

THE HOLY PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW), AN EPITOME OF PEACE

ABDUL-SAMAD ISSAH – 87TH JALSA SALANA – GHANA

Tashahuud

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝
مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝
إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝

Ameer chairman a perfunctorily look into the happening around us , in households , in communities , in towns , in cities , in nations and the world at large indicate beyond any shadow of doubt that there is commotion , agitations and unrest in the social , political , cultural and religious landscape. There is absence of peace in both the micro and macro interactions of mankind. From the basic unit of man's interaction to the larger system. There is unrest between husband and wife, between father or mother and the children, between siblings, between head of families and members of families, between chiefs of townships and their subjects. As if this is not enough the same unrest and in higher degrees are found in the political governance of countries, be it African, Asia, America or Europe. In short there is a great deal of acrimony between the rulers and the ruled. In another breadth we have unrest between different tribes, unrest between communities and unrest between countries with a fire power third world wars looming between super power blocks whilst the economic or trade wars are already in motion. The ill-effects of wars to mankind today, Ameer Chairman do not stand in need of any commentary. As if this is not enough, man has abused his environment, the land the water bodies and the seas, which hold the ingredients for his own survival. Least we forget the environment is a heritage for the dead, the living and the yet to be born. The desecration of our water bodies through "galamsay" and the wanton deforestation taking place not only in the southern

belt but the already tree impoverish northern belt. This rate of environmental degradation and pollution leaves much to be desired.

It is mind boggling and alarming the sort of society we of today are preparing for our children and our children's children.

Is there a way out of this chaotic, bleak and gloomy situation? Is there a teacher, a leader in society today , before today and after today who has not only laid down the principles of engagement or laws to remove these unrest and halt this malignant and cancerous cell vociferously corroding the peace of society at all levels , threatening the entire existence of man on earth , but also demonstrate by his own deeds that if these principles or laws are adhered to , they will grant husband and wife , families , townships , cities , nations , the environment and the world at large the needed peaceful coexistence and harmony as was the intent of the creator of the universe – Allah suhaanahu wata-Aallah when He addressed our progenitors , Hazrat Adam and his wife in the Holy Quran Chapter 2 verse 36, saying:

وَقُلْنَا يَا آدَمُ اسْكُنْ أَنْتَ وَزَوْجُكَ الْجَنَّةَ وَكُلَا مِنْهَا
رَغَدًا حَيْثُ شِئْتُمَا

O Adam, dwell thou and your wife **in the garden** and eat therefrom plentiful wherever you will.

The individual, the teacher , the leader who brought to the world principles of engagement aimed to ameliorate or eliminate the conflicts between man and man and man and his environment and provide practical workable solution when conflict occurs in the society, before today , today and after today and till the end of time is no other than the man described by his most beloved, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani , the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (as) in his Arabic poem :

Laa shakka an-na Muhammadan Khayrul waraa

Reekul Kiraami Wa nu'khatul-l a'hyaani. Meaning;

No doubt, it is Muhammad who is the best of creation; He is the essence (and the vital force) of the elect of Allah. That is Hazrat Khatamu-Nabiyyen Muhammad Mustapha (saw).Due to his perfect demonstrations of these principles, Allah addressing him in the Holy Quran chapter 33:22 say

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model.

Ameer Chairman, the accolade *uswatun hasanaton* (an excellent model) was not earned without justification. He earned it because the teachings he bequeathed and practically acted upon to serve as examples for mankind were not only meant to solve the problems of his tribesmen or nation as were the teachings of his predecessors, but that of the entire world, because they are unique, practical , timeless and all encompassing.

Allah says of him in Holy Quran chapter 21: 108

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

And We have sent thee not but as a mercy for all peoples.

The Holy Prophet (saw) is a perfect example for mankind because he has lived as the ruled, where he and his followers were subjects of an unjust pagan rule. He also lived as a ruler, where he was both a spiritual head of his followers and the head of state of his nation where his subjects belonged to different faiths – Muslims, Jews and Christians. Within his followers were internal enemies (hypocrites) , among the Jews and Christians were some who had opposed him and helped the pagan Arabs to persecute him and his followers. And had betrayed him on pacts agreed between them. Yet the Holy prophet led all these people in the spirit of fairness, justice so as to ensure peace and harmony.

