

# **The SIMPLE TRUTH**

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## **LIFE AND DIGNITY OF HUMAN BEING IS MOST SACRED**

India has for long been the land of humanist ideas and philosophies. Mahavir and Buddha in ancient times preached non-violence and respect for human life. Muslim rulers, during their rule in India, taught submission and devotion to One Almighty, also preached love, brotherhood, equality and justice. Gandhiji, in the modern times, has been the leading light of the ideas of non-violence. All religions including Hinduism taught peace, faith in Humanity, tolerance, and respect of others.

Nowadays there is a general feeling that the situation related to basic human rights and human dignity in India is deteriorating.

So let us launch a massive nationwide campaign to make people aware of their rights and duties. Let them know that there exist workable mechanisms to get the guilty punished, of course with due process of law, is also their human and national responsibility. Let them know the ways to live peacefully and honourably in a pluralistic society. Let us envisage an India where the welfare of humanity is the supreme most value and the dignity of human being the most sacred objective; where all the human beings are equal, enjoying the equal rights and status, where no communal, casteist, regional or sectarian interest

creates an obstacle in our pursuit to evolve into a truly human-friendly society.

There is the need of creating an atmosphere in the country where human beings would enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want. So that our coming generations should not inherit the hatreds, prejudices and polarized mindsets. More importantly there should be positive efforts to teach universal brotherhood, fraternity and human values to the young minds.

It is the high time we raised above all the personal interests and stood firm and united with firm commitment to uphold human dignity. Everyone of us can do something in his/her own sphere of activity to ensure that humanity is no longer disgraced.

Let us pledge to build an exemplary society that should run on the bases of justice, equality, harmony and democracy, where the constitution should be upheld, the judiciary should say for the norm's that have been set for it. Our society should be considered a just society where all people should have equal rights and respect for others including women.



## PURE RELIGION

*“Lo! Pure religion (devotion) is for Allah alone. And those who choose guardians beside Him (Saying): “We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah, “verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that in which they differ. Verily, Allah does not guide him, who is a liar, an ingrate, (Surah Az-Zumar, 39:3)*

The polytheists had made angels their guardians and protectors and they thought that if they worshipped them, they would solve all their difficulties. They also thought that to gain nearness to Allah it is necessary to make angels their *waseela*, agents or means. And for making angels their agents they used to consider all that was proper for Allah only proper for them also, e.g, they used to appeal to them, to pray for their needs, to invoke them in difficulties, etc, as all these things are included in worship. They used to explain it by saying that they worshipped angels because they wanted nearness of Allah, i.e., the worship of the angels is the means and *waseela* of Allah’s nearness. In this verse their deceiving explanation has been declared false and wrong. For nearness of Allah it is not necessary to worship any other being than Allah. By the direct and fully sincere worship

of the One and only Allah one can gain His nearness.

The explanation which the polytheists offer for worshipping angels in the same as offered by the grave-worshippers for their devotion to the saints and peers. They say that they offer them gifts and devotion (Nazro-Niyaz) for the reason that through their *waseela* (means) they reach God. If they had read these verses of the Holy Quran, they would not have fallen a prey to the deception of Satan. On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will deliver judgement and enforce it.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes: “Worshippers of idols or of deities other than Allah, e.g., saints or perhaps wealth and Power, science or selfish Desire, may pretend that those are symbols that may get them nearer to their self-development, nearer to the goal of their life, nearer to Allah, but they are altogether on the wrong track.

This departure of theirs from true worship, this divergence from the right way, produces endless disputations and sects. Allah will judge between them. But if they are determined to go after falsehoods and forget the gratitude and service which they owe to Allah, and Allah alone, they are putting themselves on a Path where they will get no guidance. They are cutting themselves off from revealed Truth”.

## HUMAN VALUES

1)Abdullah Bin Masood reported that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said: “The first decision which will take place between the people on the Day of Resurrection, will concern the bloods (*Saheeh Bukhari & Saheeh Muslim*)

2)Abu Hurairah reported that the two women from the tribe of Hudail fought and one of them drew a stone on the other and killed her and what was in her womb. The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) decided that the ransom of her baby was to free a slave man or a slave girl and the blood money of the woman (killed) would be paid by the offender (the other) woman and he (the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) appointed her children as heirs and other persons who were related to them. (*Saheeh Bukhari & Muslim*)

3)Jabir bin Abdullah reported that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said: Allah is not kind to one who is not kind to men (*Saheeh Bukhari & Saheeh Muslim*)

4)Hisham bin Urwah from his father reported that Hisham bin Hakim passed by some people of the Anbat tribe in Syria. They were made to stand up in the sun; and oil was poured over their heads. He enquired: what is this? It was said: They are oppressed about rent. Then he said: “I bear witness that surely I heard the

Messenger of Allah say; Certainly Allah will punish those who punish man in this world. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

5)Abu Hurairah reported that it was questioned: O Messenger of Allah! supplicate against the polytheists. He replied: I have been sent not to curse but I have been raised up as mercy. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

6)Abu Darda reported that the Messenger of Allah said: Shall I not inform you about what is better than the rank of fasting, charity and prayer? We replied: Yes. He said: To restore peace between the two and the dispute between the two is destroying. (*Abu Daud, Tirmizi (correct)*)

7)Abdullah and Anas (both) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: The creation is the family of Allah. So the dearest of the creations of Allah is he who is the best to His family. (*Baihaqi*)

8)The Holy Prophet said: If anyone of you come across an evil, he should try to stop it with his hand (using force), if he is not in a position to stop it with his hand then he should try to stop it by means of his tongue (meaning he should speak against it). If he is not even able to use his tongue then he should at least condemn it in his heart. This is the weakest degree of faith. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

# WHAT IS NRC AND HOW IT WOULD WORK?

Home Minister Amit Shah, while replying to the debate on citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) in the Lok Sabha on Monday said that there would soon be a pan-India National Citizenship Register. Although he did not elaborate on the contours of the NRC, people would need certain set of documents to prove their citizenship.

## WHAT IS NRC?

It is a verified digital register having names and basic demographic information about all Indian citizens in a digital format. Under the citizenship Act 1955, a person born in India or having Indian parentage or having resided in India for at least 11 years (being amended to five years), is eligible for Indian citizenship. NRC would be Indian's first such database of citizens.

## WHO ARE NATURAL CITIZENS?

According to Indian Citizenship Act, 1955, every person born in India on or after the 26.01.1950, but before 01.07.1987 is a citizen of India by birth irrespective of the nationality of his/her parents. Every person born in India between 01/07.1987 to 02.12.2004 is a citizen of India provided either of his/ her parents is a

citizen of India at the time of his/her birth. Every person born in India on or after 03.12.2004, shall be citizen of India provided both of his/her parents are citizens of India or one of whose parents is a citizen of India and the other is not an illegal migrant at the time of his/her birth.

## WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP BY REGISTRATIONS?

A person of Indian origin who is ordinarily resident in India for seven years can apply for citizenship or a person married to an Indian citizen can apply for citizenship. A district magistrate is authorized to decide on their application.

## WHAT DOCUMENTS WILL ONE NEED TO QUALIFY FOR THE NRC?

The Government has not specified any documents for NRC so far. Going by the citizenship Act, nativity certificate issued by government, land records, voter identity card, birth certificates of oneself and parents, panchayat certificate verifying residency and ration card are some of the documents that may be needed to prove one's citizenship.

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### **WILL AADHAR CARD BE A VALID DOCUMENT FOR NRC?**

As Aadhar is just identity proof and not residency proof, and applies to all residents (not just citizens), it will not be a valid document for NRC. The Permanent Account Number (PAN) for filling Income Tax returns and educational certificates are also not valid to prove citizenship.

### **WILL A PERSON HAVE TO PROVE THAT THEIR ANCESTORS ALSO LIVED IN INDIA?**

Going by NRC in Assam, legacy documents-land record document or name in electoral rolls, birth certificates providing-that one has been living for generations in India would be important for NRC. However, the government has not specified the cut off year for nation-wide NRC.

### **HOW WAS IT DONE IN ASSAM?**

The NRC in Assam was mandated and monitored by the Supreme Court in 2014 and was based on the 1951 NRC done in Assam and voter's lists of 1961, 1966 and 1971-together bunched as legacy documents. The claim of every Assam resident was verified with these legacy documents. Close to 33 million people applied and the final list published on August 31 excluded 1.9 million people. The nationwide NRC will be implemented and monitored by the central government and documents required to prove one's citizenship may not be similar to those accepted in Assam.

The government is yet to specify the documents that would be needed.

### **HOW WILL AN ALL-INDIA NRC BE DIFFERENT?**

The government has not prescribed any cut-off date for the nation wide NRC even though the Citizen Amendment Bill (CAB) passed in the Lok Sabha allows automatic citizenship to Hindus, Budhists, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs and Jains who came from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangla before December 31, 2014.

### **WHAT WOULD A PAN-INDIA NRC PROCESS ENTAIL?**

Once the National Population Register (NRC) is complete, the government could start identifying illegal immigrants. Since the census commissioner will have documents related to birth, residency and voter identity cards of every resident, the government may use it for the first round of screening. It may then issue notices to certain people to appear before a *requisite* body with documents to prove citizenship.

### **WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAA AND NRC?**

The CAA makes it easier for non-Muslims residing in India to get citizenship. Muslims may have to prove that they have been residing in India for generations and, for that, they will need legacy documents, which the government is yet to prescribe.

*(Courtesy: Hindustan Times, Delhi, dated: December 12, 2019)*

# HUMAN EQUALITY AND TAWHEED

Prof. U. Muhammad Iqbal

Monotheism (Tawheed) is the cornerstone of Abrahamic faith. Islam, which is a regeneration of Abrahamic faith, neither makes a compromise on it nor dilutes it in subtle ways. There is no other God but Allah both in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. He is one; there is none like Him, and there is no other God besides Him. He has created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness and the light. He gives life and He gives death. He provides sustenance and guidance. He has endowed mankind with innumerable gifts like hearing, seeing, intelligence and affection. He teaches man what he knew not and prefers him to a large part of His creation. He has allowed him to move over land and sea with ease, and to harness natural resources. He has sent Scriptures and Prophet so that man can retrace his steps towards heaven and avoid waywardness and wrath. Forewarned is forearmed and so He has informed mankind beforehand that man should not come a cropper on the Day of Judgement. He would deliver justice Himself after resurrecting and assembling the whole of mankind. He is free from human faiths and He does not assume a human form to subject Himself to human frailties. He is so mighty that He can roll up the entire cosmos as though

it were a scroll. This concept of Monotheism ensures that God remains supremely and inalienably vital to human existence.

Allah is unique in person, in His characteristics, in His activities, in His commandments and in His nomenclature. This uniqueness implies that He should neither beget nor be begotten, and that He should be the most High, and that He should be incomparable, neither monophyletic, nor polyphyletic.

The holy proposition, Kalimah Tayyiba, encapsulates Islamic monotheism. The Holy Qura'n says the following about it.

*A goodly word is like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches (reach) to the heavens. It brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord. (Al-Qura'n, 14:24-25)*

A scholar of Islam explains this Quranic statement in this way: "The good word" is so highly fruitful and productive that the believers will continuously benefit from the good result ensuring from it. For it brings about clarity in thought, stability in attitude, moderation in temperament, firmness in character, purity in morals, truthfulness in speech, strength in commit-

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ment, honesty in politics and dealing with others, refinement in social relationships, eloquence and fineness in cultures, balance and equilibrium in collective life, justice and compassion in economy, magnanimity in war, sincerity in peace, and faithfulness in covenant. Like Midas, everything that it touches turns into gold.

