

研究ノート

Islamic Morality as a Core Value for the Concept of Charity Work: A Case Study from Qaradawi's Explanation

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Introduction

Scholars from non-Muslim background have developed a number of different notions and arguments with regard to the concept of civic movements in the Islamic World. On the one hand, a group of scholars believe that “Islam does not in fact recognize the legal personality of the individuals in which his rights are secured to him and vested by the law.”¹ This group claims a lack of individual autonomy within the religion, which functions as an obstacle to the development of democratic civil spheres by the free exchange of views, and thus to the participation in organizing civic organization and the engagement in political parties.² Some of the scholars, in the same line, argue that the concept of civil society, in Arab and Muslim societies, is used as a “vehicle for vying for political and social reform.” In other words, Islamists’ view of civil society is, according to this group, to stand in clear contrast to the “uncivil” nature of the state or rather to the secular state.³ On the other hand, there are scholars who believe that the perception of charity work or civic activism somewhat finds its origins in the Judeo-Christian tradition that is now, however, extending into Islamic dimensions.⁴ A British scholar from this school of thought, Augustus Norton, explains that Islamic charity work is becoming now a force of Muslims’ integration in contemporary European society.⁵ He argues that scholarship on the Islamists “has been overly textual,” and that such studies failed to understand the nature of civic activism in Arab Muslim societies.⁶

The objective of this article is to analyze the fundamental nature of civic movements in the Islamic World from a Muslim scholar’s perspective. This article will examine the concept of “charity work” in the writings of Yusuf Qaradawi, a renowned scholar of Islam who utilizes a variety of disciplines within the religion. In particular, this study will explore Qaradawi’s views

on moral values in Islam which he considers are reflected in the Quran and Hadith (Prophet Sayings). An attempt is also made in this study to clarify how Qaradawi explains the uniqueness in the characteristics of charity work. For this purpose, the present article will explore the major topics dealt with by Qaradawi's writings to explain the relationship between morality and charity in Islam. It will provide an overview of Qaradawi's writings on the principles of Islam that call for charity: how he delineates the underlying Islamic principles that would urge the practice of Islamic charity work. Moreover, the article will briefly discuss Qaradawi's explanations about the Islamic concept of morality and its impact on the on-going Islamic civic movements.

Qaradawi is among the most recognized contemporary Muslim scholars throughout the Islamic and Arab Worlds. He has written more than one hundred thirty books spanning through his over sixty years' career in the scholarly field and activism. He is also known for his frequent appearance in highly popular weekly TV program which is a part of the Pan-Arab TV-network Al-Jazeera. Thus, he stretches his activities further to an activist, and reflects a voice of Arab people, though he is originally a scholar. By so doing, he impacts the general public.

At the outset of the Arab revolutions, or so called Arab Spring, Qaradawi became a regular face on Arab media supporting the youth and revolutions in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and the current reform movements in the Arab world. His books are well sought-after by those who have engaged in the resurging dynamic civil society activities, namely, NGO activists, and humanitarian and developmental program officers. One of his latest books, *The Principles of Charity Work in Islam in Light of the Scripts and Sharia Goals*, has been one of the most read books written by him, and focuses solely on the topic of charity work.

Qaradawi explains, in the introduction of his book, that he was requested by the Qatari based NGO, the Qatari Red Crescent Association, to write a book about charity work in Islam that would comprehensively discuss the concept of charity work in accordance with Islam. The Qatari NGO took on the responsibility to distribute the book to its staff and partners all over the world, both Muslims and non-Muslims. The book, now available in the world market, serves as a reference book for those working in the field of civic activism, as the book guides what Islamic principles are in this sphere. His second edition

mentions that he supports the works of the Qatari Red Crescent Association and appreciates the distribution of his book. He also states that “the purpose of the book is “to show how Islam cares about charity work in general and introduce the detailed framework for such a concept in theory and practice”⁷ He and the supporting with the creation and

