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The Universality of the Quranic Divine Commands versus the Casuistic Interpretation of the Regulative Verses

In the Holy Qur'an, it is time and again reiterated that God has decreed that human beings should not belong to a single religious community (*ummah*). For each community, moreover, He has appointed a Law (*sharī'ah*) and a spiritual path (*minhāj*) and He will try each community according to that which has been given unto them. So, the believers of different communities are commanded to vie with one another in virtuous and righteous deeds (*khayrāt*). All shall return to God and He will be the ultimate arbiter and judge among them.

According to the Holy Qur'an, three conditions are necessary for human salvation in all religions: 1) having faith in God, 2) belief in the hereafter, and 3) doing righteous and virtuous deeds. Every religion, moreover, is a totality comprising some principles (*uṣūl*) and ramifications (*furū'*) which should be taken into consideration each in its own right and in its proper place. Now, total emphasis on the ramifications at the expense of the principles of religion is tantamount to committing the so-called fallacy of the context which consists in taking something out of its proper context at the detriment of the whole and which in addition could result in a sort of reductionism; that is, in reducing that totality to one of its contingent aspects and which moreover, contrary to the dictates of Islam would jeopardise the Qur'anic emphasis on the virtuous and pious acts which are a condition sine qua non of salvation.

Regulative verses are mainly concerned with the ramifications of Islam and an emphatic and exaggerated reliance on such verses, even if in a sense necessary, will lead to casuistry of sorts which is reprimanded in the Qur'an which blames many religious scholars for their divisive spirit (*tafriqah*) which is against the spirit of religion on the one hand and against the spirit of Divine Law and anathema to righteousness and pious deeds on the other.



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