Islamic monotheism abolishes the overlordship of the Pharaohs, and the Nimrods over hapless subjects and establishes sovereignty of the Creator over His creation. Vicegerency of man acknowledges this sovereignty and upholds consensual approach as an administrative tool and its overriding objective is to establish justice, freedom, and equality. No distinction is made between man and man irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Islamic monotheism provides one centre of devotion, loyalty and allegiance and always keeps open doors of access and opportunity to one and all to reach that centre without let or hindrance. Another Islamic scholar puts this idea succinctly as follows:

“The Most High has no caste-based affinity with anyone. He does not have any family or tribe. His existence is not confined to any particular region of the earth. He is Omnipresent. He sees everyone. Every individual is free to get in touch with Him, be he a white or a black, a labourer or an employer, a peasant or a trader, a learner or a teacher, a ruler or a subject. He is equidistant from all of them. All can proceed towards Him and aspire for his proximity and affection. None can look for eminence in His presence on the basis of genealogy or status. Access to Him can neither be hindered by economic disadvan-

tage nor be assisted by affluence. He is overwilling to move forward to receive anyone advancing towards Him, whether he is from Africa or America, and speaks English or Arabic. Honour and distinction are reserved for him who enslaves himself to God, and fears His wrath and longs for His mercy.” (*Islamic Solution to Human Issues*, p.28)

The human element commonly shared by human beings owes its origin to one God and becomes a foundation for authentic equality between one man and another. Hammudha Abdalati syas, “In the sight of God, all men are equal, but they are not necessarily identical. There are differences of abilities, potentials, ambitions, wealth, and so on, yet none of these difference can by itself establish a status of superiority of one man or race to another. The stock of man, the colour of his skin, the amount of wealth he has, and the degree of prestige he enjoys have no bearing on the character and personality of the individual as far as God is concerned.”

*“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.”* (Al-Qura’n, 49:13) A similar idea expressed in Ecclesiasticus 10:20, “There is none greater than he that feareth God,”

As this distinction is individual-based and attitude-oriented, it does not militate against the equality of human race as such. As a matter of



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fact, to be born as a human being is matter of great credit. The Holy Qura'n says, "We have conferred on them special favours", We have created man in the best of moulds". "We have made your shapes beautiful," "He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on the earth."

As equality in Islam is God-sanctioned and God-oriented, there is no gender discrimination. Both men and women are treated alike in acts of piety, "Verily for Muslim men and Muslim women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise – for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward." (Al-Qura'n, 33:35) This extract begins with a mention of Muslims who uphold monotheism as the right perspective with far-reaching consequences.

"So far as cultural values of Islam are concerned egalitarianism permeates and pervades every aspect of them. All stand shoulder to shoulder as slaves in God's presence in the act of prayer; no special pews are allotted to the special elite. All starve alike while fasting; no exemption is granted to the affluent. The pilgrims don the same apparel during Hajj; all perform the same rituals as one unit; no discrimination is allowed on the basis of locals and foreigners, physically advantaged or disadvantaged, creamy layers of

the society or commoners." (Translated; Dr. Mustafa Sabai, The Shining Dimensions of Islamic Civilizations, p.50) Islam set in nation a process that ultimately culminated in the abolition of slave-trade and slavery. Untouchability never secured a foothold in the Muslim society.

One author wrote, "To these poor people, fishermen, hunters, pirates and low-caste tillers of the soil (of Bengal), Islam came as a revelation from on high. It was the creed of the ruling race, its missionaries were men of zeal who bought the Gospel of the unity of God and the equality of men in its sight to a despised and neglected population."

As equality in Islam is justice-oriented, a Muslim and a non-Muslim are equal in law. This rights and privileges extended to a Muslim in an Islamic state are extended to a non-Muslim too. "Surely Allah enjoins to the doing of justice and kindness, and giving to kindred, and forbids all shameful, injustice and rebellion." (Al-Qura'n, 16:90) The rule of law is pitted against oppression, cruelty, genocide, tyranny, social anarchy and guarantees freedom of worship, security of life and limb, and freedom from hunger and fear, and freedom to form associations, and right to earn a livelihood and own property. Islam is nothing but a guarantor of the rule of law, and a champion of human rights. If Caliph 'Umar collected jizya, a compensatory tax in lieu of military service, he provided old age pension for the aged and economically disadvantaged non-Muslim citizens too. This goes to show that where monotheism is, there equality is.



# PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S MESSAGE TO PLURAL WORLD!

By: Dr. Javed Jamil

God says in the Holy Quran, *"We have sent you (Muhammad) purely as Boon for the Multi-World"*. Rahmat-al-lil-Aalameen is often translated as "Boon for all the World", but when speaking in the context of the world existing on earth its first address is the plural World. Both the Holy Quran and the Prophet (S.A.W.) were meant not just for those who do not believe in them. Even if they just reason out their messages purely on the grounds of scientific and social facts, they will find them not just useful but also the best possible option for peace and long term health and security of the whole mankind, irrespective of regions, beliefs (religious and non-religious) and cultures.

When Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) started his mission of Peace at Makkah, soon after the promulgation of the Message of Exclusive Worship for the Lord of the Universe, he started addressing the problems of society. He began to process of eradication of slavery and emancipation of women, expressing great anguish at the humiliation of slaves and infanticide. As soon as he moved to Madinah, he started addressing other communities, caring for their needs and problems. He not only showed huge respect to the "founders" of other

religions but also told Muslims that they had been the true Messengers of God. He took special care to tell Jews and Christians that they are part of the same course of the Truth and they need to socially, if not religiously, associate and cooperate with one another. Among his closest associates were people belonging to various regions, races and cultures, including Blacks from Africa, Persians, and previous adherents of other religious. And, of course, while desiring everybody to submit to the Final Version of the Divine system, he categorically declared "no compulsion", as the Holy Quran said: *"There is no compulsion in Deen (religion),"* (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:256). "Deen" here in fact includes all the ideologies religious or non-religious.

*"To you be your system (of beliefs and practices) and to me mine"* (Surah Al-Kafiroon, 109:6) Christians and Jews need to know that the Holy Quran coins for them a very respectable term, *Ahli-Kitab*, the people of the Testament because they have been reading earlier parts (Torah, Psalm and Gospel) of the Testament of God. To affirm their proximity to Muslims, Several practical measures have been taken, the foods of the Muslims and the people of Testament have been declared lawful for each

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other. (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5) Taking another major leap towards bonding Muslims with them, Muslims have been permitted to marry Christian and Jew woman; they are not required to change their religion. (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5) Muslim rulers have also taken care to judge the internal affairs of Christians (as well as of Jews) on the basis of their own laws. While criticizing the few for indulging in exploitation of the masses, the Holy Quran takes care to mention their positives:

*“Certainly there are (different categories of) people-those who have realized (Islam) Jews, Sabians, Christians, Magians and Polytheist; God will surely give His Verdict regarding all of them on the Day of Establishment. The truth is that God alone is the witness of everything”. (Surah Al-Hajj, 22:17)*

They are not a monolithic community. There is (also) a group among the Adherents of the Testament that keeps standing in the might reciting the ayah of God and prostrating (in prayers). They are committed to God and Hereafter, promote what is appreciable and campaign against what is unacceptable, and also prompt in actions of welfare. They are among good performers” (Surah Al Imran, 3:113-114)

The Holy Quran allowed social contracts, (including marriages in communities which believed in previous prophets:

*“You are allowed to marry women of character from among the women committed (to Islam) and from among the Recipients of the previous Testaments, subject to the conditions that you give them their dowers, desire purity of relationship, not temporary*

*pleasure, and do not keep them as secret partners” (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5)*

“This day all healthy foods are made lawful to you; further, having meals (on invitation) with the Adherents of the Testament is made lawful to you and their having meals with you is made lawful for them. Further, the women of character from among the women committed (to Islam) as well as from among the Adherents of the Testament are lawful for you (for marriage)” (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5)

*Note: this writer prefers “Testament” as the translation of the “Kitab” because “Kitab” refers to a special kind of book, which binds its followers to follow it.)*

The Madinah charter was one of the biggest achievements of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). When he entered Madinah, the city was the centre of a serious rivalry between the various tribes, which often resulted in bloodshed. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) prepared the charter, which guaranteed religious freedom to all and presented a plan to end the intertribal rivalry. The plan gave Muhammad (S.A.W.) the position of the Head who will consult all the parties in solving the disputes. For the first time in the history of the world, women, children, orphans, foreigners and slaves were granted extensive rights and protection, the security of all the human beings the ultimate aim. He condemned racism and nationalism saying there is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, or a white man over a black man, except in righteousness.” He was even highly considerate for animals and trees and established laws

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protecting animals, trees, and the environment. In the field of economics, he encouraged wealth generation within the permissible fields and at the same time ensured the flow of money and the welfare of the deprived. He encouraged free trade and ethical investments, but secured worker's rights. He forbade usury which had become one of the major causes of exploitation of the poor by the wealthy.

The Prophet's messages are even more relevant to the plural society because, due to dominant role of the forces of economic and political hegemony, religions and religious morality are being incessantly sidelined. The Prophet (S.A.W.) clearly indicated that all religious communities need to come together on the ground of religious morality rather than keeping hostility on the grounds of religious identity. But for this to happen and convert into a movement, all religious communities including Muslims have to make a threadbare analysis of the designs of forces of hegemony and take counter measures.

Forces of evils are not work with impunity in society as there is none to keep them at bay. They have vested interests in the widespread dissemination of vices.

People tend to falling victim to their designs, as they strike at the most glaring susceptibilities of human natures. In the absence of any incentives in sight for good, righteous and charitable deeds, the number of those inclined to conduct in an admirable way tends to decrease. Crimes, social tensions and all forms of addiction are on the rise. To counter this, special efforts have to be organized individually, collectively and politically. Championing the good and championing against

evils must involve efforts at every level-level, state, national and international, Each and every social institution clergy, intellectuals, academic institutions, media, courts, social and welfare organizations, executive machinery of the countries, international organizations must make efforts, those that do not take active part in this war against vices must be sidelined.

Though Muslims must play a leading role they must not forget to seek active cooperation from all religious communities. They must run this campaign in an organized, relentless and daunting way data must be collected to assess the situation, to bring awareness and to counter the propaganda of the forces of evils. The world must be told in no uncertain terms that no short term or half hearted measures will suffice to counter the vices that endanger human health, destroy family peace and threaten social order. There is no place for chaos and things and practices that spread chaos in a civilized world.

Justice is the most powerful arsenal for defeating chaos of all types in a plural element that can keep the plural society secure and united. The Holy Quran categorically declares the supremacy of justice even if it goes against one's self, relatives or friends. At a large level, it implies communities and societies as well. The Holy Quran Says:

*"Committed followers (of God)! Stand resolutely for the cause of justice, as the standards on behalf of God, even if it means acting against your own persons, your parents or your relatives, and irrespective of one being wealthy or poor. It is God who guards the two (Parties). So, do not follow*

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*you (your) personal whims lest it fails you in judgement; and whether you hold it or distort it, remember that God has absolute knowledge of whatever you do” (Surah An-Nisa; 4:135)*

Justice must not only be done but must also be seen done. Furthermore, it must be achieved swiftly. Any system of justice that demise justice to the victims of crime or unduly delays it can not ensure social peace. The present legal systems all over the world have dismally failed to safeguard life and honour of the people. On the contrary, they have helped, directly and indirectly, the cause of criminals and the forces of evils. They look advanced in method but extremely poor in results. They appear to profess humanity but promote inhumanity. This has increased the crime rate to dangerous levels and has been transforming in increasing numbers of good human beings into criminals.

Islamic system of justice is based on speedy trial and ensures punishment equal to the crime with right to pardon only in the hands of victims or heirs victims. In sharp contrast, to the modern system that safeguard the interests of criminals, Islam primarily aims at bringing justice to both victims and convicts. Justice is also to be ensured at the international level; there must be ways to guarantee that small and weak nations do not suffer at the hands of powerful nations.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) worked for the welfare of not just Muslims but the whole mankind. The Holy Quran says:

*“Let you emerge as a nation that gives a call for welfare (of the people), implement the admirable (Plans of actions) and effectively*

*bans the forbidden (practice)” (Surah Ale-Imran; 3:104)*

This verse is not about individual efforts; it is about an organized effort through the legal, political and socioeconomic systems. For the larger welfare, larger unity of mankind is essential.

