

AL-QURAAAN'S CONCEPT OF HISTORY

WITH THE NAME OF ALLAH, MOST GRACIOUS, MOST MERCIFUL.

Al-Quraan is not a book of history --- it is a divine verdict on history.

The Islamic concept of history offers us hope, confidence and strength.

In Sura Hud (ch. 11): verse 120 we read:-

"All that We relate to you of the stories of the messengers, --- with it We make firm your heart: in them there comes to you the truth, as well as an exhortation and a message of remembrance to those who believe."

And in Sura Yusuf (ch. 12): verse 111 we are told:-

"There is, in their stories, instruction for men endued with understanding. It is not a tale invented, but a confirmation of what went before it, --- a detailed exposition of all things, and a guide and a mercy to any such as believe."

The superb manner in which Al-Quraan discusses the different phases of the lives of various communities, --- their rise, their development and their decline, as well as the causes underlying these changes, has no parallel in the historical records of the world.

Al-Quraan answers two fundamental questions:-

Why it happened? And how it happened?

The popular belief that chance is the motivating force of change in the universe is strongly opposed by Islam.

Islam shows that there is a determining law or **Sunnat-Allah** as the Holy Quraan calls it, which governs the moral behaviour of human beings.

refer Sura Al-Fatir (ch. 35): verses 43 – 45 &
Sura Al-Mu-min (ch. 40): verse 85

Morality, which is most essential in Deen-Al-Islam, presupposes freedom, ability to choose, accept or repudiate, --- and where there is no freedom, there can be no morality.

Without freedom, morality would be deprived of its true nature.

Our Rabb has made the human being the trustee of free responsibilities. An action that proceeds from outside pressure has no touch of morality about it.

Just as there is no change in the Sunnat-Allah, and as the physical phenomena of our age is controlled by those very laws which governed them in the past, so it is with human beings and their problems.

The Quraanic view of history is universal. It is neither time-bound nor space-bound. As much as it examines the role of a "chosen people", it discusses the role of the entire human race in its attitude towards justice, truth and righteousness.

According to the Quraanic view, history is made by us. Without a plan and a sense of moral responsibility for the future, the vessel of history cannot, by itself, reach its desired destination.

Al-Quraan's presentation of history enables us to learn wisdom in order that we may plan for the future. Mistakes of past civilisations can be avoided so that a fruitful future may be planned.

Historians have failed to recognise morality and truth as essential ingredients in the rise and fall of nations.

---refer: Sura Miriam (ch. 19): verses 96 – 98

Moreover, Al-Quraan draws our attention to the signs in the historical process for they serve as an avenue to the understanding of the ultimate reality. !

Worksheet

- 1) Offer a classic example of modern times where a nation suffered humiliation as a result of its immoral and wicked ways. Explain.

- 2) Quote a verse from Al-Quraan that outlines the various forms of punishment that our Rabb can use against a corrupt people.