Man is a being made of the physical and spiritual. And when there is no peace within both aspects of his being man is in a state of lost. To satisfy both aspects of his existence man is called upon to establish the rights of his creator (Allah) , and the rights of his creation – both the animate and inanimate. The Quran directs man to the ultimate source of peace in chapter 13 verses 29, thus

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَ تَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ
تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Those who believe, and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Aye! It is in the remembrance of Allah that hearts can find comfort;

The Holy Prophet's first and foremost duty was to call man to have union with his God, recognize his attribute and bow down to Him alone. He then called upon man to live in harmony with his fellow man observing the rights due to him without regard to his religion, tribe, and status in society or be he or she an enemy. Where possible provide him with the shelter, food and clothing. If a husband observes the right of his wife, and the wife the right of the husband, if the father or mother observes the rights of the child and the child observes the father or mother, if the ruler observes the rights of the rule and the rule the rights of the ruler, there will exist no rights to be fought for.

Ameer Chairman despite the above, one cannot proceed to establish the truthfulness in the topic for discussion today entitled **“The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) the epitome of peace”** without disentangling from his neck , the wicked , preposterous , malicious albatross tagged on him as a war monger , a murderer , a usurper who fought innocent people to forceful convert them to Islam. This accusation is far from the truth, it is as alien to truth as darkness is to light. From the creation of this universe till date , if there exist one human being among mankind who loved peace, professed peace, practiced peace and sue for peace at whatever cost , that person is the Prince and Champion of peace , Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha (saw). Though entitled as “the Khataman-Nabiyyen” , the seal of the Prophets by Allah. He accepted that Rasool of Allah be canceled from his name whilst signing a treaty with non-Muslims, who insisted that they have not accepted him as a messenger of Allah and so will not pen their acceptance unless appellation Rasool is not removed. A title proffered on him by Allah , yet for the sake of peace the holy prophet accepted that it be deleted or cancelled from the document. People pick quarrels if they not called Alhajj after their pilgrimage to Mecca.

TRUE PURPOSE OF JIHAD

The true purpose of Jihad was to establish freedom of conscience and allow for the free practice or no practice of religion. As subjects of an unjust pagan rule, they were persecuted for a period of 13 years without any resistance from them except perseverance and endurance. He and his followers were physically hurt, starved, harassed and boycotted. Muslims were be staked out on the ground under the scorching heat of the Arabian Desert. Hazrat Sumayya bint Khubbat famous as the first martyr in Islam was killed with a spear in the most despicable manner when she will not recant her new found religion. Hazrat Bilal suffered torture at the hands of Umayya ibn khalaf by placing a heavy rock on his chest to force his conversion, to mentioned but a few. They bore all these with exceptional patience.

When torture became unbearable the prophet and his followers migrated to Madinah to seek refuge. Yet again the meccans followed up desirous to kill Muhammad and to wipe out Islam from the surface of the earth. In was to halt these atrocities systematically meted out to the Holy Prophet and his followers that they were divinely instructed by Allah to defend themselves against their oppressors? This divine instruction to defend themselves is most impregnated and revealing. In the Holy Quran chapter

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقْتَلُونَ بِإِنِّهِمْ ظَلُمُوا ۗ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ
نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ

الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا
اللَّهُ ۗ وَلَا دَفْعَ اللَّهُ لِلنَّاسِ بِعُضِهِمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهْدِمَتْ
صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ ۖ وَمَسَاجِدُ يُذْكَرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ
كَثِيرًا ۗ وَلِيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged — and Allah indeed has power to help them —

Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly only because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah' — And if Allah did not repel some men by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated. And Allah will surely help one who helps Him. Allah is indeed Powerful, Mighty.

