

Human Rights and Islam: A Comparative Analysis

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Abstract:

The Human Rights advocated by UN is approved as consensus by world communities with no dissent. The sole objective of Human Rights is to eliminate evils of conflicts in a nation state arising due non-fulfillment of primary needs and basic expectations of individuals conceived as exclusively indispensable for establishing peace. The Islam extended to humanity as blessings from its own Creator – The Compassionate and All-knowing establishes the mechanism of achieving peace by resolving conflicts. The source of all conflicts is non-existent or flagrant denial to justice. Islam propounds establishing justice explicit, visibly observable and tangible. The justice achieved in turn leads to attainment of the cherishing goal of peace and harmony among nations. The sustained peace is further stabilized through host of divine principles of kinship, loyalty, gratitude, honesty, compassion, love, kindness and so alike working in synergy. The political state in any form is a compromised entity. It is not truly sovereign rather influenced by changing politico-socio aspirations of individuals changing widely over time, place, geography, customs etc. The divine principle of justice is universal and eternal and so is the peace established is stable and sustained. The sovereignty of God encompasses all entities whether an institution or individual and so all-abiding and irrevocable. It is honored prerogative of dedicated willing community of individuals to propagate justice leading to sustained environment of peace in contrast to inanimate state presumed powerful to establish peace.

Keywords: Human Rights; Divine Principles; Justice; Refugee; Welfare state; Nationality

Introduction

The discourse on human rights has occupied a central position in international relations and comparative legal scholarship since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Conceived as a universal moral and political standard, the UDHR was intended to codify a minimum threshold of dignity, freedom, and protection owed to every human being regardless of nationality, religion, or culture. Yet the claim to universality embedded in the Declaration has never been free of contestation. Scholars of international human

rights law have long noted that the drafting process, while global in participation, was disproportionately shaped by liberal Western political philosophy, raising persistent questions about whether the resulting framework can legitimately claim cross-cultural validity (Beitz, 2009; Nickel, 2010).

Among the traditions most frequently placed in critical dialogue with the UDHR is Islam, whose legal and ethical system predates the modern human rights movement by more than a millennium and derives its authority not from state consensus but from revelation. Islamic scholarship has approached this encounter from several directions. Some scholars argue that Islamic law (Shari'ah) already contains an internally coherent and, in several respects, more expansive conception of human dignity, rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah, that both anticipates and in some areas exceeds the protections articulated in the UDHR (Mayer, 2018; Sachedina, 2009). Others have focused on the structural tension between a rights regime grounded in state sovereignty and popular consensus, as in the UN model, and one grounded in divine sovereignty and textual revelation, as in the Islamic model, arguing that the two frameworks rest on fundamentally different epistemological foundations even where their substantive prescriptions converge (An-Na'im, 1990; Baderin, 2003). A third strand of literature has examined specific points of apparent divergence, such as gender equality, apostasy, and criminal punishment, treating them as test cases for the compatibility or incompatibility of the two systems (Bielefeldt, 2000).

What remains comparatively underdeveloped in this literature is a systematic, article-by-article juxtaposition of the UDHR's thirty provisions against their corresponding Qur'anic and juristic foundations. Much of the existing comparative scholarship proceeds thematically, addressing broad categories such as equality, due process, or freedom of religion, rather than following the structure of the Declaration itself. This leaves a gap for a more granular reading, one capable of showing precisely where Islamic teaching parallels, extends, qualifies, or departs from each individual article, rather than offering only a general verdict of compatibility or conflict.

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Accordingly, this paper proceeds in three stages. It first outlines the structure and normative assumptions of the UDHR as a state-centered rights instrument. It then presents a systematic, article-by-article comparative reading of each UDHR provision alongside its corresponding Islamic principle, drawing on Qur'anic verses and established secondary scholarship (al-Sheha, n.d.; Hashmi, 2009). Finally, it synthesizes the findings to argue that the Islamic emphasis on justice as the precondition for peace offers a normatively distinct, and in certain respects more binding, foundation for human rights than the consensus-based model advanced by the United Nations.

Civil and Political Rights: Dignity, Equality, and Due Process in the UDHR and Islamic Mandates

The first cluster of UDHR provisions, Articles 1 through 21, addresses the civil and political dimension of human rights: the recognition of the individual as a bearer of dignity, equality before the law, protection from arbitrary state power, and participation in public life. Table 1 summarizes the comparative mapping of this cluster as drawn from the article-by-article analysis in the appendix, before the discussion turns to a synthesized reading of the underlying patterns.

