

Is human being *Ashraful Makhlooqaat*?

By: Khurshid Imam

A. Introduction

I wanted to correct him - but did not do so; as we were having general discussion; but he said once "*Insaan Ashraful makhluqaat hai*" (Human kind is the BEST of creations). It is very common practice among many of us to say that Man / Human being is *ashraful makhlooqaat* i.e. BEST of CREATIONS. People don't ponder over this term; whether it is used anywhere in Quran or Hadees. Nowhere does Quran says that Man / Human being is BEST of creations or *Ashraful Makhluqaat*. Neither any *hadees*- as per my best understanding - says so. So how come this statement became very popular in Muslim world? I really don't know. It may be because of superiority complex? But this statement is ONE of the false / wrong / unislamic / unquranic statement popular in muslim world.

B. Universe made FOR mankind, mankind made FOR Life-Hereafter

In the house of Islam human beings have a distinction among other creations in following aspects:

- They are given free will . Quran 18:29; 10:99
- Whole universe is made **FOR** human being. Refer Quran 14:32-33; 16:12; 16:14; 22:36-37; 22:65; 31:20; 43:13; 45:12-13

It is very interesting to note that God has made everything in the universe to FOLLOW his law. Sun, moon, galaxies, stars, atoms, weather, sea, air, water - these all always **ABIDE BY** laws of God.

Only creation that is FREE to obey / disobey God is mankind (and Jinn). Man has a choice to follow God's command or not to follow. Why it is so? Because he has been given free will? Why is this free will? So that he can be tested in this life. It will not make any sense if man does not have free will / choice and at the same time he has to undergo test of life.

That is why Allama Iqbal says:

Na Tu Zameen Ke Liye Hai Na Asman Ke Liye *Jahan Hai Tere Liye, Tu Nahin Jahan Ke Liye*
You are neither for the earth nor for the heaven: The world is for you, and not
you for the world.

C. Human being is not the best of creations

In-spite of this, nowhere Allah said that man is Best of Creations. Some people get confused reading the following ayah:

"We have honored the children of Adam, provided them with transport on land and sea, given them for sustenance things good and pure, and made them superior to a great number of Our creations." (Qur'an; 17:70)

God has preferred man over MANY of his creations. Ayah does not say that man has been preferred over **ALL** creations.

So 17:70 tells that human-being has been given preference over MANY of his creations.

Another ayah of Quran 95:4 says that Allah created humans as '*ahsane taqvim*'. It means that Allah created man in the beautiful mould / design / ability. Man has been made in such way that it can acquire great talent / capabilities and perform good deeds or he can choose to perform bad deeds and harm humanity. This is clear from reading the very next two ayah (95:5-6) that says: some (people) can become lowest (in character, action, misdeed) and some will deserve for reward due to their beliefs and righteous deeds. It does not mean that He created man as the greatest of all creations.

On the contrary God says that among Human being there are some who are Shaitan. Refer Quran 6:112

Also - those people who are involved in intoxicant and gambling are like Shaytaan. Refer Quran 5:90

Surprisingly Allah has mentioned in Quran 8:22 **THOSE PEOPLE** as **WORST** creatures who do not use their **AQAL** (brain, intellect) and are thus deaf and dumb.

In Quran 8:55 Allah has described those people as **WORST** creatures who reject / conceal truth of God knowingly. In both ayah; arabic word **Ad-dawwab** is used. This word refers to **crawling / walking creatures of the earth.**

رَبَّاءُ وَآدِلٌ - Crawling / walking creature of the Earth.

Similarly in 98:6 God described some people as **WORST** of creatures. In 98:7 God described some people as **BEST** of creatures. In both these ayah arabic word **Al-barriyah** is used. This word refers to **creatures of the Earth**. This is very significant. In fact; word used here shows that they are worst or best with respect to the earth.

رَبِّرَبِّلَا	Creature of the EARTH.
رَبِّرَبِّلَا رُّشْمُهُ كَيْلُوا	98:6 Worst creature of the earth
رَبِّرَبِّلَا رُّيَخْمُهُ كَيْلُوا	98:7 Best of creature of the earth

Please don't think that human being is the only creatures of God apart from jinn and angels. God says in 42:29 that God has scattered creatures throughout the heavens and the earth. Don't be surprised tomorrow if scientists find out creatures residing on other planets or other heavenly bodies.

A very important question will come to the mind:

a. If human being is not ashraful makhlooqaat then can there be another race / creation of God that would be best of creations?

b. Do we have other creatures apart from human being, angels, jinn?

c. Are there another creatures of God about whom we don't know today? These questions are beyond the scope of the present article and require in-depth explanation of some ayah of Quran.

D. Human being - a unique creature

Whenever Quran talks about *fazeelat* i.e. "preferring one over other" - its always in some aspect that a particular entity is preferred over other entity. So, in what aspect human being is better than others?

Allah has bestowed the best faculties to us, the best of moulds to make *insaan*. (95:4)
But no other creation has the capability to reach to the highest level of excellence to which a human being can reach. Allah has kept this in human beings only. The whole point of our existence is to attain that high stature in which Allah has cast us. To reach that high stature He gave us directions through His own words in Quran. No other creation has been blessed that way.

Allah has given this capability to man that man can reach highest of the high and the lowest of the low; and has been thus put to test. Even; when somebody is sinking to the lowest of low, he/she is doing something that other earthly creations cannot do.

Yet, human beings can turn out both ways; they can become best on earth or worst (98:6-7).

Yet, Allah has not honoured human being with BEST of creatures. If human beings somehow would come out of this complex they would treat other creations in this world with more respect and perhaps not create environmental disturbances

A person CAN BECOME really good or CAN BECOME really bad. This "CAN BECOME" is a capability which has been endowed to human being and no other earthly creation.

There are numerous abilities and faculties that Allah had bestowed to other species present on this earth like some can fly, swim, have night vision, have electricity and for shocking predator or light for seeing in dark etc. So we just can't go about making sweeping statements that we are the best.

Blessing of intellect is unique for human being. This intellect is one gift of Allah to human beings and other species have been bestowed with other gifts. What really matters or what really counts for us is our deeds / *amaal*.

As poet Allama Iqbal said:

Amal se banti hai jannat bhi jahannam bhi, Yeh khaki apni fitrat se na noori hai na naari hai.
By action life may become both paradise and hell; This creature of dust in its
nature is neither of light nor of fire.

E. Conclusion

1. It is very popular statement in muslim word that human being is *ashrafal-makhlooqaati*. e. human being is the best of creations. Nowhere Quran or teachings of prophet tell that mankind is the best creation.

2. God has made entire universe for the mankind. Except mankind and jinn every creation in the universe is BOUND to follow laws of Allah. Human has been given free will. He can follow / reject laws of God. This free will forms the basis for his test.

3. Quran says in 17:70 that mankind has got preference over MANY of creation of God. God does not say that mankind has been preferred over ALL creations. This preference of mankind over many is in certain aspects.

4. Human being is unique creature in terms of capabilities. This he achieves by using intellect. There can be good ones from among human being and there can be extremely bad ones. God has made human being in beautiful manner. He can acquire amazing talent, perform astonishing deeds. He can use these for good / bad purpose.

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