



Islam

VS

Racism



Despite the tremendous cultural, scientific and technological progress and the emergence and spread of human rights organizations everywhere in the twenty-first century, racism still exists in the most developed countries of the world.

Islam has fought all forms of racism:

✦ The reason for Islam's effort to establish relationships between people is for them to get to know one another and cooperate in goodness with one another irrespective of their racial, geographical and linguistic differences.

Allah Almighty says: (O Mankind, indeed we have created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.) *The Qur'an, 49:13*



✦ Islam strictly forbids discrimination on the basis of race, colour or language. Members of the early Muslim community consisted, among many others, of Suhayb the Roman, Salman the Persian, Bilal the Abyssinian and 'Umar the Arab.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, said: “People, your Lord is One and your father [Adam] is one. An Arab is not better than a non-Arab, nor is a non-Arab better than an Arab; a white person is not better than a black person,

nor is a black person better than a white person except in piety.”

He also said: “You are all the progeny of Adam, and Adam was created from dust.” Condemning ‘asabiyyah, which is fanatic solidarity based on kinship and tribal affiliation to support oppression, he further said: “Whoever calls to ‘asabiyyah is not one of us; whoever fights for ‘asabiyyah is not one of us; whoever dies supporting ‘asabiyyah is not one of us.”

✦ Islam does not discriminate between people on the basis of their social status either. Therefore, there is no difference whatsoever between the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, the attractive and the non-attractive, nor between the master and the servant. The only criterion for distinguishing between people is piety which can only be attained by doing what Allah commands and avoiding what He forbids, as well as doing good deeds.

A man once passed by Allah’s Messenger ﷺ. The Prophet turned to a man who was seated near him and asked: “What do you think of this man?” “He is a member of the nobility”, he replied. “I swear by Allah that if he asks for a woman’s hand, he should be given her in marriage; if he intercedes for someone, his intercession should be accepted; and if he speaks, he should be listened to”. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ, kept silent. Soon afterwards when a poor man passed by, Allah’s Messenger asked the man seated near him again, “What do you think this one?” “Messenger of Allah,” he replied: “this man is one of the poor Muslims. If he asks for a woman’s hand in marriage, he does not deserve to marry her; if he intercedes for someone, his intercession should not be accepted; and if he speaks, he should not be listened to.” Thereupon, Allah’s Messenger ﷺ, said: “This poor man is better than such a large number of the first type of men as to fill the earth.” This does not mean, however, that every poor person is better than every rich person. Again the sole criterion for differentiation is based

on religion and piety, not wealth or poverty.



✦ Islam strongly rejects discrimination when imposing penalties:

Whoever commits a crime will be punished for it, regardless of his colour, social status, lineage or closeness to the ruler or judge.

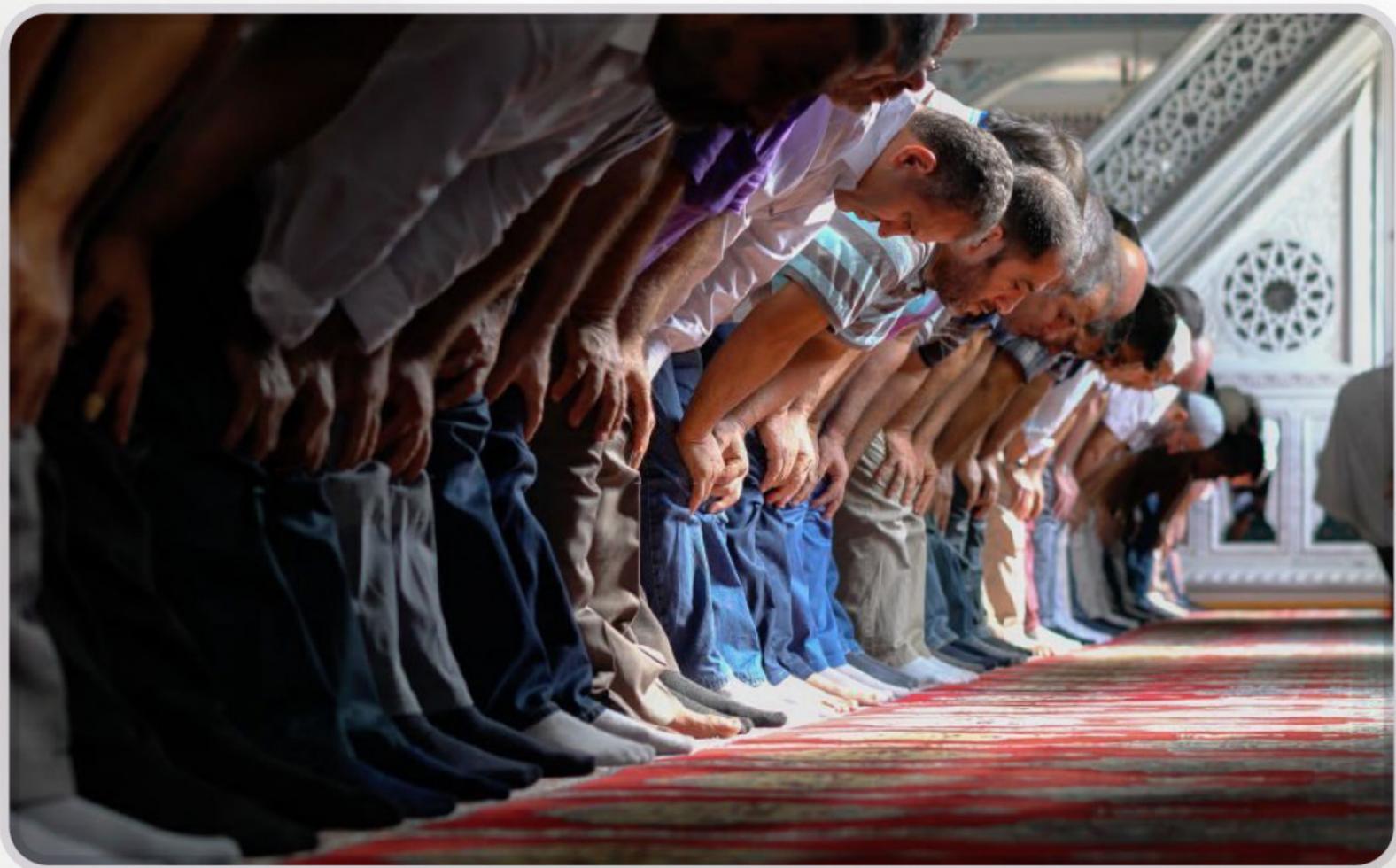
✦ A cursory look at the acts of worship in Islam will reveal that racism has no place in this religion:

DURING PRAYER: When Muslims line up shoulder to shoulder in prayer, for instance, we may find in the same row a white person standing next to a black person, an Arab next to a non-Arab, a poor person next to a rich person, and the employer next to the employee.

The prayer leader, or imam, himself could be a poor man in a lower-status occupation, and will be leading doctors, military officers and people holding top executive positions simply because he knows the Qur'an better than all of them.

DURING HAJJ [THE OBLIGATORY PILGRIMAGE]: or pilgrimage, we find among the millions of pilgrims the rich and the poor, the honourable and the lowly, the white and the black, Arabs and non-Arabs and the ruler and ruled, all gathering together in the same place, at the same time, and dressed in the same clothing.

They have the same purpose which unites them all, worshipping One Single God and following the same prophet, thereby causing all differences in language, colour and geographical territories to melt away into this brotherhood of faith.



This is bound to help them achieve unity of faith and establish Islamic brotherhood and renounce all forms of racism in this great season.

DURING RAMADAN: During the month of Ramadan, all Muslims, regardless of their social class, colour and ethnicity, observe the fast at the same time. When the call to the Fajr (dawn) prayer is announced, they all abstain from food and drink; and when the Maghrib (sunset) call to prayer is announced, they all break their fast.

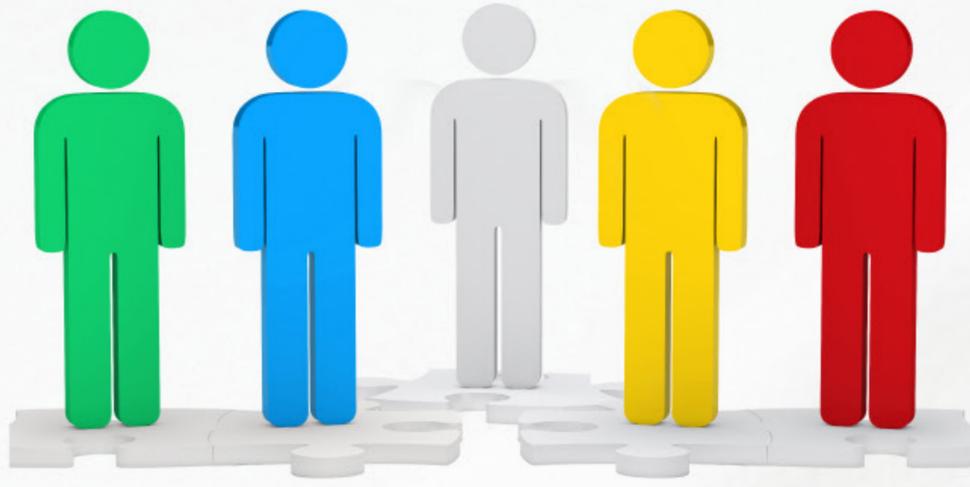
No one is allowed to eat or drink after the dawn call to prayer or before the sunset call to prayer, regardless of their colour, country or social standing

✦ Racism is one form of arrogance against which Islam sternly warns. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ, once warned, “Whoever has in his heart as much pride as a grain of mustard seed will not enter Paradise.” He also said: “Allah has revealed to me that you must all be humble, so that you do not oppress or disdain one another.”

Therefore, the criterion for differentiation between people in Islam is piety and good deeds, not one's lineage or any other worldly considerations. Allah Almighty says: (The most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.)

The Qur'an, 49:13





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