1. Charity work in Islam

Qaradawi explains that charity work, or “the work to do good,” is one of the basic aims of the message found in Islam. The Sharia (Islamic Laws) names the fundamentals in religion: the protection of religion, self, lineage, mind, money, and states some kind of honor acquired through life.⁸ However, Qaradawi explains that charity work was not excluded within these fundamentals, but implicitly included in it the first top priority of the religion. Religion has been considered, according to Qaradawi, as the top priority of the Sharia by old scholars, and thus recognized at its core. In this priority, the knowledge of truth leads to both belief and the love of good deeds, and consequently leading to doing deeds and charity.⁹

The word charity “khair” is mentioned in the Quran and “Hadith” (Prophet Sayings) in different words, terms and names. Among others are “Bir” (Piety or dutifulness), “Ihsan” (kind act or benefaction), “Rahma” (mercy or compassion), “Sadaqa” (alms or charity), “Tafrij al Kurba” (relief, driving away of worries or grief), and “Ighathit al Malhouf” (relief or aid of the sorrowful or grieved).¹⁰ The diverse terms and definitions pertain to charity, “Khair,” the actual meaning and its attributes. Nevertheless, Qaradawi maintains the usage of the word “Khair” in Arabic as charity.

The well-known Arabic English dictionary, Al Mawrd, defines the term “Al Amal Al Kheiri,” as “charity work,” in English as the following: Charity, beneficence, benefaction, benevolence, philanthropy dole, almsgiving, performance of good deeds.¹¹ Qaradawi explains that the Quran and Hadith (Prophet Sayings), the basic references in Islam, mention charity work in different ways which instruct believers to carry out and encourage the above-mentioned practice. Quran and Hadith also forbid standing against charity work or warning against it. They praise those who do charity work and vilified those who do not. Both Quran and Sunna (Sayings and Actions of the Prophet

Mohammad) praised the action of performance of charity work and other instances praised those who call for it, cooperate for it and compete for its sake.¹²

Qaradawi summarizes several principles in which Islam calls for charity or rather urges believers to do charity work or “Khair.” The principles are validated with constant reference to verses from the Quran and prophet sayings. The writer attempts to facilitate to common reader an easy approach to know and ponder the true principles for charity work in Islam. After all, it is the purpose of his work to make those working in the field of charity or anyone interested in dealing with charity understand how Islam’s two main sources, Quran and Hadith, deals with, embraces, enhances and encourages charity.¹³

2.The principles of Islam’s Call for Charity Work

2.1. Performing Charity.

Qaradawi considers that the essential principle of charity is, as a matter of fact, the practice of charity, performing charity. This is because, according to Qaradawi, the idea of the real practice causes believers to act upon charity. He refers to the Quranic injunction which clearly calls for the performance of charity, “O you, who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good - that you may succeed.”¹⁴ Another verse reference states that “[a]nd whatever good they do - never will it be removed from them. And Allah is knowing of the righteous.”¹⁵

The renowned fourteenth century Ibn Kathir elaborated in his famous work of commentary of the Quran that no good deed or charity work is absent from the knowledge of Allah and that God repay those who perform it with “Thawab,” the reward in heaven after death.¹⁶ Ibn Kathir commentary on the Quran is probably one of the most persistently sought after by many scholars and ordinary Muslims over the past centuries. It is important to refer back to such a historical scholarly figure like Ibn Kathir to find out additional interpretation and insights on the meaning of verses as a general scholarly practice.

In the section entitled, “the Mere Saying of “Khair” or Goodness or Charity,” Qaradawi refers to the Quranic reference, “[...] and speak to people good.”¹⁷ Here, Qaradawi reinforces the use of the verse with a saying of Prophet

Mohammad, "Who he believes in Allah and Day of Judgment speaks good or better not say anything."¹⁸

2.2. Readiness to Do Charity.

The following Quranic verse talks about how a believer must be ready to do charity and be prepared to perform it, "[a]nd hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous-, Who spend [in the cause of Allah] during ease and hardship and who restrain anger and who pardon the people - and Allah loves the doers of good."¹⁹ In another verse, the Quran states, concerning this particular point, that "They believe in Allah and the Last Day, and they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and hasten to good deeds. And those are among the righteous."²⁰ The Quran clearly puts high emphasis on this particular point as shown in the following, "It is these who hasten in every good work and these who are foremost in them"²¹. Qaradawi mentions that this verse especially refers to those who are conscious of God and therefore more so inclined on doing charity work.