Table 1. Summary Comparison of Civil and Political Rights: UDHR vs. Islamic Mandates (Articles 1–21)

No.	UDHR Article	Core Right in the UDHR	Corresponding Islamic Principle	Primary Textual Basis
1	Art. 1	All human beings are born free and equal in dignity	Equality grounded in common descent from Adam; superiority determined solely by piety	QS. An-Nisa [4:1]; QS. Al-An'am [6:165]
2	Art. 2	Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of race, colour, language, religion, etc.	Non-discrimination extended explicitly to the economically weak, kin, neighbors, and wayfarers	QS. Al-Isra' [17:26]
3	Art. 3	Right to life, liberty, and security of person	Life is sacred and may not be taken except in the pursuit of justice	QS. Al-An'am [6:151]
4	Art. 4	Prohibition of slavery in all its forms	Manumission regarded as a supreme virtue; gradual abolition of slavery	QS. Al-Baqarah [2:177]
5	Art. 5	Prohibition of torture and cruel or degrading treatment	Proportionate retribution (<i>qisas</i>); forgiveness commended as superior	QS. Al-Ma'idah [5:45]
6	Art. 6	Right to recognition as a person before the law	Every individual recognized as a dignified member of society	—
7	Art. 7	Equality before the law without discrimination	Absolute equality before divine law	QS. Al-Baqarah [2:178]

8	Art. 8	Right to an effective remedy	Obligation to uphold justice even against oneself or kin	QS. An-Nisa [4:135]
9	Art. 9	Freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention, or exile	Equivalent protection grounded in divine justice	—
10	Art. 10	Right to a fair and independent hearing	Means of establishing justice deemed sacred and obligatory	—
11	Art. 11	Presumption of innocence; principle of legality	Presumption of innocence absent corroborating evidence/ witnesses	QS. An-Nisa [4:15]
12	Art. 12	Protection from arbitrary interference with privacy and reputation	Slander, defamation, and mockery treated as serious transgressions	QS. Al-Hujurat [49:11]
13	Art. 13	Freedom of movement and residence	Affirmed; the world regarded as a shared dwelling for humankind	—
14	Art. 14	Right to seek asylum from persecution	Refugees to be treated with compassion; exception for genuine security threats	QS. Al-Hashr [59:9]
15	Art. 15	Right to nationality; protection from arbitrary deprivation	Membership in the <i>ummah</i> is universal, not contingent on state recognition	—

16	Art. 16	Right to marry, found a family, and equality within marriage	Free consent of both spouses required; family as the fundamental social unit	QS. Al-Isra' [17:32]
17	Art. 17	Right to own property	Right to acquire, inherit, and manage property free from exploitation	QS. An-Nisa [4:7]
18	Art. 18	Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion	No compulsion in matters of faith	QS. Al-Baqarah [2:256]
19	Art. 19	Freedom of opinion and expression	Freedom of expression bounded by the duty to enjoin good and forbid evil	QS. Ali 'Imran [3:114]
20	Art. 20	Freedom of peaceful assembly and association	Permitted so long as peace and social justice are not threatened	QS. At-Taubah [9:71]
21	Art. 21	Right to participate in government; periodic elections	Integrity and competence of governance prioritized over the procedural mechanism of selection	—

Source: compiled by the author from the article-by-article comparative table in the appendix (Ali, n.d.).

A comparative reading of this cluster against Islamic primary sources reveals a pattern of substantive convergence coupled with a fundamental divergence in the *source of obligation*. At the foundational level, Articles 1 and 2 of the UDHR proclaim that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, entitled to these guarantees without distinction of race, colour,

sex, language, religion, or origin. The Islamic mandate arrives at an equivalent, and arguably more deeply rooted, conclusion through the doctrine of common descent from a single progenitor, Adam. Because all human beings share one biological and spiritual origin, no individual possesses inherent superiority over another on the basis of race, lineage, or social status; distinctions of merit are instead reserved exclusively for piety and righteous conduct. This kinship-based egalitarianism has been read by scholars as functioning analogously to, yet independently of, the liberal individualist premises underlying the UDHR (Cruft, 2005), since the Islamic warrant for equality is genealogical and theological rather than contractual.