The world today ruled by the Big Powers may be busy in distorting his message but the truth is that there has simply been not a single person in human history except him who not only paved the way for the establishment of a holistic system but also showed himself as the true model and guide for all the individual as well as social existence. By establishing the three dimensional system based on the Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Fundamental Prohibitions, he has given the world the ideal plan for the establishment of holistic peace combining all aspects of individual, family and social peace.

Reverend Bosworth Smith in Muhammad and Muhammadanism, London, 1874, summed up beautifully when he says: “Head of the state as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without the Pope's pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without a standing army, without a body guard, without a police force, without a fixed revenue”. Plural societies are free not to accept Muhammad as Prophet if they have to establish Peace, they have no choice but to benefit from his holistic plan. They need to understand that while plurality is fine and must be respected, unity remains the ideal goal; unity through commitment to One God and One system.

# FIRST WRITTEN CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD

(As translated by Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah)

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

1) This is a prescript of Muhammad (Peace and blessings of God be to him) the Prophet and Messenger of God (to operate) between the faithful and the followers of Islam from among the Quraish and the people of Madinah and those who may be under them, may join them and take part in wars in their company.

2) They shall constitute a separate political unit (Ummat) as distinguished from all the people (of the world).

3) The emigrants from the Quraish shall be (responsible) for their own ward; and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and shall secure the release of their own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the mutual dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

4) And Banu Auf shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration, and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves so that dealings

between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

5) And Banu Al-Harith ibn-Khazraj shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

6) And Banu Sa'da shall be responsible for their own ward, and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

7) And Banu Jusham shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

8) And Banu an-Najjar shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-

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money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

9) And Banu ‘Amr-ibn Awf shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

10) And Banu-al-Nabit shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

11) And Banu-al-Auws shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

12) (a) And the believers shall not leave any one, hard-pressed with debts, without affording him some relief, in order that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(b) Also no believer shall enter into a contract of clientage with one who is already in such a contract with another believer.

13) And the hands of pious believers shall be raised against every such person as rises in rebellion or attempts to acquire anything by force or is guilty of any sin or excess or attempts to spread mischief among the believers; their hands shall be raised all together against such a person, even if he be a son to anyone of them.

14) And no believer shall kill another believer in retaliation for an unbeliever, nor shall he help an unbeliever against a believer.

15) And the protection of God is one. The humblest of them (believers) shall, by extending his protection to any one, put the obligation on all; and the believers are brothers to one another as against all the people (of the world).

16) And that those who will obey us among the Jews, will have help and equality. Neither shall be oppressed nor will any help be given against them.

17) And the place of the believers shall be one. If there be any war in the way of God, no believer shall be under any peace (with the enemy) apart from other believers, unless it (this peace) be the same and equally binding on all.

18) And all those detachments that will fight on our side will be relieved by turns.

19) And the believers as a body shall take blood vengeance in the way of God.

20) (a) And undoubtedly pious believers are the best and in the rightest course.

(b) And that no associator (non-Muslim subject) shall give any protection to the life and property

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of a Quraishite, nor shall he come in the way of any believer in this matter.

21) And if anyone intentionally murders a believer, and it is proved, he shall be killed in retaliation, unless the heir of the murdered person be satisfied with blood-money. And all believers shall actually stand for this ordinance and nothing else shall be proper for them to do.

22) And it shall not be lawful for anyone who has agreed to carry out the provisions laid down in this code and has affixed his faith in God and the Day of Judgement, to give help or protection to any murder, and if he gives any help or protection to such a person, God's curse and wrath shall be on him on the Day of Resurrection, and no money or compensation shall be accepted from such a person.

23) And that whenever you differ about anything, refer it to God and to Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be to him)

24) And the Jews of Banu 'Auwf shall share with the believers the expenses of war so long as they fight in conjunction.

25) And the Jews of Banu 'Auwf shall be considered one political community (ummat) along with the believers for the Jews their religion, and for the Muslims their, be one client or patron. He, however, who is guilty of oppression or breach of treaty, shall suffer the resultant trouble as also his family, but no one besides.

26) And the Jews of Banu-an-An Najjar shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Auwf.

27) And the Jews of Banee-al-Harith shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu Auwaf.

28) And the Jews of Bana Saida shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Auwf.

29) And the Jews of Banu Jusham shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu Auwaf

30) And the Jews of Banu-al-Auws shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu Auwaf.

31) And the Jews of Banu Jhalaba shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu A'uwf. Of course, whoever is found guilty of oppression or violation of treaty, shall himself suffer the consequent trouble as also his family, but no one besides.

32) And Jafna, who are a branch of the Thalaba Tribe, shall have the same rights as the mother tribes.

33) And Banu-ash-Shutaiba shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu-Auwf; and they shall be faithful to, and not violators of treaty.

34) And the mawlas (clients) of Thalaba shall have the same rights as those of the original members of it.

35) And the sub-branches of the Jewish tribes shall have the same rights as the mother tribes.

36) (a) And that none of them shall go out to fight as a soldier of the Muslim army, without the permission of Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be to him).

(b) And no obstruction shall be placed in the way of any one's retaliation for beating or injuries; and whoever sheds blood shall be personally



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responsible for it as well as his family; as else (i.e. any step beyond this) will be of oppression; and God will be with him who will most faithfully follow this code (Sahifah) in actions.

37) (a) And the Jews shall bear the burden of their expenses and the Muslims theirs.

(b) And if anyone fights against the people of this code, their (i.e. of the Jews and Muslims) mutual help shall come into operation, and there shall be friendly counsel and sincere behavior between them; and faithfulness and no breach of covenant.

38) And the Jews shall be bearing their own expenses so long as they shall be fighting in conjunction with the believers.

39) And the valley of Yathrib (Madinah) shall be a Haram (Sacred place) for the people of this code.

40) The clients (mawla) shall have the same treatment as the original persons (i.e. persons accepting clientage). He shall neither be harmed nor shall he himself break the covenant.

41) And no refuge shall be given to anyone without the permission of the people of the place (i.e. the refugee shall have no right of giving refuge to others)

42) And that if any murder or quarrel takes place among the people of this code, from which any trouble may be feared, it shall be referred to God and God's Messenger, Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be to him) and God will be with him who will be most particular about

what is written in this code and act on it most faithfully.

43) The Quraish shall be given no protection nor shall they who help them.

44) And they (i.e., Jews and Muslims) shall have each other's help in the event of any one invading Yathrib.

45) (a) And if they (i.e. the Jews) are invited to any peace, they also shall offer peace and shall be party to it; and if they invited the believers to some such affairs, it shall be their (Muslims) duty as well to reciprocate the dealings, excepting that any one makes a religious war.

(b) On every group shall rest the responsibility of (repulsing) the enemy from the place which faces its part of the city.

46) And the Jews of the tribe of al-Auou, clients as well as original members, shall have the same rights as the people of this Code; and shall behave sincerely and faithfully towards the latter, not petrating any breach of covenant. As one shall sow so shall be reap. And God is with him who will most sincerely and faithfully carry out the provisions of this code.

47) And this prescript shall not be of any avail to any oppressor or breaker of covenant. And one shall have security whether one goes out to a campaign or remains in Madinah, or else it will be oppression and breach of covenant. And God is the Protector of him who performs the obligations with faithfulness and care, as also His Messenger.

# PRAYER AT THE START OF JOURNEY

By Prof. U. Muhammad Iqbal

Man is a distinguished category of God's creation. The transport facilities provided for humanity over land and sea and the hygienic and delectable nutrients for human growth and health indicate that mankind is a divinely preferred creation. (The Holy Quran, 17:70) Ships and cattle and now aeroplanes have been pressed into service so that man could become a globe-trotter and space ships enable him to become a space tourist. (Ibid: 43:12) Compared to other creation, man enjoys certain advantages. He should observe this phenomenon of divine preferment and be filled with gratitude for the advantages and blessings he is privileged to enjoy.

How should one demonstrate this gratitude? The Holy Quran expects the fervent devotees of God to remember Him "standing, sitting, and reclining" (3:191). Sitting on the back of an animal or riding a vehicle, devotee should articulate his sense of gratitude in the form of a prayer. The prayer is as follows.

*Subhanallazi sakhkhara lana haaza; wamaa Kunna lahu muqrineen; wa inna ilaa Rabbina lamunqaliboon" (43:13,14)*

This Quranic prayer may be rendered thus: *Glory to Him who has subjected this for our benefit, as we could not have done so by ourselves; verily to our Lord is our (ultimate) return.*

The Muslim mind is trained to keep remembering God and to remain focused on Him all the time. "So glory be to Allah when you enter the night and when you enter the morning-unto Him be praise in the heavens and the earth-and the sun's decline and in the moonday". (30:17-18).

"Subhana" lays emphasis on the purity, perfection, infallibility, and impeccable nature of God and makes it clear that God has no progeny or progenitor or alter ego or counterpart or claimant of parity with Him in the entire universe and that He does not comprise constituent persons. This attribute of God is invoked when one becomes, agonisingly aware of one's own limitations, weaknesses and transgressions. For example, the angels invoke this attribute of God as preface to their acknowledgement that the depth and range of their knowledge have been determined and delineated by God. (2:32) By saying "Subhana," a Muslim joins the august company of the angels and the prophets and

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enters into a harmonious relationship with the universe. "All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah" (57:1) By saying "Subhana", a Muslim shows his appreciation of God's favours to man. "Allah it is who has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, it is all as a favour and kindness from Him". (45:13)

Allama Yusuf Ali has a pertinent observation to make, "Allah's creation is independent of man. But Allah, in His mercy, has given man the faculty to subdue the forces of nature and to penetrate through high mysteries with his powers of reason and insight." By saying "Subhana", a Muslim thanks God whose volition is involved in the subjugation of the transporting medium, living or non-living, for the benefit of mankind.

This prayer is not individualistic but collective in nature. When the Holy Quran was revealed, travelling across the desert was extremely hazardous for individuals. The marauding tribes and the highwaymen swooped down on individual travelers and robbed them of their property and even of their lives. So the travelers would wait and form caravans before they could venture out on a journey. This accounts for the collective nature of the prayer. Today, travel is not that hazardous. Still discretion demands that travelling alone may be avoided as far as possible. The traveler may feel safe if a companion is by his side. The collective nature of the prayer includes the welfare of the companions, related, familiar or unknown. Islam encourages ladies to have security through

affectionate and respectful escorts while travelling.

The prayer makes us conscious of a triangle of relationship God transporting vehicle, and travelers. The travelers thank God for putting the transporting vehicle under the control so that long distances could be covered with ease and speed. The travelers compare their individual physical strength with the physical or mechanical might of the transporting vehicle. In a single combat or confrontation, they realize they have a slim chance of coming out unscathed. One who rides on a lion may end up in its stomach. The travelers therefore expressed their enhanced sense of gratitude to God both for the usefulness and the induced subservience of the transporting vehicle. The elephant on safari may run amok or the vehicle may turn turtle and the rider may survive the catastrophe to lick the wounds.

The prayer is an indirect request for the continued usefulness and subservience of the vehicle until the journey is completed and the destination is reached. There should be no breakdown and no mishap during the course of the journey.

This prayer is so formed that, notwithstanding the spectacular changes in the method of transport, it can be uttered without any modification. Its relevance is perennial.

This has been made possible by using a demonstrative pronoun, *hazaa* (this), not as an adjective but as an object. Even if new and unimagined modes of transport come into being, this prayer will not require any modification whatsoever.

