

ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF WORLD PEACE AND HARMONY; AN ANALYTICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Islam is a religion with perfect distinction to be a great exponent of peace, brotherhood, tolerance, independence, harmony and common well being. One of the most glaring characteristic of Islam is its name which means "peace". This proclamation can further be extracted, directly from the commandments of Allah, enumerated in the Holy Quran and the acts as well as sayings of the holy Prophet (SWS). For example, in the 2nd chapter of the Holy Quran Allah (SWT) narrates the example of a person named "AKHNAS" having vested interest born down the Field, cattle's of a person and created mischief in the environment and as a result the following verses revealed in the holy Quran against Him:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُعْجِبُكَ قَوْلُهُ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَيُشْهَدُ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ وَهُوَ أَلَدُّ الْخِصَامِ (2:204)

"There is the type of man whose speech about this world's life May astonish you, and he calls Allah to witness about what is in his heart; yet he is the most contentious of enemies".

The annals of Islamic history are replenished with numerous precepts and examples that has well explained the peace-loving nature of Islam. In the sayings of the holy Prophet (BPUH), Islam has been named as the Religion of "Nature". He (BPUH) has further explained this in his well known saying that:

كل مولود يولد على الفطرة (Sahih Al-Bukhari, V-2, P.226)

"A human being is born neutral (with clean slate of his mind) without having any inclination to one religion or the other."

Here again the word "nature" is mentioned with its meaning "Al-Fitra" and the Prophet (SWS) said that nature is Islam.

In the article under reference efforts have been made to prove that "Islam promotes peace, equality and religious freedom. Islam also invites Non-Muslims to discuss these problems for the sake of global peace. Dialogue and discussion is the only way through which we can achieve true global peace and can end all sorts of religious hatred and differences

Key words: Islam, peace, Nature, Conflicts, Dialogue, Harmony.

Introduction

All the revealed and un-revealed religions in the world have been preaching fulfillment of the needs of humanity and eradication of all types of hazards from human life. Islam, among all these, is a religion with perfect distinction to be a great exponent of peace, brotherhood, tolerance, independence, harmony and common well being. One of the most glaring characteristic of Islam is its name which means "peace". This proclamation can further be extracted, directly from the commandments of Allah, enumerated in the Holy Quran and the acts as well as sayings of the holy Prophet (SWS).

Invitation of Dialogue to Jews and Christians in a very impressive way:

To minimize conflicts the holy Quran named all Jews and Christians as "Ahl-e-Kitab" (people of book); and asked them to come and sit on a platform and discuss the problems for the sake of Global peace, to finish the religious hatred and to bring true peace in the world. In compliance with the teachings of the Holy Quran, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) signed a pact with other tribes of Madina at the time of his arrival.

The Existence of the Pact of Madina:

The same pact is known till this day as "Messaq-e-Madina" (The pact of Madina) and it is believed to be the first written pact of the world. Similarly, the prophet (SAW) would prefer to start dialogue with any opponent follower of other religions. The example of such a practice is not found in the past history of the world.

In addition to that the kind attitude of the Prophet (SAW) in clandestine as well as public preaching, the style of letters addressed to the Non-Muslim delegations in Madani era, the orders given for the safety of their wealth, belongings and lives. The other aspects of the Prophet (SAW) kindness with opponents can be seen in his whole-heartedly tolerance, forgiveness and prayers even for "enemies". Not only this, but benevolence shown by the Prophet (SAW) to the Non-Muslim prisoners after the battle of Badr also speaks of the peace-loving nature of Islamic teachings.

The Conquest of Makka and the Kind Attitude of Muhammad(SWS):

The greatest example of this characteristic of Islam can be seen at the time of the conquest of Makkah. It was complete victory, a matchless dominance of Muslims over Non-Muslims (Who were thirsty of their blood), but the kind-hearted Prophet (BPUH) announced general forgiveness to the Non-Muslims of Makkah. Among those who were granted forgiveness, there were the killers of the holy Prophet (BPUH) beloved's uncle. This forgiveness Event has even been repeatedly narrated by historians as the greatest example of the fact that "Islam" is the religion that preaches peace. This is the collective approach of all critics that

Islam has surpassed all other religions in granting all sorts of basic rights and liberty to the Non-Muslims in all circumstances, whether it was war or peace. (Al-Tabary, Tareekh Al-Tabary, V.3, P.40)

Before conversion to Islam, a large number of the inhabitants of the Arab Peninsula behaved very brutally to each other. They would start fighting on very minor contention and continue the same for a long period. At this point the holy Book of Allah describes this reality in the words:

وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ (3:103)

And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favour on you; for you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, you became brothers; and you were on the brink of the pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah make His Signs clear to you: That (3:103) you may be guided.

Different battles like the battle of "Fujjar" were fought among different tribes for years.

The peace-loving nature of Islam as a Reality:

The annals of Islamic history are replenished with numerous precepts and examples that has well explained the peace-loving nature of Islam. In the sayings of the holy Prophet (BPUH), Islam has been named as the Religion of "Nature". He (BPUH) has further explained this in his well known saying that:

"A human being is born neutral (with clean slate of his mind) without having any inclination to one religion or the other."

Here again the word "nature" is mentioned with its meaning "Al-Fitra" and the Prophet (SWS) said that nature is Islam.

The Incidents Showing the Contributions of Muhammad(sws)in respect of the resolving Conflicts even before the Advent of Islam:

Following are the two incidents before the advent of Islam that how Muhammad(SWS) was active for Resolving Conflicts and promoting peace.