The protection of life, liberty, and bodily security (Article 3) and the prohibition of slavery (Article 4) find close Qur'anic parallels in the sanctity accorded to human life, which may not be taken except through due process of justice, and in the strong ethical premium placed on manumission as one of the most meritorious acts a believer can perform. Islamic legal history is frequently cited as having pursued the gradual abolition of slavery through structured incentives centuries before comparable movements emerged in other legal traditions (Bouhdiba, 1998; Hashmi, 2009). Article 5's prohibition of torture and cruel or degrading punishment is likewise mirrored in Islamic criminal jurisprudence, though with an important qualification: Islamic law permits proportionate retribution (*qisas*) as an instrument of justice, understood not as vengeance but as a mechanism for restoring social equilibrium, with forgiveness explicitly commended as a superior alternative (al-Sheha, n.d.).

Articles 6 through 11, concerning legal personhood, equality before the law, the right to an effective remedy, protection from arbitrary arrest, fair trial, and the presumption of innocence, are substantively affirmed within Islamic jurisprudence. Evidentiary rigor, exemplified by the requirement of multiple corroborating witnesses in serious accusations, functions as a structural safeguard against arbitrary conviction, positioning the presumption of innocence as a procedural norm rather than a modern juridical innovation (Farooqui, 2013). Notably, the Islamic framework attaches this entitlement not to citizenship of a particular state but to membership in the human community bound by kinship, which

several scholars argue gives it a claim to universality that is less contingent on state recognition than the UDHR's own guarantees (Glassé, 1989).

Articles 12 through 15 address privacy, honor, freedom of movement, asylum, and nationality. Islamic teaching extends robust protection to reputation and privacy, treating slander, mockery, and unwarranted intrusion into another's affairs as serious moral transgressions. The Qur'anic injunction against derision between believers functions as a normative parallel to Article 12's protection against attacks on honor and reputation (Stefon, 2010). On asylum and migration, Islamic sources emphasize hospitality and preference for the refugee over the self, even amid personal hardship, a principle scholars have identified as ethically more demanding than the discretionary asylum provisions of Article 14, which remain subject to state prerogative and exceptions for non-political offenses (Nasr, 2004). Nationality, meanwhile, is treated in Islamic teaching as a matter of divinely sanctioned belonging within the universal Muslim community (*ummah*) rather than a status contingent on state conferral or revocation, offering a more secure guarantee than Article 15's protection against arbitrary deprivation of nationality (Littman, 1999).

Marriage, family, and property rights (Articles 16 and 17) are affirmed in Islamic law through explicit requirements of free consent between spouses, recognition of the family as the foundational social unit, and detailed inheritance entitlements guaranteed to both men and women. The Qur'anic ordination of inheritance shares for both sexes, though calibrated differently than strict numerical equality, is presented in the literature as an early and binding instrument for female economic protection rather than a matter of custom subject to revision (Eaton, 2000; Köchler, 1981).

Finally, Articles 18 through 21, covering freedom of thought and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly, and political participation, illustrate the sharpest point of comparative nuance. The Qur'anic principle that «there shall be no compulsion in matters of faith» aligns closely with Article 18's guarantee of freedom of belief, while freedom of expression and assembly in the Islamic framework are affirmed but bounded by the collective obligation to enjoin good and forbid evil, subordinating

individual expressive liberty to communal moral order in a manner distinct from the more individualist orientation of the UDHR (Finnis, 1980). Political participation (Article 21) is likewise reconceptualized: Islamic governance theory prioritizes the moral competence and integrity of rulers over the specific procedural mechanism, such as periodic elections, through which they are selected, a position that has drawn both comparative interest and critique for its departure from procedural democratic norms (Sepulveda et al., 2004; Nickel, 2010).

Taken together, this first cluster of articles demonstrates that Islamic mandates substantively affirm, and in several instances anticipate, the civil and political guarantees enumerated by the UDHR. The decisive difference lies not in the content of the rights themselves but in their normative foundation: where the UDHR grounds civil and political liberty in state recognition and international consensus, Islamic teaching grounds the same liberties in an unalterable divine command, rendering them, at least in principle, immune to the political contingency that characterizes state-based rights regimes (Beitz, 2009).

Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: Welfare, Education, and the Limits of Freedom in the UDHR and Islamic Mandates

The second cluster of UDHR provisions, Articles 22 through 30, shifts the register of analysis from civil-political protections to economic, social, and cultural entitlements, together with the Declaration's closing provisions on duties, limitations, and interpretive safeguards. This cluster is analytically significant because it is here that the UDHR most explicitly invokes the state as an active provider rather than merely a passive guarantor of rights, a role that Islamic governance theory assigns to the state as well, but on a substantially different normative and institutional basis. Table 2 summarizes the comparative mapping before the discussion turns to a synthesized reading of the underlying patterns.