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The last part of this prayer is a typical reminder that man is ever on the move. "O you man! Verily you are ever toiling on towards your Lord painfully toiling but you shall meet Him". (84:6) The Muslim mind is stretched to encompass that moment when there will be an audience with the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Islam seizes every opportunity to keep the concept of the Hereafter alive and dynamic. The earthly journey are also made use of to remind oneself that there is a journey that will take one to God. While embarking on a journey it is not considered inauspicious to think of death. The thought of one's own death has a salutary effect upon one's own perspective on the life in this world.

When afflicted with calamity, a Muslim consoles himself with the conviction that "to Allah we belong, and to Him is our return" (2:56) When the sorcerers of the Pharaoh on being defeated declared their belief in the Lord of Moses and Aaron, the Pharaoh threatened that he would dismember and crucify them. The sorcerers replied calmly that in such an event they would be sent back to their Lord (7:125). It is with this frame of mind that a Muslim sets out on a journey. Sometimes a Muslim sets out on a voyage. He remembers that "Allah it is who has subjected to you the sea, that ships may sail through it by His command and that you may seek of His Bounty, and that you may be thankful". (45:12). He remembers that God has declared, "If it were Our will We could drown them, then there would be no helper (to hear their cry), nor could they be delivered." (36:43).

He also remembers that Nooh advised his followers to board the Ark and to pray "*Bismilahi majreeha wa Mursaha, Inna Rabbi Lagghafoorur Raheem*" (The navigation of this (Ark) and its coming to anch-both are in the name of Allah; verily my Lord is excessively forgiving and infinitely merciful) (11:41)

Our beloved Prophet was accustomed to saying "God is the greatest" three times after climbing to the back of a camel on the start of a journey and pray as follows; Glory to Him who subdued this for us, we were not capable of subduing it; and to our Lord is our return. O Allah! In this journey we request you to grant us righteousness and piety and activity that is pleasing to you. You are our Protector; you look after our dependent. O Allah! I seek refuge in you from the hardships of the journey, from a horrifying seen (on account of an accident in the journey) and from a return to the family in a traumatic condition".

The moral effect of this prayer at the start of a journey is that the journey will not be undertaken for the pursuit of sin, for oppression, usurpation and injustice, for burglary, drinking and illegal sex, for colonizing countries without weapons of mass destruction. A community nurtured on a sense of humility and gratitude to God and focused upon the values enshrined in this prayer can never be swayed by arrogance and aggressiveness towards helpless and weaker communities.



# ISLAM AND PEACE

by : Dr. Javed Jamil

Astronomically speaking, nothing extraordinary happened on September 11, 2001 when a group of suspected “Islamic terrorists” created history of its own kind by plane crashing twice into the Twin Towers that the United States and New York boasted of as the symbol of their economic prowess. The earth has, as always, been rotating with a uniform speed having rotated more than twelve hundred times since then. But in terms of socio-political terms, it appears that the human planet took innumerable turns with a breathtaking speed within a few minutes on that day, then came to a standstill and has stayed as such since then, for even now Islam as a religion and Muslims as a community are being maligned as supporters of violence in general and terrorism in particular. This is despite the fact that.

1. In the so-called coalition against the so-called international terrorism Muslim countries and groups have been in the foremost ranks, without whose active participation America and company could never have succeeded in their plans.

2. the overwhelming majority of casualties in this war, at least one hundred thousands dead, has been of Muslims. Most of these hapless victims have been neither “Islamic terrorist” nor “fighters against terrorism” but innocent men, women and children, who had nothing to do with

this on-going war.

3. a large number of Muslim clerics and intellectuals have issued categorical statements condemning terrorism and all the other forms of violence.

If one wants to notice the kind of venomous campaign being spread against Islam and Muslims, one only needs to pay a visit to Yahoo chat rooms. Visit a Christian, Hinduism, Judaism or Buddhism chat room, and you will hardly find a Muslim making obscene remarks against Jesus, Moses, Krishna, Rama or Buddha. As soon as you enter on Islam chat room, you will see a war of words going on at an unimaginable scale. There will always be some Christianity, Jews and Hindus hurling choicest of obscenities and invectives on the Holy Quran and Muhammad (S.A.W.). Helpless Muslims would not retort by the same kind of obscenities against symbols of other religions because they have been taught by their religion to pay as much of respect to them as they do to their own religious symbols. The power of Internet is in full display in the fight against Islam. This is another matter that this propaganda has only proved to be counterproductive. Islam continues to be the fastest expanding religion of the world, and its expansion has only multiplied in recent years in

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those very regions where the governments and the media are the biggest parties to that propaganda. Furthermore, this animus is only strengthening the resolve of those against whom it is directed.

A concerted campaign is being run all over the world, denigrating Islam as the religion that promotes violence and Muslims as the people that resort to violence. Clever remarks like “*Not all Muslims are terrorist but all terrorists are Muslims*” are being circulated to put Muslims on the defensive. The impact on Muslim masses has been profound, even though there is no way it can be measured. Unfortunately, most of the Muslim clerics and thinkers have become victims of this propaganda, and have adopted an evidently apologetic stand in their defence of the beleaguered Islam. Commoners however have responded by either becoming despondent at the condition of their fellow religionists or indignant at the treatment being meted out to them.

Islam has a much broader meaning of peace, and adopts effective and practicable methods to achieve its larger objectives of “Grand Peace”. It is only the Islamic concept of Grand Peace that can bring real peace in human lives, individually and collectively. Believers of Islam, not with-standing their shortcomings and their failures in practicing their religion in its true spirit, are much less chaotic, individually and collectively, than most of the other religious communities are.

It is in the fitness of things if the meaning of Grand Peace that Islam espouses is introduced at the very outset. It will then be easier for readers to better comprehend the developments in the past

few centuries and their impact on human life.

Let us first see how the world today understands peace. There are numerous definitions of peace, including those given by the world forums of eminence, individual thinkers and institutions. We will however concentrate mainly on the definitions given by the United Nations, which unquestionably is the biggest and the most powerful body of the community of nations that inhabits the earth. Let me reproduce here the definitions and programmes given by the UNESCO Culture of Peace:

#### “An Agenda for Peace: Definitions

Peace is dynamic. Peace is a just and non-violent solution of conflicts. It generates an equilibrium in social interactions, so that all of the members of society can live in harmonious relations with each other. Peace is good for society. Where there is violence there is no peace. Where there is injustice and absence of liberty, there is no peace. In order for there to be an equilibrium in the dynamics of social interactions, peace must be founded on justice and liberty.

Preventative diplomacy is action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.

Peace making is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations.

Peacekeeping is the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally

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involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peace-keeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.

Peace-building is action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. Only sustained, co-operative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems can place and achieved peace on a durable foundation.”

It can be noted that the above set of rules defining peace is primarily an agenda “to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur”, “so that all of the members of society can live in harmonious relations with each other.” This obviously is a *political definition of peace*. This definition is not only incomplete but is highly deficient in many ways. It will have dangerous implications because its very basis is erroneous. Though it speaks of peace as “dynamic”, the peace it promotes has hardly any dynamism visible: it is *static* rather than dynamic and *negative* rather than *positive*. Peace is regarded as essentially not a positive quality but mere absence of conflicts. In negative terms too, this indicates only the absence of armed conflicts. This definition of peace is neither *all encompassing*, including all that is positive nor *all abandoning* excluding all that is negative. This “peace” is primarily the brainchild of those who seek to promote a certain type of ideology and accompanied culture for their own selfish interests. What an irony! Peace based on selfishness! But this exactly is the peace that is

being promoted all over the world with utmost zeal, valour and planning. The consequences of such a strategy are what they should be. Total all-enveloping chaos at every level. The same approach is adopted in various other documents. See for example the following:

Appeal to the International Community from a Round Table of Institutions Who Have Won the Noble Prize for Peace (excerpts)

\* Peace is not only the absence of armed conflict, it is also a dynamic set of relationships of coexistence and co-operation among and within peoples, characterized by the respect for the human values set forth particularly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with the concern to provide the greatest possible well-being for all.

\* Peace is increasingly threatened each day by the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction, by the great economic and social inequalities, which divide mankind, and by contempt for basic human rights and the dignity of the individual.

\* Peace requires ever greater efforts to overcome these threats. It is only possible in a world in which the observance of international law replaces violence, fear and injustice, in which states voluntarily agree to limit their national sovereignty in the general interest, and in which states employ existing procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes between nations. To build such a peace, everyone must feel a responsibility and should be educated in that sense from childhood.....

Finally, the round table asks the mass media to employ to a greater extent their skills and

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immense resources towards building and maintaining peace, to foster a spirit of equity and solidarity among peoples and to draw attention to the personal and collective sacrifice inherent in the pursuit of those ideals.

Suggestions for moving towards a Culture of Peace:

Revisit history to discover how people contributed to their cultures.

Research non-military actors and make them models to be emulated.

Research women's roles in the development of their societies, and the causes and consequences of violence against women.

Promote peace goals as the dominant factor in all forms of art.

Teach the need to be aware of, and take responsibility for, the consequences scientific discovery can have for society as a whole.

Promote responsibility for the well-being of the local and global community, including protection of the natural environment.

Promote gender-specific analysis in all areas of human activity, encouraging women to organize themselves to make an impact on decisions that affect society.

Teach co-operation rather than competition, solidarity for mutual support, and appreciation for the rich diversity of multicultural societies.

Combat racism and discrimination, teach respect for human rights, for human life and the dignity of the person.

Promote economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights to create conditions for peace,

disarmament and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The above quoted documents fail to mention peace at individual and family levels, and only focus on national and international violence.

There are others, mainly the spiritual masters belonging to different religions including mystics, who stress on individualistic notion of peace (Spiritual definition). For them, the tranquility of mind and soul represent the true peace, which is attained through belief in God or gods, through meditation, devotion, self sacrifice and other spiritual exercises ranging from *self appeasing* ones to *self-sacrificing*. They tend to ignore family and social dimensions of peace, their argument resting on the premise that if individuals are peaceful society will automatically be peaceful as well. They tend to bury in the cemetery of their ideology the fact that hundred per cent of the members of society can never be truly peaceful, and that a very minuscule percentage is enough to cause disastrous consequences. There is another definition of peace, the social one that is promoted by sociologists for whom the equality of the distribution of wealth is the chief motive. They argue that if the distribution of wealth and opportunities in society is not equitable there is no way peace can be ensured.

The truth however is that no definition of peace can be complete unless it takes into account the following:

First, human existence has three essential constituents: Individual, family and society. For peace to carry any real meaning, it has to be at all these three levels. Peace at individual level means *physical, mental, social and spiritual*



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*health*, to which must be added what we understand as *satisfaction*. Peace at family level means *cordial relationship between spouses, between parents and children and among children themselves, and the absence of all irritant in a peaceful family life*. Peace at social level means *peaceful co-existence of all human beings that inhabit the earth anywhere, individually or as communities and nations, and the absence of all forms of exploitation, oppression and conflicts*. Thus individual health, family peace and social order may be regarded as the three essential constituents of Grand Peace.

Second, peace must involve *all the stages of life*: foetal, paediatric, adult, geriatric, and postdeath life. This alone can lead to eternal peace.