Ameer Chairman it is clear from the above verses that the purpose for which this permission was granted to the Holy Prophet and his followers to defend themselves was a general rule aim to stop unbridle persecution to establish freedom of conscience (worship). Four things are clear from the verse. One, it was the pagan Arabs who took the war to the Muslims. Two, the Muslims were wronged as they were maltreated and driven out of their homes. What was their crime? Ay-yakuuluu Rab-bunal-lahu (because they said Our Lord is Allah). Thirdly, it clear from the verses that it is sunnatul-llah , the ways of Allah even before Islam that , man was used to stop man from desecrating the religion established by

Allah. Is said in the verse: **Wa laylaa daf'ul-laahin-naasa ba'duhum biba'd** (If Allah did not repel some men (wicked ones) by means of other (those desirous of worship) , places of worship would have been destroyed. This establishes the fact that like earlier worshippers of Allah who came under persecution and had to fight back, the Muslims in the same fashion took up arms in self-defense to protect their infant religion.

Fourthly, the Muslims fought base on the conviction that Allah will help them defeat their mighty opponents. This was their only incentive to fight though they were very weak in comparison to the pagans of Arabia. Never could it be to convert the pagans by force to Islam.

Again the verses call for defense against desecration of places of worship. Cloisters for the Monks , churches for the Christians , Synagogues for Jews and Mosques for the Muslims , and to stop the killing of man by man to ensure peace and harmony , and freedom to worship or not to worship. There is always a time when the treatment of a sickness base on the intensity and criticality calls for drastic and harsh measure to be administered to the patient, but thereafter gives an everlasting cure. When an iron falls into fire, is only an iron that can be used to take it out. These enemies of Islam had gone beyond all bounds of aggression and there was no option than that they were matched boot to boot. Fire for fire, sword for sword, an eye for and eye.

Interestingly, today those who incite rebellions and wars in other nations and use them as pretext to become peace makers ending up in looting these countries for their personal economic needs are also those who accuse the Prophet unjust wars. Those who sell firearms to nations to engage in War are those calling the prince of peace a War monger.

CONDUCT DURING WARS

Whilst conducting wars the Holy Prophet still extended a hand of compassion towards those who took war to him. He instructed his followers to be humane whilst in war and never to transgress. Once whilst dispatching his army to the battle ground he reminded them that they should consider themselves all the time in the presence of God, and that the commanders should deal justly with those over whom he had been placed in authority. They should fight in the cause of God courageously, but humanely. They should not molest priests and monks and those who occupied themselves with the remembrance of God in their houses of worship, nor should they kill women or children or old people or those who were in any manner afflicted and were not able to fight. Nor should they cut down any

tree or pull down any building. In one narration it is said that prophet admonished his followers that of the six things that will be beneficial to man after his death is the planting of trees and also to preserve the earth because it is his mother.

Ameer Chairman the world's highest peace council is the United Nations established in 1945. The Geneva conventions which established the International Law for humanitarian treatment in war was established in 1949. A paltry 69 years today. Whilst the King of peace had established humanitarian treatment in war over 1400 years ago.

MATRIMONIAL HARMONY

In Holy Quran chapter 2 verses 188, the relationship between husband and wife has been described as coverings for each other.

“They are a sort of garment for you and you are sort of garment for them”. Just like the garment we wear grants us comfort protection from the hardships of the weather, so does husband and wife comfort each other and guide against moral and spiritual decadence.

The Holy Prophet recognized that a peaceful society has its seed in a peaceful home or family, he gave a very strong admonishment to his followers to ensure homes are peaceful by ensuring the welfare of wives who are the bedrock of our homes.

Abu Hurairah (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "The believers who show the most perfect Faith are those who have the best behaviour, and the best of you are those who are the best to their wives".[At-Tirmidhi].

Thauban bin Bujud (May Allah be pleased with him) reported: Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, "The most excellent dinar is one that a person spends on his family."(Muslim)

The peace and harmony of matrimonial homes has a concomitant effect on the peace and harmony of the entire community. This is so because it is the members of households that make up the community, and the communities make up the township or city and townships and cities make up nation. Knowing the role of the mothers in the upkeep of homes, the Holy Prophet has established the rights of wives on their husband as a key component. He admonished his companions' sayings take very good care of their wives. Also in establishing the higher status of mothers in a very succinct statement, Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "Paradise is at the feet of mothers." Once a man came to him and asked, "O, Messenger, who among mankind is worthy of my kindness and love?" The Prophet answered, "Your

mother." "Who next?" "Your mother." "Who next?" "Your mother." Only after the third time he said, "And your father."

