

TYPES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERSHIP: A QUR'ANIC PRESENTATION

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is one of the integral parts of human life because human nature is universally imbued with cooperation and mutual assistance. It is the leadership which establishes the firm relations among the people and elucidates the different ways towards the progressive development of civilizations. Leadership, in contemporary times, is being claimed by the people who themselves do not have ability to lead. In fact such persons do not have even the basic knowledge about the leadership. Communities developing under such leadership are like blind followers, like mass who do not understand their role in their respective communities. This is also one of the factors for fall of civilizations. Quran speaks about the leadership in details, gives examples of leadership in both; good and bad aspects and their impacts on the societies. This article will explain the types and characteristics of leadership as mentioned in the Quran. It is hoped that this article will present a clear and explicit view of Quran towards the leadership. It will also explain the ingredients and characteristics of the successful leadership which will exhibit the distinguished approach of the Quran in dealing with different aspects of the leadership. Because of the limitation of time and space in this article only Qiyādah Al-Rāshidah and its ethical characteristics will be discussed.

Keywords: Leadership, Quranic Prospective, Types of Leadership, Characteristics of Leadership

INTRODUCTION

The word used for leadership in Arabic language is “Al-Qiyādah”. Specifically this word is not mentioned in the Quran, even the derivations of this root are not used in the Quran. But there are other words which are used for leadership; such as Al-Imāmah, Al-Kilāfah, Al-Tamkīn. Imāmah is used in its singular form, in the second chapter of the Quran; Al-Baqarah, while Allāh stated the story of Abraham. When He was tested by Allāh with certain commands, which He fulfilled. After that Allāh gave him a glad tidings that He will make him an Imam to the Nations. [2:124]. Same word in its plural form is used in chapter Al-Qaṣaṣ, while Allāh informed the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) about the favors He wished for Mūsā and his people that He want to make them “Al-'A'imah” leaders and make them heirs. [28:5]. All the scholars are agreed upon the meaning of the Imāmah in these verses as leaders. (Ṭabarī and Nīsābūrī 1986, Ibn Kathir 2004) Al-Kilāfah and its derivations are stated in many places, but all are giving the same meaning as leading, whether it is in the field of politics or education. In chapter Ṣād Allāh addressed Prophet Dāw'ūd and told him that it is He Who did indeed make him a Khalīfah (vicegerent) on earth, so that he may judge between people in truth (and justice) and may not follow the lusts (of his heart). [38:26]. In another place in chapter Yūnus Allāh indicates the Al-Khilāfah is conditioned with deeds not with personalities. Allāh addressed the believers that He made them Kulafā in the land, to see how would they perform. [10:14]. Al-Tamkīn; literally it means having ability to do something or having power over something. In chapter Yūsuf Allāh mentioned how He made him a leader and used the word Al-Tamkīn.[12:21] and chapter Al-Kahaf Allāh stated He established the power of Zū Al-Qarnayn on earth, and He gave him the ways and the means to all ends and (such) way he followed. [18:84-85].

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