Islam literally means peace and is defined as submission to God, which means that peace can not be obtained without total submission to be the Lord of the universe. Similarly Iman means total satisfaction, which again can be obtained only through an undivided devotion to God. When the Quran calls, "Enter Islam wholeheartedly" it does not merely invite its adherents to follow the institutionalized system of Islam; it also informs them that the real, comprehensive and long lasting peace can be achieved only through total acceptance of the system of God. The Quran states: "*The System for you is the (system of) Peace*" and "*Call them to the House of Peace*". In Islam, peace is not just a state of the absence of war or chaos in society; it has the broadest and the most comprehensive meaning, in terms of extents, depth and longevity, including all the components of peace described above. It has to be neither

just personal nor just family, nor just social; it has to be at all the three levels and in the widest discernible sense. At *individual* level, it does not merely mean the peace of mind; it encompasses physical, mental and social health. At *family* level, it comprises peaceful relationships between husband and wife, and among children themselves. At *social* level, it does not only indicate the absence of war or chaos but also means the absence of all forms of crimes and social tensions, and prevalence of mutual brotherhood and justice. Peace is also not something bound by time or space; it is as much for this world as for Hereafter; peace is *eternal*. This is to be ensured that Islam's message of Grand peace has to percolate down to the lowest strata of society. And this is to be done in a way that the world does not feel threatened by the emergence of an institutionalized and political Islam, but instead learns to apply the moral and socio-economic principles of Islam for the benefit of the whole mankind.

This can be seen that Islam uses *all the possible means* to achieve its goal of Grand Peace. In the modern world, dominated by what I call economic fundamentalism, Fundamental Rights are given paramount importance, Fundamental Duties are largely ignored and Fundamental Prohibitions are virtually prohibited. Islam, on the other hand, espouses a three dimensional system giving an equal emphasis on Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Fundamental Prohibitions. If we want to achieve the true peace, this three dimensional approach is indispensable.

*(The writer is the director, International Centre for Applied Islamic, Saharanpur, India)*

# MANAGE TIME FOR SMOOTH SAILING IN THE BOARDS (Class 10 and 12 Exams)

Compiled by Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

*We wish all the best to intending candidates for the Board Exams.*

## CBSE NOT TO RESCHEDULE BOARD EXAMS

The class X and XII board exams will commence from February 15, 2020. From last year, the board has shifted the exam from the first week of March to February.

While the class XII exams will end on March 30, class X exams will conclude on March 20, 2020.

Amid the ongoing nationwide protests, several national, state-level and entrance exams have been rescheduled. Numerous universities have also cancelled their internal exams that will now be held at a later date. Speculations were rife on CBSE board exams getting rescheduled.

However, Sanyam Bhardwa, controller of examinations, CBSE has assured that the exams will be held as per the schedule and no changes will be made to the announced dates.

Even in cases of curfews previously, students appearing for the exams along with teachers and parents have been allowed to travel to the

venues after presenting the admit cards, adds Bhardwaj.

*(Courtesy: Times of India 30/12/19)*

Managing your time effectively is an important part of studying. One common mistake is creating an overly restrictive schedule which does not work. The second mistake is telling yourself that scheduling just does not work for you. Try to be realistic and honest with yourself when determining those things that require more effort and those that come easier to you. The following list will guide you through time management.

Think about when your brain works best—morning, night or the middle of the afternoon. Plan your things to do list accordingly. If you are going to read a difficult article for the first time, don't start at 10 p.m unless you are comfortable staying awake during the late hours. Do something less demanding in these hours, organize your notes, or write the next day's thing to do list.

***Schedule and priorities:*** Have a regular study time and place each day. This helps to get you into the study mode. Get everything you need before you start studying. Make a list of what

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you have to do and list it in order of importance. Schedule the important stuff first.

**PLAN YOUR SESSIONS:** Do the difficult stuff first. That way, when, you reach your saturation phase you will only have to grapple with very simple things.

**TAKE BREAKS:** Don't study longer than 50 minutes at a stretch. Use the other ten for a run around the block or to eat a snack (i.e. take a break).

**AVOID GETTING STUCK:** If you can't figure something out, skip it, and get help later. However, skipping everything is not allowed.

**DIVIDE AND CONQUER:**

Break your projects up into smaller bits, and complete those bits one by one.

**SET MILESTONES:**

Setting milestones help to manage the time and task better. You can also set rewards for reaching those milestones.

**REWARD YOURSELF:** The reward can be small, like treating yourself to some ice cream, or larger, like buying that new outfit you have had your eye on. Rewards also don't have to cost money, like going to play some basketball with some friends at the park. Enjoy yourself when you pass a milestone, stick to your reward plans to make them worth the effort.

**REVIEW REGULARLY:** Regular reviewing benefits taking stock of the work done. We have said this before. It's important. Better read it again. Also monitor your progress at reasonable

periods and make changes where necessary. If you find that you are consistently allotting more time than necessary to a specific chore, change your future schedule accordingly.

**SAY NO TO DISTRACTIONS:** No matter how attractive they are unless, of course, its on the schedule.

Time management is an important component of an effective study habit. Individuals have their own ways of managing time. Try using this grid while managing your time-urgent and important, urgent but not important, not urgent but important and neither urgent nor important.

When planning study time for your exams, answer these two questions. How much time do I need to devote to studying for the exam and how much time do I have to study for this exam?

It's fairly easy to determine the answer for the second question. But the first question calls to arrive at a definite answer. Your answer can be accurate or near accurate if you ask yourself the following questions.

- \* How much time do I usually spend studying for this type of exam? What results have I got? (if you usually spend three hours and you are getting D grades, perhaps you need to reassess the time spent?

- \* What grade do I feel get?

- \* What special study do I have to do?

- \* Organise the material you need to study, pace yourself and check to see how much hour of review. How does this compare to what you

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have left to study?

Following these tips will help you secure a good result. What's better you will be stress free during preparations.

***TAKE IT EASY, BOARDS ARE LIKE, ANY OTHER EXAM***

Tufail Ahmad name changed, a class 12 student, is under pressure, His neighbour, Latif, scored 94% in the class 12 Boards a year ago and Tufail Ahmad's parents expect him to perform a lot better. He is not the only one in such a situation. With the Boards just two months away, many students find themselves weighed down by expectations.

As Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, a senior psychiatrist at Moolchand Meditly pointed out, comparisons with other students, parental expectations, and peer pressure are major concerns for students attempting their Board exams.

"These concerns bog students down, leading to severe examination stress which can be defined as a feeling of anxiety over one's performance, the results and reaction of parents and friends," he said.

A class 10 student admitted to having a tough time dealing with parental pressure. "If parents, don't force their expectations on the students, they can make their own goals and achieve them. When I have made my target of the day on a certain amount of syllabus that I will cover, my parents shouldn't force me to study more". A parent admitted that "With college admissions becoming difficult these days, is an increased

parental pressure on children".

Much harm can be caused by expectations, said a parental coach. Parental expectations driven by their social standing can hamper a student's performance. It is imperative to create a comfort zone and generate a "we are with you" feeling among children, especially during exams", said the parental coach.

As to how is he dealing with parental pressure, a student from the Indian School said; I want to become a doctor but my parents expect me to join the family business after finishing my studies. Seeing my unfinishing dedication, they accepted it, and gave me five years to turn my dream into a reality.

***DO NOT IGNORE YOUR EYES***

1. Take a five minute break after every 50 minutes of studying as a regular routine.
2. Make sure the room has enough light. Studying in a dark room leads to eye strain.
3. If your eyes start aching and you can't see clearly while reading, you may require glasses, see an eye specialist.
4. Blink frequently whenever you study for long periods at a time. Blinking helps in keeping your eyes moist.
5. Sleep for 7-8 hours for optimal eye comfort.
6. Wash your hands properly before using contact lenses.
7. Drink plenty of water.

# **The SIMPLE TRUTH**

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## LIFE AND DIGNITY OF HUMAN BEING IS MOST SACRED

India has for long been the land of humanist ideas and philosophies. Mahavir and Buddha in ancient times preached non-violence and respect for human life. Muslim rulers, during their rule in India, taught submission and devotion to One Almighty, also preached love, brotherhood, equality and justice. Gandhiji, in the modern times, has been the leading light of the ideas of non-violence. All religions including Hinduism taught peace, faith in Humanity, tolerance, and respect of others.

Nowadays there is a general feeling that the situation related to basic human rights and human dignity in India is deteriorating.

So let us launch a massive nationwide campaign to make people aware of their rights and duties. Let them know that there exist workable mechanisms to get the guilty punished, of course with due process of law, is also their human and national responsibility. Let them know the ways to live peacefully and honourably in a pluralistic society. Let us envisage an India where the welfare of humanity is the supreme most value and the dignity of human being the most sacred objective; where all the human beings are equal, enjoying the equal rights and status, where no communal, casteist, regional or sectarian interest

creates an obstacle in our pursuit to evolve into a truly human-friendly society.

There is the need of creating an atmosphere in the country where human beings would enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want. So that our coming generations should not inherit the hatreds, prejudices and polarized mindsets. More importantly there should be positive efforts to teach universal brotherhood, fraternity and human values to the young minds.

It is the high time we raised above all the personal interests and stood firm and united with firm commitment to uphold human dignity. Everyone of us can do something in his/her own sphere of activity to ensure that humanity is no longer disgraced.

Let us pledge to build an exemplary society that should run on the bases of justice, equality, harmony and democracy, where the constitution should be upheld, the judiciary should say for the norm's that have been set for it. Our society should be considered a just society where all people should have equal rights and respect for others including women.



## PURE RELIGION

*“Lo! Pure religion (devotion) is for Allah alone. And those who choose guardians beside Him (Saying): “We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah, “verily, Allah will judge between them concerning that in which they differ. Verily, Allah does not guide him, who is a liar, an ingrate, (Surah Az-Zumar, 39:3)*

The polytheists had made angels their guardians and protectors and they thought that if they worshipped them, they would solve all their difficulties. They also thought that to gain nearness to Allah it is necessary to make angels their *waseela*, agents or means. And for making angels their agents they used to consider all that was proper for Allah only proper for them also, e.g, they used to appeal to them, to pray for their needs, to invoke them in difficulties, etc, as all these things are included in worship. They used to explain it by saying that they worshipped angels because they wanted nearness of Allah, i.e., the worship of the angels is the means and *waseela* of Allah’s nearness. In this verse their deceiving explanation has been declared false and wrong. For nearness of Allah it is not necessary to worship any other being than Allah. By the direct and fully sincere worship

of the One and only Allah one can gain His nearness.

The explanation which the polytheists offer for worshipping angels in the same as offered by the grave-worshippers for their devotion to the saints and peers. They say that they offer them gifts and devotion (Nazro-Niyaz) for the reason that through their *waseela* (means) they reach God. If they had read these verses of the Holy Quran, they would not have fallen a prey to the deception of Satan. On the Day of Resurrection, Allah will deliver judgement and enforce it.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali writes: “Worshippers of idols or of deities other than Allah, e.g., saints or perhaps wealth and Power, science or selfish Desire, may pretend that those are symbols that may get them nearer to their self-development, nearer to the goal of their life, nearer to Allah, but they are altogether on the wrong track.

This departure of theirs from true worship, this divergence from the right way, produces endless disputations and sects. Allah will judge between them. But if they are determined to go after falsehoods and forget the gratitude and service which they owe to Allah, and Allah alone, they are putting themselves on a Path where they will get no guidance. They are cutting themselves off from revealed Truth”.

