What is the stance of Islam on the concept of enlightenment?

The Islamic concept of enlightenment is built on a solid foundation of faith and knowledge, which combines between the enlightenment of the mind and that of the heart through faith in Allah first, then, through knowledge, which is inseparable from faith.

The European concept of enlightenment has been transferred to the Islamic communities like other western concepts. From the Islamic perspective, enlightenment does not depend merely on the mind that is not guided by the light of faith. However, at the same time one's faith is of no benefit to him if he does not use his mind, which is a blessing that Allah has bestowed on him, in thinking, contemplating, and managing his affairs in a way that fulfills public welfare that benefits people and lasts on earth.

During the dark Middle Ages, Muslims were the ones who brought the light of civilization and culture back after it had faded in all of the western and eastern countries as far as Constantinople.

The enlightenment movement in Europe was a normal reaction to the tyranny that was practiced by the ecclesiastical authorities against the mind and the human will. However, the Islamic civilization did not undergo such circumstances.

{Allah is the Protector of those who believe; He brings them out of the depths of darkness into the light. As for those who disbelieve, their protectors are false gods; they bring them out from the light into the depths of darkness. They are the people of the Fire; they will abide therein forever.} [98] Surat al-Baqarah: 257.

By reflecting on these Qur’anic verses, it becomes clear that man gets out of the depths of darkness by the divine will, which is the divine guidance of man that takes place only by the permission of Allah. This is because a person whom Allah Almighty brings out of the darkness of ignorance, polytheism, and superstition to the light of faith, science, and true knowledge is a person with an enlightened

mind, insight, and heart.

Moreover, Allah Almighty has referred to the Noble Qur’an as light, saying:

{...There has surely come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book.} [99] Surat al-Mā’idah: 15.

Allah Almighty revealed the Qur’an to His Messenger Muhammad, and revealed the Torah and the Gospel (the undistorted versions) to Moses and the Messiah to bring people out of the depths of darkness into light. Thus, Allah made guidance connected with light.

{We sent down the Torah which contains guidance and light...} [100] Surat al-Mā’idah: 44.

{...and We gave him the Gospel that contained guidance and light, confirming what came before it in the Torah; a guidance and admonition for the righteous.} [101] Surat al-Mā’idah: 46.

There is no guidance without light that is provided by Allah, and there is no light that illuminates man's heart and life except with a permission from Allah.

{Allah is the Light of the heavens and earth...} [102] Surat an-Nūr: 35.

It is important to note that in the Qur’an, the word "light" comes in the singular form in all cases, whereas, the word "darkness" always comes in the plural form and this indicates extreme accuracy in describing such conditions. [103]

div> From the article "Enlightenment in Islam" by Dr. Tuwaijri.
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