2.3. The Outdoing For The Sake of Charity

The Quran says, "[i]f Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single people, but (His plan is) to test you in what He hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to Allah; it is He that will show you the truth of the matters in which ye dispute."²² Qaradawi elaborates that charity to Muslims is a cause to exert more efforts in being generous for social causes that would contribute to elevating of poverty, raising levels of education, easing the suffering of the weak portions of society. The implication of the use of the Quran is basically to go back to the most important book source in Islam which means touching directly the conscience of the people.

2.4. Appealing for Charity

The author refers to the Quran to substantiate his point, "[a]nd let there be [arising] from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful."²³ Thus, Qaradawi emphasizes that one can find that the Quran is calling believers for charity works.

2.5. The Prompting of Charity Work

Qaradawi relies on a couple of references from the Quran to support this point. The first, “[h]ave you seen the one who denies the Recompense? For that is the one who drives away the orphan- And does not encourage the feeding of the poor.”²⁴ Also, “Indeed, he did not use to believe in Allah, the Most Great, nor did he encourage the feeding of the poor.”²⁵ Additional citation is, “No! But you do not honor the orphan, and you do not encourage one another to feed the poor.”²⁶ Islam does not only make obligatory the feeding the “Miskeen,” the needy, but also prompting the act of looking after the Miskeen such as his food, expenses and required basics of life, as Qaradawi explains.²⁷

2.6. The Intention of Doing Charity work.

If a person does not have the means to carry out charity work, explains Qaradawi, then, he/she can compensate it by holding sincere intentions for the desire and wish to do charity work. Actually, the mere intentions of one person, who wishes to have the means to give to charity, can be considered of high value and praise by Allah.²⁸ Intentions held by individuals can contribute and strengthen social solidarity, empathy and community cohesion with moral concern and sympathy.

2.7. The Performing of Charity Regardless of How Small or Trivial the Size of Charity.

The author here shows how far Islam values charity even if it is considered too small or insignificant. He maintains that in the eyes of God, it is big. Such small charity for one person seems to carry no value at all but for those who seek it, it could turn into a meaningful difference. The author refers to a Quranic verse that eloquently expresses the point, “[s]o whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it.”²⁹ In another verse in the Quran, “ Indeed, Allah does not do injustice, [even] as much as an atom's weight; while if there is a good deed, He multiplies it and gives from Himself a great reward.”³⁰ Moreover, Qaradawi mentions the great and well-known Hadith of Prophet Mohammad, “(O people!) [s]ave yourselves from the (Hell) Fire even if with one half of a date fruit (given in charity), and if this is not available, then (save yourselves) by saying a good pleasant friendly word.”³¹ This Prophet saying is widely used and repeated in many occasions and places where a charity activity is

normally held. Charity collectors commonly use the above-mentioned Hadith by repeating the Saying in an attempt to encourage charity givers to donate and not to underestimate the value of donation no matter how small it is.

2.8. Dispraising Those Who Hinder Charity Work

Qaradawi argues that just as the Quran praises those who do charity and prompt others to do so, it also strongly dispraises those who hinder charity.³² Referring to the main source in Islam, the author cites the following, "And do not obey every worthless habitual swearer [and] scorner, going about with malicious gossip -A preventer of good, transgressing and sinful."³³ Qaradawi interprets that by stating that such a person is identified with certain characteristics. A person who prevents or hinders the work of charity or the performance of any goodness is a self degrading person, backstabbing person, spreads rumors among people, obstructs goodness, aggressive and sinful. The description of such a person is expressed powerfully in the Quran in Arabic as "Manna lilkhair"; a preventer of good.

