

The Quran and its Message

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سَلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمْ

Salamun Alaikum (Peace be upon you)

CONSULTATION

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Mutual consultation whether in the spheres of religion, personal conduct, societal, state or government is a duty on all believers. Forced beliefs, unilateral decisions where many individuals are involved, undemocratic governments which are not elected by consultation or by its people and all areas where consultation is lacking or devoid is not within the spirit of the Quran's message.

042:038

"And those who answer the call of their Lord and establish worship, and whose affairs are a matter of counsel (Arabic: Shura), and who spend of what We have bestowed on them"

The Arabic word for consultation is 'Shura' and there exists a complete Surah (Chapter 42) named after it. The Arabic word 'Shura' is formed from its root word 'Shiin-Waw-Ra' which carries the meaning of consultation, to debate, to examine, to counsel.

شاوره (inf. n. مُشَاوَرَةٌ and شَوَارٌ, TA,) and استشاره, both signify the same, (S, Mṣb,) *He consulted him, or consulted with him; he debated with him in order that he might see his opinion; (Mṣb;)* فِي الْأَمْرِ *respecting the thing or affair: (S, Mgh,* Mṣb:*)* or † the latter, (A, K,) or both, (TA,) *he sought, desired, or asked, of him counsel, or advice. (A, K.)* See also 6.

Source: Edward Lanes Lexicon [1]

Even in private spheres, mutual consultation is strongly advised by the Quran.

065:006

"Lodge them where you dwell, according to your wealth, and do not harm them so as to make life difficult for them. And if they are pregnant, then spend for them till they bring forth their burden. Then, if they suckle the child for you, give them their due payment **and consult (Arabic: watamiru) together in kindness**; but if you make difficulties for one another, then let some other woman give suckle for him (the father of the child)"

Please note that the Arabic word 'watamiru' (verb: i'tamara) in this context carries a similar nuance of consultation and advice.

Whether it is business affairs or matters within a domestic remit, believers are encouraged to conduct life by **mutual consultation**. This was also the advice given to Prophet Muhammad. ^(pbuh)

003:159

"It was by the mercy of God that you (Muhammad) were lenient with them, for if you had been rude and harsh of heart they would have dispersed from round about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them **and consult with them (Arabic: washawir'hum) in the matter**. And when you have decided, then put thy trust in God. Indeed! God loves those who put their trust (in Him)"

002.233

"The mothers shall suckle their offspring for two whole years, for whoever desires to complete the term. The father shall bear the cost of their food and clothing in a fair manner. No soul shall have a burden laid on it greater than it can bear. No shall the mother be treated unfairly on account of her child. Nor father on account of his child. And on the heirs is a duty of the like. If they both decide weaning, **by mutual consent (Arabic: taradin), and after due consultation (Arabic: tashawurin)**, there is no blame on them. If ye decide on a foster-mother for your offspring, there is no blame on you, provided you give in a fair manner. And fear God and know that God sees well what you do"

027.032

She said (Sheba): "O chiefs! advise me in (this) my affair: no affair have I decided except in your presence."

FINAL THOUGHTS

Mutual consultation as a necessity in all walks of a believers life is powerfully underscored by the Quranic narratives.

REFERENCES

[1] LANE. E.W, Edward Lanes Lexicon, Williams and Norgate 1863; Librairie du Liban Beirut-Lebanon 1968, Volume 4, Page 1616

Highlights marked in red on the lexicon excerpt are my own insertions. They have no bearing on the original text other than they emphasise relevance to the topic at hand. These are merely illustrations and have solely been utilised for educational and explanatory purposes.

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