed created you from a male and a female (from Adam

and Eve). In addition, We made you nations (shu'ūb is the plural of sha'b, which is the broadest category of lineage). and (We made you) tribes (qabā'il, which are smaller than nations, and are followed by 'amā'ir, 'tribal districts', then butūn, 'tribal sub-districts', then afkhādh, 'sub-tribes', and finally fasā'il, 'clans'. For example, Khuzayma is the sha'b, while Kināna is the qabīla, Quraysh is the 'imāra, Qusayy is the batn, Hāshim is the fakhdh, and 'Abbās is the fasīla) that you may come to know one another (ta'ārafū: one of the two tā' letters (of tata'ārafū) has been omitted). You may acquire knowledge of the customs of one another. And not to boast to one another of (whose is the more) noble lineage, for pride lies only in (the extent to which you have) fear of God. Truly, the noblest of you in the sight of God is the most God-fearing among you. Truly God is Knower, of you, Aware, of your inner thoughts<sup>18</sup>.

In the life example of Prophet (May Allah peace be upon him) we see the Prophet how was justice and sensible to honor of human, impartiality regarding humans' dignity. It is a great lesson for whole human to apply the ethics without discrimination while dealing with people.

He says: 'Verily Allah does not look at your bodies or at your faces but He looks at your hearts'<sup>19</sup>. On the one hand, this hadith teaches that person who disabled he should not feel shy to participate to social gathering. On the other hand, people also should not avoid them because Allah does not look at appearance of body or face of human rather He looks at people' heart. Is it pure or corrupted. So, people whose hearts are pure, they are compassionate and merciful to people, they have humility, they not abhor the disabled people.

Prophet Muhammad (May Allah peace be upon him) was a great model for human honor in general. For example, narrated from Jabir Ibn Abdullah (may Allah be blessed upon them) said: There was passed us a funeral, so stood up the Prophet peace be upon him for that, and we stood up following the Prophet, and we said: O Messenger of Allah! It's a Jewish funeral, «the Messenger of Allah said: if you have seen the funeral stand up»<sup>20</sup>. In another *sanad*: «there was a funeral passed by the Prophet (may Allah peace be upon him) and He stood up. He was told by his companion that is a Jewish funeral. He said: Is not person?»<sup>21</sup>.

Thus, the Messenger of Allah (may Allah peace be upon him) had established the honor of human without discrimination between Muslim and other faith, even to the date body of human. In spite of this, on the one hand, it is anybody cannot deny that there are a lot of persons with special needs have been depriving from their fundamental rights till now, both in Muslim and non-Muslim societies around the world. On the other hand, we would like to acknowledge with pleasure that the modern world is

<sup>16</sup> Al-Qurtbi, Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Ahmad ibn Abi Bakar, (2003). Al-Jami' li Ahkam al-Qur'an, review: Hisham Samir al-Bukhari, publisher: Dar Alam al-Kutub-Riyadh, Vol.10, p 293.

<sup>17</sup> Al-Zyoud, N., 2011. An investigation into the current service provision for students with learning difficulties in Jordan: Teachers' perspectives (Doctoral dissertation, Brunel University School of Sport and Education PhD Theses).

<sup>18</sup> Jalaluddin, M. & Jalaluddin, S. (2007). Tafsir al-Jalalayn, translated by Feras Hamza, edited and with an introduction by Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talat. Royal Aal al-Bayt institute of

Islamic Taught: Amman, Jordan. Vol. 1, P. 624. Arabic version Tafsir al-Jalalayn, Cairo: Darul hadith, 1st edition, Vol.1, P. 687.

<sup>19</sup> Muslim, I. H., (2007). Şhiḥ Muslim, review by Muḥammad Fu'ad 'Abdul Baqi, Publisher: Bayrūt - Daru Ahyau Turas al-Arabi, Vol. 4, P.1986, No. 2564.

<sup>20</sup> Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad Ibn Ismail (1987). Şaḥiḥ Al-Bukhārī, review Mustufa Daib al-Baga, Publisher:Dār Ibn kasir- Bayrūt, 2nd edition, Vol. 2, P. 85, No.1312.

<sup>21</sup>Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad Ibn Ismail (1987). Şaḥiḥ Al-Bukhārī, review Mustufa Daib al-Baga, Publisher:Dār Ibn kasir- Bayrūt, 2nd edition, Vol. 2, P. 85, No.1312.

starting research to safe and develop the life of persons with special needs. However, it is essential to enhance this effort according to rapidly increasing number of persons with special needs around the world especially in developing countries.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This verse is foundation of rights of people with special needs. It presents complete mercy to consoling, relieving, and supporting them. Hence, to be more sensible and responsible to the persons with special needs and to make sure significant improvements in their lives, we should to pay strong attention to the Holy Qur'an and the Prophetic dealings with those people in order to enhance their social, educational and financial integration with communities. As a result, they will be able to obtain their education, job opportunity, social status and security of life and so forth with others in our running society.

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