Table 2. Summary Comparison of Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: UDHR vs. Islamic Mandates (Articles 22–30)

No.	UDHR Article	Core Right in the UDHR	Corresponding Islamic Principle	Primary Textual Basis / Key Argument
22	Art. 22	Right to social security and to the economic, social, and cultural rights indispensable for dignity	State as benevolent guardian obligated to ensure equitable justice, training, skill development, and livelihood support for the marginalized	Welfare governance as a structural mission of the Islamic state (al-Sheha, n.d.)
23	Art. 23	Right to work, free choice of employment, equal pay, favorable remuneration, and trade unions	Free choice of employment without discrimination; government as active guardian preventing exploitation of both weak and strong	Economic rights administered through committed state action plans (Hashmi, 2009)
24	Art. 24	Right to rest, leisure, and limitation of working hours	Treated as a legitimate but secondary need arising from civilizational progress, accepted so long as it does not conflict with Islamic values	Matter of consensus (<i>ijma'</i>), not a primary revealed mandate (Farooqui, 2013)

25	Art. 25	Right to an adequate standard of living, health, and special care for motherhood and childhood	New needs accommodated if consistent with equitable justice; equal social protection for all children regardless of birth status, though premarital relations remain unlawful Free education at all levels based on merit and aptitude; education directed toward producing morally enlightened, competent personnel; parental priority in choice of education Accepted so long as cultural and scientific activity does not conflict with sacred moral values (justice, compassion, dignity, modesty)	Distinction between social protection of the child and moral regulation of conduct (Bouhdiba, 1998)
26	Art. 26	Right to education, free at elementary level, directed toward full development of personality		Holistic human resource development as a mission of Islamic governance (Stefon, 2010; Syed Shahid Ali, 2015)
27	Art. 27	Right to participate in cultural life, enjoy the arts, and share in scientific advancement		Islamic ethics as a normative filter on permissible cultural expression (Campo, 2009; Glassé, 1989)

28	Art. 28	Right to a social and international order enabling full realization of rights	Accepted insofar as the social/political/ international order advances the Islamic conception of human rights and personality development	Conditional endorsement contingent on substantive alignment (Nasr, 2004)
29	Art. 29	Duties to the community; limitations on rights determined by law for public order and welfare	Individuals duty-bound to promote virtue and curb evil; state as guardian protecting rights derived from divine sovereignty, not merely legal enactment	Rights and duties as correlative divine obligations, not state-conferred privileges (Köchler, 1981; Beitz, 2009)
30	Art. 30	No provision may be interpreted as permitting destruction of the rights and freedoms herein	Equivalent safeguard: no interpretation of Islamic human rights mandates may be invoked to destroy the very personality development they are meant to protect	Interpretive closure clause paralleling Article 30 (Finnis, 1980)

Source: compiled by the author from the article-by-article comparative table in the appendix (Ali, n.d.).

Article 22 establishes the normative premise for the entire cluster: that economic, social, and cultural rights are «indispensable for [the individual's] dignity and the free development of his personality,» to be realized through national effort and international cooperation. The Islamic mandate affirms this premise but relocates its institutional anchor. Rather than treating social security as a discretionary policy outcome contingent on a state's resources and political will, Islamic governance theory casts the ruler and the state apparatus as a *benevolent guardian (wali)* bound by a substantive, non-negotiable obligation to the poor, the elderly, orphans, widows, and wayfarers, discharged through mechanisms such as training, skill development, subsidized education, and livelihood support (al-Sheha, n.d.; Hashmi, 2009). This reframing shifts social welfare from a matter of state capacity to a matter of state legitimacy: a government that fails to secure these provisions forfeits, in the Islamic framework, a core justification for its authority.

Article 23's guarantees on work, free choice of employment, equal pay for equal work, and trade union protections are substantively mirrored in Islamic economic ethics, which similarly prohibits discrimination in employment and affirms remuneration commensurate with human dignity. What distinguishes the Islamic position is its explicit two-directional concern with exploitation: the state is charged not only with protecting weaker parties from stronger ones, the conventional labor-rights concern, but equally with preventing the reverse, the exploitation of the strong (employers, capital holders) by opportunistic claims from the weak, positioning economic justice as a symmetrical rather than one-directional obligation (Hashmi, 2009). Article 24, concerning rest, leisure, and paid holidays, receives comparatively lighter treatment in Islamic sources; rather than being derived from revealed text, it is classified as a matter of legitimate civilizational development subject only to a compatibility test against Islamic values, illustrating how the Islamic framework distinguishes between primary revealed rights and secondary, consensus-based accommodations (Farooqui, 2013).