Incident No.1:

Once when the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) was yet young, a conflict emerged among the different tribes apparently on a very minor issue. The bone of contention was as to who would lift and place the "Hajar-e-aswad"(i.e)"black stone" in the wall of the Kaba. Each and every member of the tribes considered their chief to be the most deserving personality for that. It caused a disagreement among them. One elder of them presented a very good idea. He said; let us make submission to the decision of the person who enters first of all to the "Kaba" on coming day(i.e)Tomorrow. This was quit by chance that the first person who came into the Kaba on the next day was the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). All of them shouted with great pleasure that the "Al-Sadiq and Al-Ameen" has come. They requested him to solve their conflict. On this the Prophet (P.B.U.H) placed the stone (i.e) "Hajar-e-Aswad" in a cloth sheet. Then He (P.B.U.H) said that all elders of the different tribes should take hold of the corners of the sheet and lift the same to higher part of the structure of the "Kaba". When it was lifted higher towards the point specified for the same, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) took it and fixed it there. After this, all of them went to their homes happily. (Maulana, Ameeruddin, Global Bi Annual Journal, V.15, P.356, 2006).

The active Participation and appreciation by the prophet (P.B.U.H) in the "Half-al-fudhool" Treaty before the advent of Islam.

When the prophet, Muhammad (SWS) was about 20 years old, a treaty was renewed by the people of makka. This treaty was hustled by the general Terrorism such as insecurity of the Arab countries, the hazards found on the high ways, the plundering of travelers on their ways and the brutality of the oppressors on the poor. All these activities compelled some of the sensible and sympathetic people to eradicate the same.

Hence, the people fostering such inspiration assembled names of some of them were like" fadl-bin- fudala, fadl- bin warda'a and fadl-bin- haris" to curb all these bad trends, they prepared a treaty , which became famous as " half-al-fudool" (maulana amir ud din mehir" the prophet (SAW)and well fare deeds, global bi-annual journal, vol-15.p-357)

There was great blood shed in the battle of "Fujjar" in the said battle which has caused extreme uncertainty in hijaz region so it is and that on the behest of Zubair bin- abdul mutalib and as per narration of Sulaiman mansoor poory on the movement of the prophet Muhammad (SWS), the tribes of both banu hashim" and banu-tamim "both gather in the half al fudool"

This treaty contained four important Sections and each member had to agree with them"

1. We shall eradicate uncertainty from the country
2. We shall protect the travelers
3. We shall continue helping the poor.
4. We shall prohibit the powerful from oppressing the weak people.

The prophet Muhammad (SWS) was present in this treaty signing session after which peace was maintained to some extent. While mentioning this treaty the prophet (SAW) would say if I was given red animals for forsaking this treaty, I would have not accepted that and if in this era of Islam I am ever invited to such a treaty, I would accept to participate in that (sohaili, al-raud – al-onuf vol,1 page 155, idara al marif Bairoot.)

Whatever narrations are presented in the preceding paragraph is related to the first era i.e. the era before the advent of Islam. These all show how much great respect and honor was being extended to the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) by the inhabitants of Makah in those days. They, due to His (P.B.U.H) kind and honest dealings with all, would also call him "Al-Ameen and Al-Sadiq" (the honest and true). Several incidents and events can be presented from the second era of the life of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) i.e. after the advent of Islam, which are visible proofs of the fair and affectionate dealing of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) with the non-Muslims of that era which compelled them to accept Islam. The wise sayings and purposeful planning of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) in all fields of life made them all to further strengthen their belief in Him (P.B.U.H).

The Prophet Muhammad(sws) was peace loving personality by Nature:

The era in which the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) started His (P.B.U.H) preaching was known for extreme brutality and social injustice. All of the inhabitants of Arab Peninsula with very minor exception used to inflict all sorts of pains not only on their opponents but even on their relatives and friends if they happened to oppose them. But we see the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) quite different from them. Even in those days, the Prophet (P.B.U.H) is heard praying for the conversion of the extreme staunch non-Muslims. Similarly, wishing for the good well of the infidels who had injured Him (P.B.U.H) during the battle of Bader. In another incident we see that when the Prophet (P.B.U.H) was severely injured in

"Taif" at the movement when He got the breath of Ease two angels came and asked permission regarding the devastation of their enemies they further addressed to Muhammad(SWS):

"As per your directives against your Enemies we can kill them by closing the two mountains"

The prophet(SWS) preferred peace and forgiveness instead of revenge and destruction and address to Allah:

اللهم اهدى قومي فأنهم لا يعقلون

"Oh, Allah let my Nation be guided on the Right Path as they do not know"

He carried on praying for their good well and safety with hope that there might be some of their children who would finally lead on the right path.

The Worthy Caliphs and the Preaching of Islam:

Strictly restricting themselves to the teaching of Islam and following the footsteps of the Prophet (P.B.U.H), the guided Caliphs and other companions of the Prophet (P.B.U.H) always preached Islam in a peaceful way. They depended on sweet & soft speaking and affectionate way and as per annals of the history, a large number of people flooded as converted Muslims in a very short span of time after the demise of Prophet (P.B.U.H).

Even today, all those good Muslims who are involved in the duty of preaching never use any force or a derogatory language to compel non-Muslims to accept Islam. For preaching the Holy Quran has clarified the method to be that of free will and liberty. Allah says in chapter 3 of the Holy Quran:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الرَّبُّدُّ مِنَ الْغَيِّ قَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ (2:256)

Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And Allah hear and know all things.(2:256)

Conclusion:

There is no compulsion in Islam, all the Human being are free to follow any religion. The Muslims preachers, however usually apprise them of the bad consequences of not accepting Islam as their one choice. This is also a fact that a large number of non-Muslims historians have time and again appreciated the peace loving nature of "Islam". Among these writers a handsome number from approximately all religions are included. This is a great evidence of the religion of Islam to be a religion of peace and tranquility.