

ISLAM IS PEACE AND MERCY

Assalamu Alaikum warahmatullahi wa barakatuh, (the peace, mercy and blessing of Allah upon you) is the first statement of Muslims whenever they meet.

The Qur'an is the last divine revelation and the universal message to all mankind. The Holy Qur'an has a dominant role in the daily lives of Muslims.

Social relations, being an important part of life, have naturally received their due place in the Islamic code of guidance which is based on the Holy Qur'an, the Hadith and the Prophet Muhammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) illustrious role model. In today's pluralistic, multi-faith society, these Islamic teachings have assumed greater meaning and relevance.

Islamic teachings emphasize kind treatment towards one's neighbours, be they Muslim or non-Muslim. It goes without saying that good neighbourliness is the key to firm social bonding. The Prophet [Peace Be Upon Him] repeatedly asked Muslims to behave as model neighbours. His observation is as follows: "One who believes in Allah and the next life should not hurt his neighbour."

A Muslim's life is governed and characterized by his love for and obedience to Allah and to His Messengers, and love for His creatures.

The teachings of Islam severely prohibit all forms of terrorism; they rather call for peace, mercy, love and forgiveness not only among Muslims and non-Muslims but also among animals.

Almighty God says in the Qur'an: "Whoever kills a believer intentionally – his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allah has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment." (4:93)

Islam saves lives and prohibits all types of suicide. Allah says in the Qur'an: " Do not kill (or destroy) yourselves, verily Allah has been to you the most merciful
" (4:29)

Allah has praised the believers for their sympathy towards the needy: "and they give food, in spite of love for it, to the needy, the orphan and the captive, saying (in their hearts)" we feed you only for the sake of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude" (76:8-9)

Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) is a mercy to all the worlds. Allah says in the Qur'an: "And We have not sent you (O Muhammad), except as a mercy to the worlds." (21:107)

As a part of a Muslim's religious obligations, he is duty-bound to be just, kind and sympathetic to all living beings. Throughout history, Muslims have adhered to these teachings of Islam. Religious minorities have flourished in Muslim lands. Non-Muslims have enjoyed equal opportunities in Islamic states and professed and practiced their respective faiths. Today, while the public scene in the world is emotionally surcharged and malicious propaganda is strong, projecting Islam as intolerant and exclusivist, there is a greater need for publicizing and observing the noble teachings of Islam concerning the maintenance of cordial social relations with non-Muslims.

Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) said in his famous sermon that was delivered on the ninth day of Hajj, 10 A.H (589 A.D) in Arafat, Makkah:

"O People, lend me an attentive ear, for I don't know whether after this year I shall ever be amongst you again. Therefore, listen to what I am saying to you carefully and take these words to those who could not be present here today.

“O People, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Return the goods entrusted to you to their rightful owners. Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you. Remember that you will indeed meet your Lord, and that He will indeed reckon your deeds. Allah has forbidden you to take usury (Interest); therefore all obligations on interest shall henceforth be waived...

“Beware of Satan, for the safety of your religion. He has lost all hope that he will ever be able to lead you astray in big things, so beware of following him in small things.

“O People, it is true that you have certain rights with regard to your women, but they also have rights over you. If they abide by your right, then to them belongs the right to be fed and clothed in kindness. Do treat your women well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers. And it is your right that they do not make friends with any one of whom you do not approve, as well as never committing adultery.

“O People, listen to me in earnest, worship Allah, offer your five daily prayers (Salah), fast during the month of Ramadhan, and give zakah of your wealth. Perform Hajj if you can afford to. You know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. You are all equal. Nobody has superiority over another except by piety and good action.

“Remember, one day you will appear before Allah and answer for your deeds. So beware, do not be astray from the path of righteousness

“O People, no prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. Reason well, therefore, O People, understand my words, which I convey to you. “

Islam not only condemns terrorism, but also prohibits it completely.

For Islam lists murder as the second of the major sins, and even warns in the words of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him): “ The first cases to be adjudicated between people on the

Day of Judgment will be those of bloodshed.”
6533)

(Al-Bukhari,

Muslims are even encouraged to be kind to animals and are forbidden to hurt them. Once the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) said: “A woman was punished because she imprisoned a cat until it died. On account of this, she was doomed to Hell. While it was imprisoned, she did not give the cat food or drink, nor did she free it to eat the insects of the earth.”
(Al-Bukhari, 2365)

He also said that a man gave a very thirsty dog a drink, so God forgave his sins for this action. When the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) was asked: “ Messenger of God, are we rewarded for kindness towards animals?” he said: “There is a reward for kindness to every living animal or human.”
(Al-Bukhari, 2466)

Additionally, while slaughtering an animal for food, Muslims are commanded to do so in a manner that causes the least amount of fright, pain and suffering possible. The Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) said: “ When you slaughter an animal, do so in the best way. You should sharpen your knife to reduce the suffering of the animal.”
(Muslim, 1955 and Al-Tirmidhi, 1409)

In light of these and many other Islamic texts, the act of inciting terror in the hearts of defenseless civilians, the wholesale destruction of buildings and properties, the bombing and maiming of innocent men, women, and children are all forbidden and detestable acts according to Islam and Muslims.

Muslims follow a religion of peace, mercy, and forgiveness, and the vast majority has nothing to do with the violent events some have associated with Muslims. If an individual Muslim were to commit an act of terrorism, this person would be guilty of violating the laws of Islam.

Even if a Muslim committed a crime or a terrorist act, does it mean that all Muslims (more than 1000 million) are terrorists? And does that mean that Islam itself calls for terrorism?

The actions of an individual or a small group do not necessarily represent the beliefs of a particular religion, nor is that religion responsible for such actions. That is why generalizing in such a manner is not objective at all. Therefore, when the media labels those responsible for these actions as “Islamic Terrorists” and links such actions to Islam, it is either a great mistake or an attempt to delude people.

In January 2002, The Islamic Fiqh Council laid emphasis on the fact that extremism, violence, and terrorism have no connection whatsoever with Islam. In fact, they are manifestations of perilous acts with dangerous consequences, and an aggression and iniquity against the individual.

Whosoever carefully studies the two sources of Shari’ah (Islamic law), namely the Qur’an and the traditions (Hadith) of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), would discover that they are devoid of any import of extremism, acts of violence or terrorism, which imply carrying out aggression against others without a just cause. The Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) said: “A Muslim must not terrorize a fellow Muslim”.

And he also said: “Whoever points an iron rod towards his brother, the angels shall go on cursing him until he stops, even if he (the victim) happens to be his full brother.”
(Muslim) With regard to non-Muslims living in Muslim countries under their protection, Islam has ordered that they must be treated justly. It has given them the right of security in the Muslim world, and has imposed blood money and expiation for an act of killing committed against anyone among them and has imposed duties on them.

In view of the above, therefore, the teaching of Islam says that the felony of taking a life without a just cause is tantamount to killing all people, whatever the faith of the murdered or the murderer; and that punishment and retribution are solely the prerogative of the ruler, not of individuals or groups.

Allah, Almighty God says in the Qur’an: “...Because of that, we decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption (done) in the land – it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one – it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. And Our messengers had certainly come to them with clear proofs. Then indeed many of them, (even) after that, throughout the land, were transgressors.”
(5:32)

Finally, we pray to Allah, Almighty God, to save humanity from all types of evil.

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