2.9. Cooperating in Charity Work Constitutes "Faridah" (Religious Duty)

One of basic principles of charity in Islam is the obligatory nature of cooperating for charity work. Qaradawi states that "a human being is small by him/herself alone but much more with the brothers and sisters and friends. Whatever one person cannot do, the group, Jamaa, can do."³⁴ The writer cites the Quran to support his argument, "And cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty."³⁵ This Quranic verse is quite well known among Muslims and repeated in various occasions. Muslim people usually utter the aforementioned verse when occasions arise to stress a fact, even if it is so obvious, that society cannot function without the cooperation of its member on good causes. There are even names of NGOs that carry the word "Tauanu," meaning cooperate in Arabic, as a title of certain organizations.³⁶ Qaradawi goes further to describe the necessity of cooperation between the ruler and people which is of high value among Muslims. He supports that the Quran has a verse saying that "He said that in which my Lord has established me is better [than what you offer], but assist me with strength: I will make between you and them a dam."³⁷ Moreover, the author mentions a prophet saying that urges

cooperation and solidarity among community members. The prophet says, “A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other. The Prophet then clasped his hands with the fingers interlaced (while saying that).”³⁸

2.10. Rewarding All Those Who Participate in Charity Work

It is an important aspect of charity work in rewarding those who put efforts into the work of charity and deliver its benefits to the people who need charity. Individuals assisting and helping in delivery of charity are regarded with high esteem. The writer cites a story told by Prophet Muhammad’s wife, Ayisha, who said that “the prophet said, when a woman gives in charity some of the foodstuff (which she has in her house) without spoiling it, she will receive the reward for what she has spent, and her husband will receive the reward because of his earning, and the storekeeper will also have a reward similar to it. The reward of one will not decrease the reward of the others.”³⁹

3. The Inherent Characteristics of Charity Work in Islam

3.1 Comprehensiveness of Charity

Qaradawi expands on the subject by explaining that there are certain characteristics in Islamic Charity Work that differentiate it from other religions or philosophies. According to him, the first is the comprehensiveness of charity; in other words, the subject to whom Charity is given.⁴⁰ He explains that a Muslim extends help and assistance to whomever in need whether near or far, a friend or enemy, a Muslim or non-Muslim, a human or animal.⁴¹ Despite particular emphasis on extending help to relatives and friends, charity and dutifulness must reach out beyond the immediate community. Islam recognizes the rights of strangers and those who are “far away” in the name of Islam if they happen to be Muslims. And non-Muslims receive charity and assistance from Muslims in the name of humanity.⁴²

Qaradawi illustrates how Islam urges Muslims to spread “Khair,” Goodness, and Charity Work to all. The author explains the Quran forbids Muslims to hate certain people and to be fair towards them. That Muslims have to show mercy and show dutifulness because a Muslim is a merciful person. He cites the related Hadith, “No one enters Heaven unless he is merciful.” His

companions asked, "Oh Apostle of Allah, we are all merciful. Then, he said, "It is not the mercy towards your friend but the mercy to the public in general."⁴³ Qaradawi explains further this essential principle by stressing that non-Muslims live under the sway of Allah, eat from God's bounty and at the same time not deprived from God's mercy and piety. The Author reminds us of the Quranic injunction that instructs Muslims how to deal with non-Muslims who do not show aggression and who are peaceful, "Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly."⁴⁴

Moreover, the author talks about those who fall as prisoners in wars and how Allah obliges believers to ensure the good treatment of prisoners in providing food and not to inflict hunger or thirst upon non-Muslim prisoners, even if a prisoner was a fighting soldier. Once a soldier falls as a captive or prisoner, he is entitled to his right for access to food, drink and good conduct that is suitable for a dignified human being.⁴⁵

The same Islamic principles extend to treatment of birds and animals. The author tells of a story about the Prophet, "When Prophet Mohammad told his companion about a man who experienced extreme thirst, found a well, went down inside it and drank. As the man was leaving the well, he found a dog so thirsty that the dog was eating the sand out of thirst. The man said to himself that he was in the same dire situation moments before. Then, the man went down again to the well, filled up his hands with water and let the dog drink it. God thanked the man and forgave him. The prophet companions then asked; are we rewarded even in treating animals? The prophet, then, replied, with any living being."⁴⁶

3.2. Diversity of Charity

The second characteristic is diversity of charity. The individual Muslims or Muslim society extends charity in different forms and not restricted to one way. Charity is translated into different methods according to the needs of people and according to the ability and means of a charity giver. Charity could be in material means or answering to the emotional and intellectual requirement like education and culture. That includes psychological support as to bring happiness, wiping off a tear, talk about the person's worries and concerns and

induce people with confidence in God and assist to get rid of despair in the heart of others.⁴⁷