He also called on men to establish the conjugal rights of their wives. This is a very serious matter if not adhered to can lead to matrimonial scandals and inevitable divorces, to detriment of children and society at large. Addressing 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr ibn Al-'Aas, may Allah be pleased with him, the Prophet sallallaahu `alayhi wa sallam (may Allah exalt his mention) said: "O 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, I have been informed that you observe daily fasting and perform voluntary night prayers the whole night. Do not do so, for your body, your eyes and your wife have due rights upon you." [Muslim]

These admonishments if assimilated and practiced will make our homes building blocks of peace to construct peaceful communities, towns, cities and nations.

ESTABLISHING JUSTICE AND EQUITY

The song of one legendary reggae king, Peter Tosh is of relevance here. He says in one of his famous songs **"Everyone is crying out for peace, but none is crying out for justice. I don't want no peace I need equal rights and justice"**. The Holy Prophet even before his appointment as a messenger of Allah had ingrained in his being the power to fight for injustices and equal rights in the in the pre-Islamic society. He therefore became an active member of a movement known as Hilful-fadool. The members of this association took a responsibility under oath in the following terms:

"They will help those who were oppressed and will restore them their rights, as long as the last drop of water remained in the sea. And if they do not do so, they will compensate the victims out of their own belongings".

His passion and will power was re-enforced later base on verse of the Quran which says ;

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوِّمِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَ لَوْ
عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ
فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا ۗ وَ إِن
تَلَّوْا أَوْ تُعْرَضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

"O ye who believe! Be strict in observing justice, and be witnesses for Allah, even though it be against yourself or against parents and kindred. Whether he be rich or poor, Allah is more regardful of them both than you are. Therefore, follow not low desires so that you may be able to act equitably. (4:136)

The Holy prophet (saw) was a strict adherent to the laws laid down in the Quran by Allah for the dispensing of justice. He will administer justice without recourse to blood relationship, friendship or the social class of the culprit. It is reported in a hadith that a woman from a prominent tribe Banu Makhzoom committed theft. The society was apprehensive and were devising ways and means to protect her from facing the law, because of the nobility of her family. One of the Prophet's beloved companion Usamah was asked to intercede with the Prophet to temper justice with mercy. The Prophet became agitated on the account of the pleas and said **"O people, what led to the destruction of the nations preceding you was their acquittal of the noble person if he committed theft and infliction of the punishment on the weak if he committed theft. By Allah, if Faatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, committed theft I would cut her hand off."** [Al-Bukhari and Muslim] .

Another classic case of fairness demonstrated by the holy prophet is the account of his uncle Abass who became a prisoner of war. He was among the prisoners of war taken after the battle of Badr.

He Abass and his colleague prisoners were tied tightly with ropes to prevent their escape. The tightness of the rope at night caused him to groan with pain. The groans of his uncle made the Holy Prophet unable to sleep. Perceiving this the companions decided to loosen Abass's ropes to give him some comfort. When the Holy Prophet got to know of this favour extended to only Abass his uncle, he directed the companions to treat all prisoners alike, saying there was no reason to show favours to his relative. He insisted that either they must loosen the bonds of all the prisoners or tighten the bonds of Abass , his uncle like all others.

When there was an argument between his bossom friend Hazrat Abu-Bakr and a Jew, on who is superior than the other. Hazrat Musah (as) and the Holy Prophet. This was actually after the Jew declared that Moses was above the whole of mankind. And Hazrat Abukar counted by saying that Prophet Muhammad is above Prophet Moses. Though a fact that he was khatam of Prophets and sent to all mankind. He judged against his friend saying;

"You should not have said this, as the feeling of others people must be respected".

This is what is needed in the Jama'at of all Office holders. To dispense justice without regards to race or tribe or friendship.