## HUMAN VALUES

1) Abdullah Bin Masood reported that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said: "The first decision which will take place between the people on the Day of Resurrection, will concern the bloods (*Saheeh Bukhari & Saheeh Muslim*)

2) Abu Hurairah reported that the two women from the tribe of Hudail fought and one of them drew a stone on the other and killed her and what was in her womb. The Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) decided that the ransom of her baby was to free a slave man or a slave girl and the blood money of the woman (killed) would be paid by the offender (the other) woman and he (the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.)) appointed her children as heirs and other persons who were related to them. (*Saheeh Bukhari & Muslim*)

3) Jabir bin Abdullah reported that the Messenger of Allah (S.A.W.) said: Allah is not kind to one who is not kind to men (*Saheeh Bukhari & Saheeh Muslim*)

4) Hisham bin Urwah from his father reported that Hisham bin Hakim passed by some people of the Anbat tribe in Syria. They were made to stand up in the sun; and oil was poured over their heads. He enquired: what is this? It was said: They are oppressed about rent. Then he said: "I bear witness that surely I heard the

Messenger of Allah say; Certainly Allah will punish those who punish man in this world. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

5) Abu Hurairah reported that it was questioned: O Messenger of Allah! supplicate against the polytheists. He replied: I have been sent not to curse but I have been raised up as mercy. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

6) Abu Darda reported that the Messenger of Allah said: Shall I not inform you about what is better than the rank of fasting, charity and prayer? We replied: Yes. He said: To restore peace between the two and the dispute between the two is destroying. (*Abu Daud, Tirmizi (correct)*)

7) Abdullah and Anas (both) reported that the Messenger of Allah said: The creation is the family of Allah. So the dearest of the creations of Allah is he who is the best to His family. (*Baihaqi*)

8) The Holy Prophet said: If anyone of you come across an evil, he should try to stop it with his hand (using force), if he is not in a position to stop it with his hand then he should try to stop it by means of his tongue (meaning he should speak against it). If he is not even able to use his tongue then he should at least condemn it in his heart. This is the weakest degree of faith. (*Saheeh Muslim*)



# WHAT IS NRC AND HOW IT WOULD WORK?

Home Minister Amit Shah, while replying to the debate on citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) in the Lok Sabha on Monday said that there would soon be a pan-India National Citizenship Register. Although he did not elaborate on the contours of the NRC, people would need certain set of documents to prove their citizenship.

## WHAT IS NRC?

It is a verified digital register having names and basic demographic information about all Indian citizens in a digital format. Under the citizenship Act 1955, a person born in India or having Indian parentage or having resided in India for at least 11 years (being amended to five years), is eligible for Indian citizenship. NRC would be India's first such database of citizens.

## WHO ARE NATURAL CITIZENS?

According to Indian Citizenship Act, 1955, every person born in India on or after the 26.01.1950, but before 01.07.1987 is a citizen of India by birth irrespective of the nationality of his/her parents. Every person born in India between 01/07.1987 to 02.12.2004 is a citizen of India provided either of his/ her parents is a

citizen of India at the time of his/her birth. Every person born in India on or after 03.12.2004, shall be citizen of India provided both of his/her parents are citizens of India or one of whose parents is a citizen of India and the other is not an illegal migrant at the time of his/her birth.

## WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP BY REGISTRATIONS?

A person of Indian origin who is ordinarily resident in India for seven years can apply for citizenship or a person married to an Indian citizen can apply for citizenship. A district magistrate is authorized to decide on their application.

## WHAT DOCUMENTS WILL ONE NEED TO QUALIFY FOR THE NRC?

The Government has not specified any documents for NRC so far. Going by the citizenship Act, nativity certificate issued by government, land records, voter identity card, birth certificates of oneself and parents, panchayat certificate verifying residency and ration card are some of the documents that may be needed to prove one's citizenship.

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### **WILL AADHAR CARD BE A VALID DOCUMENT FOR NRC?**

As Aadhar is just identity proof and not residency proof, and applies to all residents (not just citizens), it will not be a valid document for NRC. The Permanent Account Number (PAN) for filling Income Tax returns and educational certificates are also not valid to prove citizenship.

### **WILL A PERSON HAVE TO PROVE THAT THEIR ANCESTORS ALSO LIVED IN INDIA?**

Going by NRC in Assam, legacy documents-land record document or name in electoral rolls, birth certificates providing-that one has been living for generations in India would be important for NRC. However, the government has not specified the cut off year for nation-wide NRC.

### **HOW WAS IT DONE IN ASSAM?**

The NRC in Assam was mandated and monitored by the Supreme Court in 2014 and was based on the 1951 NRC done in Assam and voter's lists of 1961, 1966 and 1971-together bunched as legacy documents. The claim of every Assam resident was verified with these legacy documents. Close to 33 million people applied and the final list published on August 31 excluded 1.9 million people. The nationwide NRC will be implemented and monitored by the central government and documents required to prove one's citizenship may not be similar to those accepted in Assam.

The government is yet to specify the documents that would be needed.

### **HOW WILL AN ALL-INDIA NRC BE DIFFERENT?**

The government has not prescribed any cut-off date for the nation wide NRC even though the Citizen Amendment Bill (CAB) passed in the Lok Sabha allows automatic citizenship to Hindus, Budhists, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs and Jains who came from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangla before December 31, 2014.

### **WHAT WOULD A PAN-INDIA NRC PROCESS ENTAIL?**

Once the National Population Register (NRC) is complete, the government could start identifying illegal immigrants. Since the census commissioner will have documents related to birth, residency and voter identity cards of every resident, the government may use it for the first round of screening. It may then issue notices to certain people to appear before a *requisite* body with documents to prove citizenship.

### **WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAA AND NRC?**

The CAA makes it easier for non-Muslims residing in India to get citizenship. Muslims may have to prove that they have been residing in India for generations and, for that, they will need legacy documents, which the government is yet to prescribe.

*(Courtesy: Hindustan Times, Delhi, dated: December 12, 2019)*

# HUMAN EQUALITY AND TAWHEED

Prof. U. Muhammad Iqbal

Monotheism (Tawheed) is the cornerstone of Abrahamic faith. Islam, which is a regeneration of Abrahamic faith, neither makes a compromise on it nor dilutes it in subtle ways. There is no other God but Allah both in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. He is one; there is none like Him, and there is no other God besides Him. He has created the heavens and the earth and made the darkness and the light. He gives life and He gives death. He provides sustenance and guidance. He has endowed mankind with innumerable gifts like hearing, seeing, intelligence and affection. He teaches man what he knew not and prefers him to a large part of His creation. He has allowed him to move over land and sea with ease, and to harness natural resources. He has sent Scriptures and Prophet so that man can retrace his steps towards heaven and avoid waywardness and wrath. Forewarned is forearmed and so He has informed mankind beforehand that man should not come a cropper on the Day of Judgement. He would deliver justice Himself after resurrecting and assembling the whole of mankind. He is free from human faiths and He does not assume a human form to subject Himself to human frailties. He is so mighty that He can roll up the entire cosmos as though

it were a scroll. This concept of Monotheism ensures that God remains supremely and inalienably vital to human existence.

Allah is unique in person, in His characteristics, in His activities, in His commandments and in His nomenclature. This uniqueness implies that He should neither beget nor be begotten, and that He should be the most High, and that He should be incomparable, neither monophyletic, nor polyphyletic.

The holy proposition, Kalimah Tayyiba, encapsulates Islamic monotheism. The Holy Qura'n says the following about it.

*A goodly word is like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed and its branches (reach) to the heavens. It brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord. (Al-Qura'n, 14:24-25)*

A scholar of Islam explains this Quranic statement in this way: "The good word" is so highly fruitful and productive that the believers will continuously benefit from the good result ensuring from it. For it brings about clarity in thought, stability in attitude, moderation in temperament, firmness in character, purity in morals, truthfulness in speech, strength in commit-

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ment, honesty in politics and dealing with others, refinement in social relationships, eloquence and fineness in cultures, balance and equilibrium in collective life, justice and compassion in economy, magnanimity in war, sincerity in peace, and faithfulness in covenant. Like Midas, everything that it touches turns into gold.

Islamic monotheism abolishes the overlordship of the Pharaohs, and the Nimrods over hapless subjects and establishes sovereignty of the Creator over His creation. Vicegerency of man acknowledges this sovereignty and upholds consensual approach as an administrative tool and its overriding objective is to establish justice, freedom, and equality. No distinction is made between man and man irrespective of caste, creed or colour. Islamic monotheism provides one centre of devotion, loyalty and allegiance and always keeps open doors of access and opportunity to one and all to reach that centre without let or hindrance. Another Islamic scholar puts this idea succinctly as follows:

“The Most High has no caste-based affinity with anyone. He does not have any family or tribe. His existence is not confined to any particular region of the earth. He is Omnipresent. He sees everyone. Every individual is free to get in touch with Him, be he a white or a black, a labourer or an employer, a peasant or a trader, a learner or a teacher, a ruler or a subject. He is equidistant from all of them. All can proceed towards Him and aspire for his proximity and affection. None can look for eminence in His presence on the basis of genealogy or status. Access to Him can neither be hindered by economic disadvan-

tage nor be assisted by affluence. He is overwilling to move forward to receive anyone advancing towards Him, whether he is from Africa or America, and speaks English or Arabic. Honour and distinction are reserved for him who enslaves himself to God, and fears His wrath and longs for His mercy.” (*Islamic Solution to Human Issues*, p.28)

The human element commonly shared by human beings owes its origin to one God and becomes a foundation for authentic equality between one man and another. Hammudha Abdalati syas, “In the sight of God, all men are equal, but they are not necessarily identical. There are differences of abilities, potentials, ambitions, wealth, and so on, yet none of these difference can by itself establish a status of superiority of one man or race to another. The stock of man, the colour of his skin, the amount of wealth he has, and the degree of prestige he enjoys have no bearing on the character and personality of the individual as far as God is concerned.”

*“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you.”* (Al-Qura’n, 49:13) A similar idea expressed in Ecclesiasticus 10:20, “There is none greater than he that feareth God,”

As this distinction is individual-based and attitude-oriented, it does not militate against the equality of human race as such. As a matter of

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fact, to be born as a human being is matter of great credit. The Holy Qura'n says, "We have conferred on them special favours", We have created man in the best of moulds". "We have made your shapes beautiful," "He has subjected to you, as from Him, all that is in the heavens and on the earth."

As equality in Islam is God-sanctioned and God-oriented, there is no gender discrimination. Both men and women are treated alike in acts of piety, "Verily for Muslim men and Muslim women, for believing men and women, for devout men and women, for true men and women, for men and women who are patient and constant, for men and women who humble themselves, for men and women who give in charity, for men and women who fast (and deny themselves), for men and women who guard their chastity, and for men and women who engage much in Allah's praise – for them has Allah prepared forgiveness and great reward." (Al-Qura'n, 33:35) This extract begins with a mention of Muslims who uphold monotheism as the right perspective with far-reaching consequences.

"So far as cultural values of Islam are concerned egalitarianism permeates and pervades every aspect of them. All stand shoulder to shoulder as slaves in God's presence in the act of prayer; no special pews are allotted to the special elite. All starve alike while fasting; no exemption is granted to the affluent. The pilgrims don the same apparel during Hajj; all perform the same rituals as one unit; no discrimination is allowed on the basis of locals and foreigners, physically advantaged or disadvantaged, creamy layers of

the society or commoners." (Translated; Dr. Mustafa Sabai, The Shining Dimensions of Islamic Civilizations, p.50) Islam set in nation a process that ultimately culminated in the abolition of slave-trade and slavery. Untouchability never secured a foothold in the Muslim society.

One author wrote, "To these poor people, fishermen, hunters, pirates and low-caste tillers of the soil (of Bengal), Islam came as a revelation from on high. It was the creed of the ruling race, its missionaries were men of zeal who bought the Gospel of the unity of God and the equality of men in its sight to a despised and neglected population."

As equality in Islam is justice-oriented, a Muslim and a non-Muslim are equal in law. This rights and privileges extended to a Muslim in an Islamic state are extended to a non-Muslim too. "Surely Allah enjoins to the doing of justice and kindness, and giving to kindred, and forbids all shameful, injustice and rebellion." (Al-Qura'n, 16:90) The rule of law is pitted against oppression, cruelty, genocide, tyranny, social anarchy and guarantees freedom of worship, security of life and limb, and freedom from hunger and fear, and freedom to form associations, and right to earn a livelihood and own property. Islam is nothing but a guarantor of the rule of law, and a champion of human rights. If Caliph 'Umar collected jizya, a compensatory tax in lieu of military service, he provided old age pension for the aged and economically disadvantaged non-Muslim citizens too. This goes to show that where monotheism is, there equality is.



# PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S MESSAGE TO PLURAL WORLD!

By: Dr. Javed Jamil

God says in the Holy Quran, *"We have sent you (Muhammad) purely as Boon for the Multi-World"*. Rahmat-al-lil-Aalameen is often translated as "Boon for all the World", but when speaking in the context of the world existing on earth its first address is the plural World. Both the Holy Quran and the Prophet (S.A.W.) were meant not just for those who do not believe in them. Even if they just reason out their messages purely on the grounds of scientific and social facts, they will find them not just useful but also the best possible option for peace and long term health and security of the whole mankind, irrespective of regions, beliefs (religious and non-religious) and cultures.

When Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) started his mission of Peace at Makkah, soon after the promulgation of the Message of Exclusive Worship for the Lord of the Universe, he started addressing the problems of society. He began to process of eradication of slavery and emancipation of women, expressing great anguish at the humiliation of slaves and infanticide. As soon as he moved to Madinah, he started addressing other communities, caring for their needs and problems. He not only showed huge respect to the "founders" of other

religions but also told Muslims that they had been the true Messengers of God. He took special care to tell Jews and Christians that they are part of the same course of the Truth and they need to socially, if not religiously, associate and cooperate with one another. Among his closest associates were people belonging to various regions, races and cultures, including Blacks from Africa, Persians, and previous adherents of other religious. And, of course, while desiring everybody to submit to the Final Version of the Divine system, he categorically declared "no compulsion", as the Holy Quran said: *"There is no compulsion in Deen (religion),"* (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:256). "Deen" here in fact includes all the ideologies religious or non-religious.

*"To you be your system (of beliefs and practices) and to me mine"* (Surah Al-Kafiroon, 109:6) Christians and Jews need to know that the Holy Quran coins for them a very respectable term, *Ahli-Kitab*, the people of the Testament because they have been reading earlier parts (Torah, Psalm and Gospel) of the Testament of God. To affirm their proximity to Muslims, Several practical measures have been taken, the foods of the Muslims and the people of Testament have been declared lawful for each

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other. (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5) Taking another major leap towards bonding Muslims with them, Muslims have been permitted to marry Christian and Jew woman; they are not required to change their religion. (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5) Muslim rulers have also taken care to judge the internal affairs of Christians (as well as of Jews) on the basis of their own laws. While criticizing the few for indulging in exploitation of the masses, the Holy Quran takes care to mention their positives:

*“Certainly there are (different categories of) people-those who have realized (Islam) Jews, Sabians, Christians, Magians and Polytheist; God will surely give His Verdict regarding all of them on the Day of Establishment. The truth is that God alone is the witness of everything”. (Surah Al-Hajj, 22:17)*

They are not a monolithic community. There is (also) a group among the Adherents of the Testament that keeps standing in the might reciting the ayah of God and prostrating (in prayers). They are committed to God and Hereafter, promote what is appreciable and campaign against what is unacceptable, and also prompt in actions of welfare. They are among good performers” (Surah Al Imran, 3:113-114)

The Holy Quran allowed social contracts, (including marriages in communities which believed in previous prophets:

*“You are allowed to marry women of character from among the women committed (to Islam) and from among the Recipients of the previous Testaments, subject to the conditions that you give them their dowers, desire purity of relationship, not temporary*

*pleasure, and do not keep them as secret partners” (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5)*

*“This day all healthy foods are made lawful to you; further, having meals (on invitation) with the Adherents of the Testament is made lawful to you and their having meals with you is made lawful for them. Further, the women of character from among the women committed (to Islam) as well as from among the Adherents of the Testament are lawful for you (for marriage)” (Surah Al-Maidah, 5:5)*

*Note: this writer prefers “Testament” as the translation of the “Kitab” because “Kitab” refers to a special kind of book, which binds its followers to follow it.)*

The Madinah charter was one of the biggest achievements of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). When he entered Madinah, the city was the centre of a serious rivalry between the various tribes, which often resulted in bloodshed. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) prepared the charter, which guaranteed religious freedom to all and presented a plan to end the intertribal rivalry. The plan gave Muhammad (S.A.W.) the position of the Head who will consult all the parties in solving the disputes. For the first time in the history of the world, women, children, orphans, foreigners and slaves were granted extensive rights and protection, the security of all the human beings the ultimate aim. He condemned racism and nationalism saying there is no superiority of an Arab over a non-Arab, or a white man over a black man, except in righteousness.” He was even highly considerate for animals and trees and established laws

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protecting animals, trees, and the environment. In the field of economics, he encouraged wealth generation within the permissible fields and at the same time ensured the flow of money and the welfare of the deprived. He encouraged free trade and ethical investments, but secured worker's rights. He forbade usury which had become one of the major causes of exploitation of the poor by the wealthy.

The Prophet's messages are even more relevant to the plural society because, due to dominant role of the forces of economic and political hegemony, religions and religious morality are being incessantly sidelined. The Prophet (S.A.W.) clearly indicated that all religious communities need to come together on the ground of religious morality rather than keeping hostility on the grounds of religious identity. But for this to happen and convert into a movement, all religious communities including Muslims have to make a threadbare analysis of the designs of forces of hegemony and take counter measures.

Forces of evils are not work with impunity in society as there is none to keep them at bay. They have vested interests in the widespread dissemination of vices.

People tend to falling victim to their designs, as they strike at the most glaring susceptibilities of human natures. In the absence of any incentives in sight for good, righteous and charitable deeds, the number of those inclined to conduct in an admirable way tends to decrease. Crimes, social tensions and all forms of addiction are on the rise. To counter this, special efforts have to be organized individually, collectively and politically. Championing the good and championing against

evils must involve efforts at every level-level, state, national and international, Each and every social institution clergy, intellectuals, academic institutions, media, courts, social and welfare organizations, executive machinery of the countries, international organizations must make efforts, those that do not take active part in this war against vices must be sidelined.

Though Muslims must play a leading role they must not forget to seek active cooperation from all religious communities. They must run this campaign in an organized, relentless and daunting way data must be collected to assess the situation, to bring awareness and to counter the propaganda of the forces of evils. The world must be told in no uncertain terms that no short term or half hearted measures will suffice to counter the vices that endanger human health, destroy family peace and threaten social order. There is no place for chaos and things and practices that spread chaos in a civilized world.

Justice is the most powerful arsenal for defeating chaos of all types in a plural element that can keep the plural society secure and united. The Holy Quran categorically declares the supremacy of justice even if it goes against one's self, relatives or friends. At a large level, it implies communities and societies as well. The Holy Quran Says:

*"Committed followers (of God)! Stand resolutely for the cause of justice, as the standards on behalf of God, even if it means acting against your own persons, your parents or your relatives, and irrespective of one being wealthy or poor. It is God who guards the two (Parties). So, do not follow*



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*you (your) personal whims lest it fails you in judgement; and whether you hold it or distort it, remember that God has absolute knowledge of whatever you do” (Surah An-Nisa; 4:135)*

Justice must not only be done but must also be seen done. Furthermore, it must be achieved swiftly. Any system of justice that demise justice to the victims of crime or unduly delays it can not ensure social peace. The present legal systems all over the world have dismally failed to safeguard life and honour of the people. On the contrary, they have helped, directly and indirectly, the cause of criminals and the forces of evils. They look advanced in method but extremely poor in results. They appear to profess humanity but promote inhumanity. This has increased the crime rate to dangerous levels and has been transforming in increasing numbers of good human beings into criminals.

Islamic system of justice is based on speedy trial and ensures punishment equal to the crime with right to pardon only in the hands of victims or heirs victims. In sharp contrast, to the modern system that safeguard the interests of criminals, Islam primarily aims at bringing justice to both victims and convicts. Justice is also to be ensured at the international level; there must be ways to guarantee that small and weak nations do not suffer at the hands of powerful nations.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) worked for the welfare of not just Muslims but the whole mankind. The Holy Quran says:

*“Let you emerge as a nation that gives a call for welfare (of the people), implement the admirable (Plans of actions) and effectively*

*bans the forbidden (practice)” (Surah Ale-Imran; 3:104)*

This verse is not about individual efforts; it is about an organized effort through the legal, political and socioeconomic systems. For the larger welfare, larger unity of mankind is essential.

The world today ruled by the Big Powers may be busy in distorting his message but the truth is that there has simply been not a single person in human history except him who not only paved the way for the establishment of a holistic system but also showed himself as the true model and guide for all the individual as well as social existence. By establishing the three dimensional system based on the Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Fundamental Prohibitions, he has given the world the ideal plan for the establishment of holistic peace combining all aspects of individual, family and social peace.

Reverend Bosworth Smith in Muhammad and Muhammadanism, London, 1874, summed up beautifully when he says: “Head of the state as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without the Pope's pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without a standing army, without a body guard, without a police force, without a fixed revenue”. Plural societies are free not to accept Muhammad as Prophet if they have to establish Peace, they have no choice but to benefit from his holistic plan. They need to understand that while plurality is fine and must be respected, unity remains the ideal goal; unity through commitment to One God and One system.

# FIRST WRITTEN CONSTITUTION OF THE WORLD

(As translated by Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah)

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

1) This is a prescript of Muhammad (Peace and blessings of God be to him) the Prophet and Messenger of God (to operate) between the faithful and the followers of Islam from among the Quraish and the people of Madinah and those who may be under them, may join them and take part in wars in their company.

2) They shall constitute a separate political unit (Ummat) as distinguished from all the people (of the world).

3) The emigrants from the Quraish shall be (responsible) for their own ward; and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and shall secure the release of their own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the mutual dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

4) And Banu Auf shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration, and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves so that dealings

between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

5) And Banu Al-Harith ibn-Khazraj shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

6) And Banu Sa'da shall be responsible for their own ward, and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom from themselves, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

7) And Banu Jusham shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

8) And Banu an-Najjar shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-

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money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

9) And Banu ‘Amr-ibn Awf shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

10) And Banu-al-Nabit shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

11) And Banu-al-Auws shall be responsible for their own ward and shall pay their blood-money in mutual collaboration and every group shall secure the release of its own prisoners by paying their ransom, so that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

12) (a) And the believers shall not leave any one, hard-pressed with debts, without affording him some relief, in order that the dealings between the believers be in accordance with the principles of goodness and justice.

(b) Also no believer shall enter into a contract of clientage with one who is already in such a contract with another believer.

13) And the hands of pious believers shall be raised against every such person as rises in rebellion or attempts to acquire anything by force or is guilty of any sin or excess or attempts to spread mischief among the believers; their hands shall be raised all together against such a person, even if he be a son to anyone of them.

14) And no believer shall kill another believer in retaliation for an unbeliever, nor shall he help an unbeliever against a believer.

15) And the protection of God is one. The humblest of them (believers) shall, by extending his protection to any one, put the obligation on all; and the believers are brothers to one another as against all the people (of the world).

16) And that those who will obey us among the Jews, will have help and equality. Neither shall be oppressed nor will any help be given against them.

17) And the place of the believers shall be one. If there be any war in the way of God, no believer shall be under any peace (with the enemy) apart from other believers, unless it (this peace) be the same and equally binding on all.

18) And all those detachments that will fight on our side will be relieved by turns.

19) And the believers as a body shall take blood vengeance in the way of God.

20) (a) And undoubtedly pious believers are the best and in the rightest course.

(b) And that no associator (non-Muslim subject) shall give any protection to the life and property

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of a Quraishite, nor shall he come in the way of any believer in this matter.

21) And if anyone intentionally murders a believer, and it is proved, he shall be killed in retaliation, unless the heir of the murdered person be satisfied with blood-money. And all believers shall actually stand for this ordinance and nothing else shall be proper for them to do.

22) And it shall not be lawful for anyone who has agreed to carry out the provisions laid down in this code and has affixed his faith in God and the Day of Judgement, to give help or protection to any murder, and if he gives any help or protection to such a person, God's curse and wrath shall be on him on the Day of Resurrection, and no money or compensation shall be accepted from such a person.