Qaradawi describes numerous forms and aspects of how to give charity. They range simply from donating money to providing objects for assistance. Charity can be in the form of “Sadaqa Jariya,” meaning a continuous charity. Islamic Waqf is, by the way, considered to be a form of “Sadaqa Jariya” in which the benefit or fruit of a designated charity is solely for one purpose. Qaradawi provides the example of allocating a certain sum of money to be spent over a certain duration of time, like a million Dinar to be used over a period of ten or twenty years specifically for a certain purpose.⁴⁸

Giving charity is also about answering the immediate need of a community in the form of a project. The funding comes from a charity source where a group of charity givers combine efforts together for funding a project for solving a pending problem for a given community such as a village or a certain group belonging to a particular trade. He illustrates further in the following example. A group of individuals decide on establishing a factory funded by Zakat money in order to provide opportunities of employment as a way of charity. In another example, a number of individuals, charity donors, buy a land as investment for agricultural use. The outcome or financial gains can be utilized as a source of charity.⁴⁹

Charity can be done in terms of providing one’s own time and efforts. For example, a medical doctor allocates his own time as a charity in order to volunteer for the treatment of patients freely or with minimum charge for specific number of hours every week or month for the sake of seeking God’s satisfaction. Qaradawi asserts that in some cases, charity with efforts and time can be more valuable than donating money.⁵⁰ He further stresses that all kinds of charity is acceptable because it complements the need of society and Umma (Islamic community).

Prophet Mohammad encouraged and instructed all kinds of charity in all aspects of life and not only in the form of money. To give one example, there is what is called the social “sadaqa,” social charity, where people are highly encouraged to resolve problems between two feuding individuals or people.⁵¹ The importance of taking part actively in establishing the social peace and harmony is vital and the action taken is considered Sadaqa or charity. In one Hadith it is mentioned, “the good word is charity.”⁵² Also, the Prophet says, “[a]

nd your smile in the face of your brother is charity.”⁵³

Moreover, the humane Sadaqa, another type, is also highly elevated among Muslims. It means ranging from taking care of the weak to simply guiding a stranger to the right directions. Removing harmful object from public places is considered Sadaqa in preventing causing harm to people.⁵⁴

3.3. Continuing of Charity

The third characteristic of charity in Islam is Continuity or sustaining it. This is a highly important characteristic and feature because charity work for Muslims is either a regular “Fridah” (Religious Obligation) or irregular “Faridah”. The regular “Faridah” is bound by certain rules, such as Zakat and “Zakat Al Fitr;” a form of Zakat obligatory during the month of Ramadan. The irregular “Faridah” is the type of charity given to those who hold the right, in a way, or qualified for it such as relatives, the needy, the stranger or traveler, “Ibn Al Sabeel” (meaning literally son of road). The aim of the irregular “Faridah” is to relieve the destitute and rescuing the troubled ones.⁵⁵ These are the obligations that the Muslim holds them in belief and attempt to carry them out in order to cleanse one’s self and to seek God’s Satisfaction.

A Muslim is always ready to volunteer for the charity work other than the obligatory religious tasks. According the Quranic verse, “And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive. (Saying), we feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks.”⁵⁶ Qaradawi interprets the verse that God praises those believers who volunteer for charity and they deserve God’s Heaven and satisfaction.

Doing charity, including intention, is part of a Muslim’ life. Here Qaradawi further says that if a Muslim can do charity, he/she would have to do the utmost to implement it. If he/she cannot, then, it is by possessing the intention in the heart and by praying that someone else can cover it or even guide another person towards it. Reason for that is to gain similar “thawab,” reward, like the actual charity provider.⁵⁷ The author cites a saying of Prophet Mohammad concerning this point, "There is a “Sadaqa” to be given for every joint of the human body; and for every day on which the sun rises there is a reward of a “Sadaqa” (i.e. charitable gift) for the one who establishes justice among people.”⁵⁸

God gives “Thawab,” for every action a person participates in or commits to

no matter how trivial this action is. Here Qaradawi refers again to the Quran, “So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it.”⁵⁹