RECONCILIATION OF FEUDING PARTIES

Ameer chairman the legacy left by the Holy Prophet to resolve quarrels between two feuding brothers or parties is unparalleled. This legislation is mimicked by the United Nations albeit defectively. And in most situation solution profess by the United Nations only end up exacerbating the situation. To end such confrontations between two parties, the Holy Quran directs as follows

And if two parties of believers fight against each other, make peace between them; then if after that one of them transgresses against the other, fight the party that transgresses until it returns to the command of Allah. Then if it returns, make peace between them with equity, and act justly. Verily, Allah loves the just. (Ch.49:V.10).

This once again demonstrates that the teachings laid down by the Holy prophet are timeless. Today we are all witness to how quickly wars between two countries spread into the neighboring countries. If the physical brunt of the war is not felt by the neighbors but the economic brunt is felt due to the influx of refugees. The need to make peace between these two feuding parties is not just for the good of the two parties but for the good of the neighbors and the neighbors' neighbor. Ameer chairman the story of the disagreement in the palace of the King is most apt. Once upon a time in the palace of a King lives a cat, a mouse, a cock, a ram and a horse. There were incessant attacks on the life of the mouse by the cat leading to constant unrest. The cat made appeals to the cock, ram, the horse to intercede and bring peace between it and the cat. Each time the cat approached any, he was rebuked and told 'it is the two of you who live inside the house and enjoy all the goodies in the palace. It is your problem, go away and face the consequence..... It does not concern me.

SUPERIORITY COMPLEX

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ
شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰ إِنَّ
اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize one another. Verily, the most honorable among you, in the sight of Allah, is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely, Allah is All-knowing, All-Aware. Quran chapter 49 verse 14.

The world has witness lots of uprisings and upheavals due the exhibition of superior complex by a group of people or a nations with respect to other people or nations. The apartheid system of South Africa, racial discrimination in United States were all base on the system of superior complex. These discriminatory systems have always left ugly scars that are difficult to erase and bring about mistrust between members of different races or groups.

The Holy prophet (saw), always inculcated among his followers the spirit of unity and equality between mankind of different race, nationality and tribe. This matter is of great importance to the holy Prophet that in his last days in a sermon known as the farewell sermon. He said and I quote;

... “Allah has made you brethren one to another, so be not divided. An Arab has no preference over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab over an Arab; nor is a white one to be preferred to a dark one, nor a dark one to a white one.”

While he was saying this, Prophet Muhammad raised his hands and joined the fingers of the one hand with the fingers of the other and then said:

“Even as the fingers of the two hands are equal, so are human beings equal to one another. No one has any right, any claim to superiority over one another. You are as brothers”.

LOVE FOR ENEMIES

When the Prophet went to Taif in the company of his companion Zaid to preach, the people of Taif did not only refuse to listen to his message but set up vagabonds and street boys at him and his companion. They were pelted with stones until the Prophet bled profusely. In a sorely grieved and dejected state, an angel of Allah descended upon him and asked of him, if he wanted his tormentors annihilated. The answer offered by the holy prophet is most profound, unprecedented, and unmatched and to a large extend unimaginable. **He replied to the angel “No, I hope that of these very tormentors would be born those who will worship the one true God.”**This replied was offered whilst the Prophet was still having fresh wounds and experiencing pain.

FORGIVENESS (AMNESTY OFFERED TO MECCANS)

There are conflicts that have gone on in this world for over centuries, simple because no party is ready to forgive the other. These conflicts rage for generations. On occasions where forgiveness is brought to bear, it comes with reconciliation commissions to help heal wounds and at times compensation offered to victims. In Arabia a man brought to his people a message from Allah. He and his followers subjected to utmost cruelty. He was pelted with stones. An afterbirth of a camel put on his neck whilst in prayers. They were attempt to assassinate him. His pregnant daughter was assaulted and she died shortly after. His uncle was killed, chest torn open and his liver and heart mutilated. To mentioned but a few. When the Muslims triumphed over and conquered Mecca, Muhammad issued a blanket pardon to everyone except a few criminals. The Prophet pronounced judgment in the words addressed by the Prophet Joseph to his brethren:

Arabic verse

There is no censure on you on this day. May God forgive you, for He is the Most Merciful of the merciful? No retribution shall be exacted from you this day” (12: 92-93)