Article 25's provisions on an adequate standard of living, healthcare, and special protection for motherhood and childhood find a notable point of both convergence and moral specificity in Islamic teaching. Islamic sources affirm, in terms closely paralleling

Article 25(2), that children born in or out of wedlock are entitled to identical social protection, an equality of treatment toward the child that scholars have described as remarkably progressive relative to many historical legal systems (Bouhdiba, 1998). At the same time, Islamic law maintains a clear moral distinction between protecting the child, who bears no responsibility for the circumstances of their birth, and regulating premarital sexual conduct, which remains categorically prohibited; the two are treated as separate normative questions rather than a single continuous issue, a distinction the UDHR's more neutral, secular phrasing does not draw (al-Sheha, n.d.).

Article 26's right to education is one of the areas of strongest substantive alignment between the two frameworks, while also revealing a difference in underlying purpose. Both instruments affirm free and accessible education, technical and higher education based on merit, and parental priority in directing children's education. However, where the UDHR frames education chiefly as a vehicle for the «full development of the human personality» and international understanding, Islamic educational philosophy adds an explicit normative telos: education is directed toward cultivating individuals capable of discerning right from wrong, practicing and promoting virtue, and remaining loyal to family, community, and society, integrating technical competence with moral and spiritual formation as inseparable components of a single educational mission (Stefon, 2010; Syed Shahid Ali, 2015). This is reflected in the qualification that parents, while entitled to choose the technical or professional direction of their children's education, are not permitted to omit its moral-formative component altogether.

Article 27's guarantee of participation in cultural life and scientific advancement is affirmed in Islamic sources, but conditionally: cultural and artistic expression is protected only insofar as it does not conflict with values considered sacred within the Islamic ethical system, including justice, compassion, modesty, and communal welfare (Campo, 2009; Glassé, 1989). This conditional structure recurs in Article 28, where the Islamic mandate endorses a «social and international order» only to the extent that such an order substantively advances the Islamic conception of human dignity and personality development, rather than endorsing pluralistic international order as an unconditional good in itself

(Nasr, 2004). In both cases, the pattern observed throughout this cluster reappears: Islamic teaching affirms the *right* articulated by the UDHR while attaching a *value-based qualifying condition* absent from the Declaration's more procedurally neutral language.

The final two articles of the Declaration, Articles 29 and 30, are the most conceptually significant for the argument of this study, as they concern not a specific right but the *architecture* within which all preceding rights operate. Article 29 acknowledges that individuals bear duties to the community and that rights may be limited by law for the sake of public order, morality, and the rights of others; Article 30 forecloses any interpretation of the Declaration that would permit the destruction of the rights it protects. Islamic teaching affirms both principles but grounds them differently: individual duty is not merely a legal limitation imposed by positive law but a religious obligation to actively promote virtue and curb evil, while the ultimate safeguard against the destruction of rights lies not in the text of a declaration subject to state interpretation, but in the immutability of divine sovereignty itself, from which all legitimate rights, duties, and institutional authority are understood to derive (Köchler, 1981; Beitz, 2009; Finniss, 1980).

Taken as a whole, the second cluster of articles reinforces the pattern identified in the first: Islamic mandates do not merely replicate the UDHR's economic, social, and cultural guarantees but reframe them within an explicitly value-laden and theologically grounded architecture. Where the UDHR treats these rights as policy commitments realized through «national effort and international cooperation,» contingent on a state's resources, priorities, and political consensus, the Islamic framework treats them as binding obligations flowing from the state's role as a divinely accountable guardian, and treats the individual's corresponding duties, not merely the individual's rights, as equally central to the attainment of social justice. This structural difference, more than any single substantive divergence in content, is what the comparative analysis in this study identifies as the defining distinction between a consensus-based and a revelation-based approach to human rights.