The conduct of daily life of the companions of the prophet is normally taken seriously by Muslims. The companions are the first ones to follow the “Sunnah”, actions and sayings of the prophet, therefore Muslims consider the companions, “Sahaba,” as the first and best Muslims to apply the true Islamic way. Charity work and Sadaqa became an integral part of a Muslims conduct. One story goes that one man in Egypt was known for being generous and gave much charity. When asked why he was always ready to give charity, he replied that he heard from one of the prophet’s companions, saying that the prophet said, “Sadaqa is like the believer’s shadow in the day of judgment.”⁶⁰

3.4. Power of Motivation

The fourth characteristic and feature of charity in Islam is the power of motivation. In this basic aspect of Islamic Charity Work, Qaradawi refers to “powerful motivation combined with vigorous infusion that attracts a person to love charity, exerts oneself towards action, awaken the call for it and its continuity, compete in realizing charity and accomplish its demands.”⁶¹

3.5. The Good Intention of the Principle of Charity

Finally, the fifth characteristic of charity work in Islam is the good intention or the good will towards the principle of Charity. Here, Qaradawi stresses the importance of the individual’s inner intention, meaning that Charity must be given and for the sake of good only without any impurity or ill-feeling.⁶² He explains that the goal of charity can be realized through the religious, moral evocation; non-mundane nor materialistic. In Islam, no charity is accepted from a person who uses it a method of deceiving people or winning votes in elections as we see candidates do in some Arab Countries. He goes on by saying that we see in these countries often carry out charity work where the real intention is not charity itself but rather to win people’s votes during elections. Islam looks at the whole through the moral normative standard where there is not separation between morality and life.⁶³

4. Motivation of Charity Work in Islam

Qaradawi outlines three major aspects of such powerful motivations for Charity in Islamic context. Muslims are seeking the satisfaction of Allah, moral motivation and finally attaining blessings and bequeathment in this life.⁶⁴

4.1. Seeking God's Satisfaction

Qaradawi considers the satisfaction of God, "Mardhat Allah," the most important of motivation. He supports that by quoting the Quran, "And the example of those who spend their wealth seeking means to the approval of Allah and assuring [reward for] themselves is like a garden on high ground which is hit by a downpour - so it yields its fruits in double. And [even] if it is not hit by a downpour, then a drizzle [is sufficient]. And Allah, of what you do, is seeing."⁶⁵ Also, "The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and knowing."⁶⁶

Qaradawi explains what the "seeking of satisfaction of Allah" means. It means asking for heaven, "Janna," and that in the heavens are the true rewards and happiness. The author adds that Heaven, "Dar Al Naeim," the House of Happiness, is not only restricted to physical sense but it is also "Dar Al Redwan," the House of Satisfaction, granted by Allah. This spiritual powerful motivation was the driving force of many of the "Sahaba," Prophet's companions, upon hearing the Quran instructing action of goodness, charity. Their hearts responded quickly. The "Sahabas" transformed the principle of charity into work and implementation without any hindrance of selfishness or the love of this life only because the "Thawab," Reward of Allah, is greater. And what God possesses is good and everlasting.⁶⁷ Again he refers to another verse, "Never will you attain the good [reward] until you spend [in the way of Allah] from that which you love. And whatever you spend - indeed, Allah is knowing of it."⁶⁸

4.2. The Moral Motivation

The second most important power of motivation is the Moral Dimension.

Qaradawi points out how the Quran regards those Muslims who give and perform charity by summarizing Quranic descriptions of such believers. The Quran calls them “Al Mutaqeen,” the pious ones, or those conscious of Allah. As the verse says, “This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah; Who believe in the unseen, establish prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them.”⁶⁹ Numerous descriptions describe charity doers that elevate their status as believers. They are described as “Mumeneen Haqan,” true believers, people of understanding or those gifted with understanding hearts, “ulu Al albab.” Also, they are called the beneficent or doers of good, “Al Muhseneen,” and the righteous, “Al Abrar.” Such description carries powerful moral and religious meanings for many individuals.

