INTER-FAITH DIALOGUE:

QUR’ANIC AND HISTORICAL APPROACHES

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(PAHANG)
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ABSTRACT

Inter-religious discourse is a pertinent aspect of comparative religion studies especially in a pluralistic society. By pluralism it refers to the differences in terms of beliefs held by the believers towards the concept of God, beliefs in their sacred texts, beliefs in the teachings of their respective prophets, beliefs in the religious community, ethics and culture which function as the backbone of a religion. History has proven that inter-faith dialogue is not new as it existence can be traced in both the Islamic and Western civilizations.

However, limited knowledge and understanding on this issue resulted it to be viewed negatively especially by the Muslim. Most of them are not aware of the Qur’anic verses on the concept of inter-faith dialogue and how it was practiced by the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) since the first year of Hijrah. In addition, there do not realize the importance role inter-faith dialogue as an effective method of da‘wah propagation of the faith. Thus, this book aimed to literally analyze the basic concept on inter-faith dialogue and how it is used in Qur’an, among the elements of dialogue identified from the analysis are (1) the basis of dialogue: objectives, principles, guidelines, methodologies and rules of dialogue; (2) history of inter-faith dialogue: relationship; (3) Qur’anic verses on the Prophet’s dialogue; (4) understanding of a religion and its tradition; (5) understanding of the inter-faith dialogue, which took place during the rise of civilizations, (6) current context, needs and obligations; (7) in reference to current context and (8) in global perspective.

Thus, a conclusion and accurate definition can be specified clearly, theoretically and practically. Besides, the clear relationship between the inter-faith dialogue and da‘wah will be analyzed as practiced by Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.). It is also important to further analyze the aspects contributing a dialogue as sometimes a peace, non-violent dialogue can be transformed into a debate or at times as provoking with one’s faith (Islamophobia as has been witnessed between Prophet Muhammad and the Jews in Medina and the Sargon Christian). Thus, with a solid ground of understanding, the Muslims are able to put inter-faith dialogue into practice and view it as part of the new method of da‘wah.
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"Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious; for thy Lord knoweth best, who have strayed from His Path, and who receive guidance"

Sūrah al-Nahl (16):125

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