ESTABLISHMENT OF CONSULTATIVE BODY

What is democracy Ameer Chairman? It is the rule of the people by the people and for the people. The issue of parliamentary democracy touted as the best way for the governance of nations in contrast to monarchy, autocracy, dictatorship was established by the Holy Prophet over 1300years ago. The Holy had established a system of consultation in the determination of the affairs of the state, where representatives are chosen to run the affairs of the Muslim nation. This was base on the Quranic verse which says;

فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ

So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in matters of administration. 3 : 160

وَ أَمْرُهُمْ شُورَىٰ بَيْنَهُمْ

And those whose affairs are decided by mutual consultation. 42: 39

O (Nisa 4:59-Al) Arabic

Verily, Allah commands you to make over the trusts to those entitled to them, and that, when you judge between men, you judge with justice. And surely excellent is that with which Allah admonishes you! Allah is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

Ameer Chairman the command here is most perceptive. Give trust to those entitled to themEntitlement here is a measure of their capacity to perform the duty, with fairness, fairness and justice. Do we choose leaders base on these traits or base on tribe, nationality, relationship or friendship in our body politics. This needs no answer.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

Fighting between members of the same religion and of different religions is one of the sources of great disturbance in the world today. Christians verses Muslims and Muslims verses Muslims Two typical cases of recent times is the persistent persecution and killing of Coptic Christians in Egypt and Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar.

In the Guardian of 10th January 2018 Harriet Sherwood the religion correspondent, writes and I quote “Christians in Egypt are facing unprecedented levels of persecution, with attacks on churches and the kidnap of girls by Islamist extremists intent on forcing them to marry Muslims.”

Another report from Newsweek Wed, Nov 14, 2018, report by By John Haltiwanger says and I quote “Over the past two weeks or so, over 120,000 Rohingya people have fled from Myanmar to Bangladesh due to ongoing violence, which has included reports of mass killings, among other crimes”.

Let juxtaposed the action of this persecution on Coptics Christians in Egypt to the relationship that existed between the holy Prophet and Christian orthodoxies who settled in the Sinai region in Egypt. During the period of Islam’s influence in the Arabian peninsula and its surroundings, the Holy prophet (SAW) sent series of letters to Kings and Leaders to declare in no uncertain terms his willingness for peace and cooperation. Thus in 628 AD a delegation from St Catherine Monastery in Egypt came to the Holy Prophet and requested for his protection. This Prince of peace granted them protection and provided them with a letter which is called the

“charter of Privileges”. The original copy of this memorial letter can still be found today at the royal treasury in Constantinople in Turkey. A copy is preserved and is on display at the St. Catherine Monastery where it is commemorated. The content of this letter is a grand testimony to the fact that our beloved prophet is an embodiment of peace and extends this peace to humanity irrespective of their religious persuasion. The letter reads: And I quote ;

“This is a message from Muhammad, son of Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them.

Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by Allah!

I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries.

No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims’ houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God’s covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate.

No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray.

Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation of (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world).”

Once in a religious discussion with a delegation of Christians from Najran who who came to Madina. The discussion continued until it was time for prayer service of the delegation. The leader of the deputation asked permission to depart from the mosque and to hold their religious service at some convenient spot. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

There is no need for you to go out of the mosque, because the mosque is the place to worship one God, if you want to do so, you have every freedom of worship, and holding the services in it. (Zurqani).

Conclusion

From the above Ameer Chairman, invited guest, brothers and sister in Islam it is crystal clear that Hazrat Muhammad Mustapha taught peace , practiced peace for the welfare of mankind more than any mortal to have lived on this earth and as such is the epitome of peace. And this is confirmed by non muslim writer George Bernard Shaw in his book **“The Genuine Islam”** Vol.No.8, 1936.

“I believe if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in **solving its problems in a way that would bring much needed peace and happiness.**

I have studied him - the man and in my opinion is far from being an **anti-Christ. He must be called the Savior of Humanity.**

Allahumma Solli Alaa MuhammadiInnaka Hameedun Majeed.

Wa aliakum salaam warahmatullah wabarakatuhu.