4.3. The Blessings in Daily Life “Ikhlaḥf”

According to Qaradawi, the third most powerful motivation for doing charity work in Islam is the blessings and compensation in this life, “Ikhlaḥf.” Islam as a religion combines both “two goods”: the good of this life and the good of the afterlife.⁷⁰ Here the author refers to this life by using the religious term, “Dar Al Dunia,” meaning the House of This Life, in which motivation for charity work is applied and connected. However, Qaradawi explains that the motivations connected to the hereafter life, life after death, is the more powerful incentive and possess more influence. To explain further, when a person gives charity or participates in charity work, such a person would feel the “blessings” filling his/her life; be it family or money in which God bestows upon the doer of charity more goodness and many folds of growth and purifying.⁷¹ Qaradawi goes back to few verses in the Quran that are connected to the above, “But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of those who grant Sustenance.”⁷²

The concept of “Ikhlaḥf,” meaning bestowing from Allah, is stressed further by Qaradawi that God bestows upon the charity doer health, serenity, inner peace, harmony among family members, uprightness or integrity of his/her children, blessings of money; in all, a person simply lives a good life.⁷³ Qaradawi supports his explanation by the Quranic verse, “Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer -We will surely cause him to live a good life, and we will surely give them their reward [in the Hereafter]

according to the best of what they used to do.”⁷⁴

5. Islamic Morality

In one of his books titled, *Our Islamic Message in the Age of Globalism*, Qaradawi touches upon the basic concept of morality in Islam. He states that Islam stresses comprehensiveness of morals in all aspects of life. There is no division in Islam between science or knowledge and morality, between economy and morality, between politics and morality, and between war and morality. All simply follow morality.⁷⁵ Here, he refers to the Quranic injunction “Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah.”⁷⁶ Also, “And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”⁷⁷ The reference is to show how the Quran describes Prophet Mohammad as a human being of the highest moral character. This is what elevates the individual being closer to God and people at the same time by practicing a moral life. In another book, *The Muslims and Globalism*, Qaradwi points out morals besides Iman, “Faith,” as a way to resist the onslaught of cultural globalization that made people a prey to modern machine of consumerism.”⁷⁸

Qaradawi describes morality further by stating that Islam does not accept the saying “the goal justifies the means.” He says the goal must have an honor and the decency of the means combined together. For Muslims, making money through bribes, profiting from interest, cheating on trade, then, build a mosque or establish a charity project is not allowed in Islam.⁷⁹ He points out that “Ihsan,” beneficence, is required for a human, animal, plants and for earth; water, air and all other factors in environment.⁸⁰ Morality, therefore, is being a practical and integral part of the whole. Its values become the embodiment of our own questioning of actions and consequences in human interaction and in all aspects of environmental surrounding.

In this regard, Qaradawi argues in his book, *Features of Muslim Society*, that solidarity in a given society must extend to generational pace in Umma. He means that one generation does not have the right to monopolize the resources of the hidden or known resources to the point of consuming it and leave nothing for next generation. The current generation must take into account the needs of the next generation as the insightful, merciful father who

is keen on leaving behind a condition of self-sufficiency and independence for his kids.⁸¹

At the end, Qaradawi explains that no nation in the world can keep up its existence and protect its identity or work in the pursuit of its ideals without morality. He says, “[m]orality is the protecting fence of nations.”⁸² That if such a fence is broken, societies become exposed to danger. Laws alone do not protect nations from deterioration and deviation for the conscience must protect its laws.⁸³

Therefore, morality is a religious obligation as Qaradawi asserts. It is a practical necessity and no individual can succeed or be happy or achieve a goal without morals and virtues supplying him/her with strength and protection from deterioration. He elaborates with a statement saying, “Islam considers morality the fruit of faith, even one branch of faith.”⁸⁴

It is the feelings and sense of urge among Muslims from all walks of life to apply their “Iman,” belief or Faith, into actions in all possible directions, to turn the faith into a continuous charity, “Sadaqa Jariya,” and a lasting reward, “Hasana Daema.” Qaradawi points out that stressing such deeds have rewards continuing as long as both life and human exists.⁸⁵