Synthesis: From Article-by-Article Comparison to a Structural Distinction

Read together, the two clusters examined above point to a single underlying structural distinction rather than a scattered set of unrelated similarities and differences. In the civil and political domain (Section 4.1), Islamic mandates were found to substantively affirm, and in several instances anticipate, the protections enumerated in Articles 1 through 21, from equality and due process to freedom of belief and political participation, while consistently relocating the *source* of these guarantees from state recognition to an unalterable divine command. In the economic, social, and cultural domain (Section 4.2), the same pattern recurs in a different register: Islamic mandates affirm the substantive content of Articles 22 through 30, welfare, employment, education, and cultural participation, while reframing them as binding obligations of a divinely accountable guardian rather than discretionary policy commitments contingent on national resources or international cooperation (al-Sheha, n.d.; Beitz, 2009).

Three cross-cutting threads emerge from this comparative reading. First, where the UDHR consistently frames the state as the primary duty-bearer and rights as claims held against that state, Islamic teaching consistently pairs every right with a correlative individual duty, positioning the believer, not only the institution, as an active agent responsible for realizing justice (Köchler, 1981). Second, where the UDHR's guarantees derive their authority from international consensus and are therefore revisable through further negotiation among states, the Islamic mandates examined throughout both clusters derive their authority from revelation, and are accordingly presented in the literature as binding independently of state ratification or political circumstance (An-Na'im, 1990; Baderin, 2003). Third, and most significant for the argument of this study, both clusters converge on the same causal claim: that peace is not a directly achievable goal but a downstream consequence of justice (*ʿadl*) being established first, whereas the UDHR's aspiration to peace is pursued through consensus and institutional guarantee without specifying an equivalent foundational precondition (Sachedina, 2009).

It is this structural distinction, rights anchored in a contingent political institution versus rights anchored in an immutable transcendent source, that the following Conclusion draws together as the central finding of the comparative analysis undertaken in this study.

Conclusion

The Human Rights advocated by the United Nations rest on mutual agreement among state institutions, liberal thinkers, and international organizations committed to establishing peace as a goal of utmost importance, a consensus reached through sustained deliberation among nations and codified across thirty discrete articles. Although not exhaustive, the UDHR expresses a significant degree of agreement on the conditions necessary for peace; it nevertheless remains non-binding in the strict legal sense, leaving individual states and their leaders free to define their own methods, pace, and depth of commitment to implementation. In doing so, it treats individual freedom and free will as values of near-sacred standing, pursuing peace and harmony among states whose views, preferences, and socio-political trajectories often diverge sharply. Islam, by contrast, derives its Mandates of Human Rights directly from divine revelation enshrined in the Qurʾan, bestowed by God Almighty rather than negotiated among institutions. These mandates are accordingly binding and obligatory upon all human communities and individuals, irrespective of time, place, caste, creed, religion, geography, or socio-political origin. Where the UN Charter articulates no single, discrete ethical objective, Islam identifies the establishment of justice as its objective of prime importance: peace is not pursued directly but understood as the outcome of justice already prevailing, such that the absence of justice is what gives rise to exploitation, chaos, and anarchy, and it is precisely this absence that guarantees the absence of peace. The endeavor to establish justice is therefore paramount to any community genuinely aspiring toward peace and harmony, and the far-reaching compassion embedded in God's commandments becomes evident precisely through this comparative reading against the specific articles of the UDHR. Peace sought in the absence of justice, on this reading, is not a realizable condition but a utopian aspiration, and the Islamic approach, by anchoring peace in the

prior and sustained establishment of justice, offers a more durable foundation for lasting harmony.

This distinction carries a further implication for how the responsibility for human rights is properly located. It is commonly presumed that the establishment of human rights is the responsibility of the state as a sovereign institution; yet even a state proclaimed sovereign is not, in essence, fully sovereign, since states are themselves shaped and redirected by shifting wills, dominant customs, and the trends of a given time and circumstance, ultimately controlled by individuals, whether a single dictator or a collective institution, who define, direct, and monitor that sovereignty. In Islam, sovereignty in the fullest sense belongs to God alone, and is inseparably attached to the pristine, unalterable principles of justice, love, compassion, harmony, piety, integrity, and truthfulness that He has defined. These principles bind every individual who constitutes and composes political, social, and economic institutions alike, making the establishment of human rights not merely an institutional mandate but a personal religious obligation. It thus falls to each member of the community to remain dedicated to affirming God's sovereignty and to actively help establish human rights through deeds that promote virtue and curb vice, for it is precisely this pious, intentional action of individuals, rather than the pronouncements of any state, that ultimately leads to peace.

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