The author gives numerous examples on charity work implemented in different causes historically. Islamic waqf charity institutions were in integral part of daily life among Muslims. Waqf was known, for example, for taking care of abandoned cats. Islamic Waqf institutions looked after migrating birds reaching Muslim lands where people encouraged helping the birds survive their long journeys. Qaradawi points to the belief or “Aqida” in Islam in producing and encouraging such considerate feelings toward living beings as far as taking care, for example, of lost cats, or even migrating birds. Until recent past, the so called “Cats home” in Damascus housed more than 400 cats, especially the blind ones were provided with food and care.⁸⁶ Islamic society is a society of solidarity and mercy where the strong shows mercy to the weak and the rich to the poor and so on. Prophet Mohammad said, “Believers in their solidarity, love, mercifulness and sympathy is like the human body; if one part complains, the rest of the body reacts with fever and stays up all night.”⁸⁷

Finally, is it civic society what Islam terms as charity work? Qaradawi considers the Islamic principle of “Tawhid,” Unity of God, as the true basis of brotherhood among people. He said that, “the deities do not become

brothers to worshipers but worshipers become brothers in front of the God of worshipers.”⁸⁸ The principle of “Tawhid,” unity of God, is the essence of Islam and it carries powerful significance to individual actions and motivation in looking after fellow human beings, environment and seeking true social justice. Contemporary Western academics have reconsidered the notion and implication of Islamic Charity work. The perceived Judeo-Christian monopoly on charity has been challenged by the Islamic dimension. Only till recently, charity in Islam was thought of a “parallel world” and not being part of the aid activities or even taken seriously. This is being challenged now. In Europe, Islamic Charity is now becoming a force of integration in Europe.⁸⁹ According to recent research, “Some of the most important international charities operating today are explicitly Christian (Caritas Aid, World Vision, Order of Malta) or strongly influenced by Christian values such as Oxfam, Save the Children, the Red Cross. “But, one can go further and argue that the entire Western tradition of charity, resulting in today’s enormous NGO sector, has historically deep religious roots that are not always noticed.”⁹⁰

Conclusion

Qaradawi explains throughout his many works and books, as elaborated above, that Islam strongly urges believers to do charity work. He stresses the fact that Charity work is one of the basic aims of Islam. The two main sources in Islam, the Quran and “Sunna,” prophet’s sayings and conducts, mention charity work in different ways, instructing and encouraging believers to carry out charity. Qaradawi outlines several Islamic principles calling for charity from the mere performing of charity, readiness, etc., to being a religious duty. Charity work in Islam is different from other religions or philosophies as being characterized by certain features. Qaradawi outlines the characteristics of charity in Islam in the comprehensiveness of charity, diversity of charity, continuing and sustaining of charity, power of motivation and the good intention of charity. The motivation for performing charity in Islam is of a powerful dimension that ensures its continuity and sustains consistency. The most important aspects of motivation are seeking the satisfaction of Allah, moral motivation and “Ikhlaḥ”, the blessings and bequeathment in life.

Qaradawi explains that Morality is a religious obligation and it is a

practical necessity in the individual's life in order to succeed and be happy. Morality encourages good deeds and actions that are rewarded in this life and hereafter. Charity work is an action that expresses solidarity and brotherhood and translates into extending assistance, relief, support and cooperation. Muslims see morality, if not connected to religion, leave impact or effect on the life of individual and society. Thus, charity work or civic action both in Islamic terms lead to assistance, development and protecting the dignity of human beings.

Endnotes

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- 12 Qaradawi, *Principles of Charity Work in Islam*, 25-26
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- 14 Quran 22:77.
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- 23 Ibid., 3:104.
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- 29 Quran 99:7.
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- 41 Ibid., 35.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 Masnad, Hadith No. 1454, <http://www.searchtruth.com/searchHadith>.
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- 45 Qaradawi, *The Principles of Charity Work in Islam*, 36-37.
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- 48 Ibid., 38.
- 49 Ibid.
- 50 Ibid., 38-39
- 51 Ibid.,39.
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- 54 Qaradawi, *The Principles of Charity in Islam*, 40.
- 55 Ibid., 41-42.
- 56 Quran 76: 8-9.
- 57 Qaradawi, *The Principles of Charity in Islam*, 42.
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