23) And that whenever you differ about anything, refer it to God and to Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be to him)

24) And the Jews of Banu 'Auwf shall share with the believers the expenses of war so long as they fight in conjunction.

25) And the Jews of Banu 'Auwf shall be considered one political community (ummat) along with the believers for the Jews their religion, and for the Muslims their, be one client or patron. He, however, who is guilty of oppression or breach of treaty, shall suffer the resultant trouble as also his family, but no one besides.

26) And the Jews of Banu-an-An Najjar shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Auwf.

27) And the Jews of Banee-al-Harith shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu Auwaf.

28) And the Jews of Bana Saida shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu 'Auwf.

29) And the Jews of Banu Jusham shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu Auwaf

30) And the Jews of Banu-al-Auws shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu Auwaf.

31) And the Jews of Banu Jhalaba shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu A'uwf. Of course, whoever is found guilty of oppression or violation of treaty, shall himself suffer the consequent trouble as also his family, but no one besides.

32) And Jafna, who are a branch of the Thalaba Tribe, shall have the same rights as the mother tribes.

33) And Banu-ash-Shutaiba shall have the same rights as the Jews of Banu-Auwf; and they shall be faithful to, and not violators of treaty.

34) And the mawlas (clients) of Thalaba shall have the same rights as those of the original members of it.

35) And the sub-branches of the Jewish tribes shall have the same rights as the mother tribes.

36) (a) And that none of them shall go out to fight as a soldier of the Muslim army, without the permission of Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be to him).

(b) And no obstruction shall be placed in the way of any one's retaliation for beating or injuries; and whoever sheds blood shall be personally

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responsible for it as well as his family; as else (i.e. any step beyond this) will be of oppression; and God will be with him who will most faithfully follow this code (Sahifah) in actions.

37) (a) And the Jews shall bear the burden of their expenses and the Muslims theirs.

(b) And if anyone fights against the people of this code, their (i.e. of the Jews and Muslims) mutual help shall come into operation, and there shall be friendly counsel and sincere behavior between them; and faithfulness and no breach of covenant.

38) And the Jews shall be bearing their own expenses so long as they shall be fighting in conjunction with the believers.

39) And the valley of Yathrib (Madinah) shall be a Haram (Sacred place) for the people of this code.

40) The clients (mawla) shall have the same treatment as the original persons (i.e. persons accepting clientage). He shall neither be harmed nor shall he himself break the covenant.

41) And no refuge shall be given to anyone without the permission of the people of the place (i.e. the refugee shall have no right of giving refuge to others)

42) And that if any murder or quarrel takes place among the people of this code, from which any trouble may be feared, it shall be referred to God and God's Messenger, Muhammad (peace and blessings of God be to him) and God will be with him who will be most particular about

what is written in this code and act on it most faithfully.

43) The Quraish shall be given no protection nor shall they who help them.

44) And they (i.e., Jews and Muslims) shall have each other's help in the event of any one invading Yathrib.

45) (a) And if they (i.e. the Jews) are invited to any peace, they also shall offer peace and shall be party to it; and if they invited the believers to some such affairs, it shall be their (Muslims) duty as well to reciprocate the dealings, excepting that any one makes a religious war.

(b) On every group shall rest the responsibility of (repulsing) the enemy from the place which faces its part of the city.

46) And the Jews of the tribe of al-Auou, clients as well as original members, shall have the same rights as the people of this Code; and shall behave sincerely and faithfully towards the latter, not petrating any breach of covenant. As one shall sow so shall be reap. And God is with him who will most sincerely and faithfully carry out the provisions of this code.

47) And this prescript shall not be of any avail to any oppressor or breaker of covenant. And one shall have security whether one goes out to a campaign or remains in Madinah, or else it will be oppression and breach of covenant. And God is the Protector of him who performs the obligations with faithfulness and care, as also His Messenger.

# PRAYER AT THE START OF JOURNEY

By Prof. U. Muhammad Iqbal

Man is a distinguished category of God's creation. The transport facilities provided for humanity over land and sea and the hygienic and delectable nutrients for human growth and health indicate that mankind is a divinely preferred creation. (The Holy Quran, 17:70) Ships and cattle and now aeroplanes have been pressed into service so that man could become a globe-trotter and space ships enable him to become a space tourist. (Ibid: 43:12) Compared to other creation, man enjoys certain advantages. He should observe this phenomenon of divine preferment and be filled with gratitude for the advantages and blessings he is privileged to enjoy.

How should one demonstrate this gratitude? The Holy Quran expects the fervent devotees of God to remember Him "standing, sitting, and reclining" (3:191). Sitting on the back of an animal or riding a vehicle, devotee should articulate his sense of gratitude in the form of a prayer. The prayer is as follows.

*Subhanallazi sakhkhara lana haaza; wamaa Kunna lahu muqrineen; wa inna ilaa Rabbina lamunqaliboon" (43:13,14)*

This Quranic prayer may be rendered thus: *Glory to Him who has subjected this for our benefit, as we could not have done so by ourselves; verily to our Lord is our (ultimate) return.*

The Muslim mind is trained to keep remembering God and to remain focused on Him all the time.

"So glory be to Allah when you enter the night and when you enter the morning-unto Him be praise in the heavens and the earth-and the sun's decline and in the moonday". (30:17-18).

"Subhana" lays emphasis on the purity, perfection, infallibility, and impeccable nature of God and makes it clear that God has no progeny or progenitor or alter ego or counterpart or claimant of parity with Him in the entire universe and that He does not comprise constituent persons. This attribute of God is invoked when one becomes, agonisingly aware of one's own limitations, weaknesses and transgressions. For example, the angels invoke this attribute of God as preface to their acknowledgement that the depth and range of their knowledge have been determined and delineated by God. (2:32) By saying "Subhana," a Muslim joins the august company of the angels and the prophets and

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enters into a harmonious relationship with the universe. "All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Allah" (57:1) By saying "Subhana", a Muslim shows his appreciation of God's favours to man. "Allah it is who has subjected to you all that is in the heavens and all that is on the earth, it is all as a favour and kindness from Him". (45:13)

Allama Yusuf Ali has a pertinent observation to make, "Allah's creation is independent of man. But Allah, in His mercy, has given man the faculty to subdue the forces of nature and to penetrate through high mysteries with his powers of reason and insight." By saying "Subhana", a Muslim thanks God whose volition is involved in the subjugation of the transporting medium, living or non-living, for the benefit of mankind.

This prayer is not individualistic but collective in nature. When the Holy Quran was revealed, travelling across the desert was extremely hazardous for individuals. The marauding tribes and the highwaymen swooped down on individual travelers and robbed them of their property and even of their lives. So the travelers would wait and form caravans before they could venture out on a journey. This accounts for the collective nature of the prayer. Today, travel is not that hazardous. Still discretion demands that travelling alone may be avoided as far as possible. The traveler may feel safe if a companion is by his side. The collective nature of the prayer includes the welfare of the companions, related, familiar or unknown. Islam encourages ladies to have security through

affectionate and respectful escorts while travelling.

The prayer makes us conscious of a triangle of relationship God transporting vehicle, and travelers. The travelers thank God for putting the transporting vehicle under the control so that long distances could be covered with ease and speed. The travelers compare their individual physical strength with the physical or mechanical might of the transporting vehicle. In a single combat or confrontation, they realize they have a slim chance of coming out unscathed. One who rides on a lion may end up in its stomach. The travelers therefore expressed their enhanced sense of gratitude to God both for the usefulness and the induced subservience of the transporting vehicle. The elephant on safari may run amok or the vehicle may turn turtle and the rider may survive the catastrophe to lick the wounds.

The prayer is an indirect request for the continued usefulness and subservience of the vehicle until the journey is completed and the destination is reached. There should be no breakdown and no mishap during the course of the journey.

This prayer is so formed that, notwithstanding the spectacular changes in the method of transport, it can be uttered without any modification. Its relevance is perennial.

This has been made possible by using a demonstrative pronoun, *hazaa* (this), not as an adjective but as an object. Even if new and unimagined modes of transport come into being, this prayer will not require any modification whatsoever.

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The last part of this prayer is a typical reminder that man is ever on the move. "O you man! Verily you are ever toiling on towards your Lord painfully toiling but you shall meet Him". (84:6) The Muslim mind is stretched to encompass that moment when there will be an audience with the Lord of the heavens and the earth. Islam seizes every opportunity to keep the concept of the Hereafter alive and dynamic. The earthly journey are also made use of to remind oneself that there is a journey that will take one to God. While embarking on a journey it is not considered inauspicious to think of death. The thought of one's own death has a salutary effect upon one's own perspective on the life in this world.

When afflicted with calamity, a Muslim consoles himself with the conviction that "to Allah we belong, and to Him is our return" (2:56) When the sorcerers of the Pharaoh on being defeated declared their belief in the Lord of Moses and Aaron, the Pharaoh threatened that he would dismember and crucify them. The sorcerers replied calmly that in such an event they would be sent back to their Lord (7:125). It is with this frame of mind that a Muslim sets out on a journey. Sometimes a Muslim sets out on a voyage. He remembers that "Allah it is who has subjected to you the sea, that ships may sail through it by His command and that you may seek of His Bounty, and that you may be thankful". (45:12). He remembers that God has declared, "If it were Our will We could drown them, then there would be no helper (to hear their cry), nor could they be delivered." (36:43).

He also remembers that Nooh advised his followers to board the Ark and to pray "*Bismilahi majreeha wa Mursaha, Inna Rabbi Lagghafoorur Raheem*" (The navigation of this (Ark) and its coming to anch-both are in the name of Allah; verily my Lord is excessively forgiving and infinitely merciful) (11:41)

Our beloved Prophet was accustomed to saying "God is the greatest" three times after climbing to the back of a camel on the start of a journey and pray as follows; Glory to Him who subdued this for us, we were not capable of subduing it; and to our Lord is our return. O Allah! In this journey we request you to grant us righteousness and piety and activity that is pleasing to you. You are our Protector; you look after our dependent. O Allah! I seek refuge in you from the hardships of the journey, from a horrifying seen (on account of an accident in the journey) and from a return to the family in a traumatic condition".

The moral effect of this prayer at the start of a journey is that the journey will not be undertaken for the pursuit of sin, for oppression, usurpation and injustice, for burglary, drinking and illegal sex, for colonizing countries without weapons of mass destruction. A community nurtured on a sense of humility and gratitude to God and focused upon the values enshrined in this prayer can never be swayed by arrogance and aggressiveness towards helpless and weaker communities.





# ISLAM AND PEACE

by : Dr. Javed Jamil

Astronomically speaking, nothing extraordinary happened on September 11, 2001 when a group of suspected “Islamic terrorists” created history of its own kind by plane crashing twice into the Twin Towers that the United States and New York boasted of as the symbol of their economic prowess. The earth has, as always, been rotating with a uniform speed having rotated more than twelve hundred times since then. But in terms of socio-political terms, it appears that the human planet took innumerable turns with a breathtaking speed within a few minutes on that day, then came to a standstill and has stayed as such since then, for even now Islam as a religion and Muslims as a community are being maligned as supporters of violence in general and terrorism in particular. This is despite the fact that.

1. In the so-called coalition against the so-called international terrorism Muslim countries and groups have been in the foremost ranks, without whose active participation America and company could never have succeeded in their plans.

2. the overwhelming majority of casualties in this war, at least one hundred thousands dead, has been of Muslims. Most of these hapless victims have been neither “Islamic terrorist” nor “fighters against terrorism” but innocent men, women and children, who had nothing to do with

this on-going war.

3. a large number of Muslim clerics and intellectuals have issued categorical statements condemning terrorism and all the other forms of violence.

If one wants to notice the kind of venomous campaign being spread against Islam and Muslims, one only needs to pay a visit to Yahoo chat rooms. Visit a Christian, Hinduism, Judaism or Buddhism chat room, and you will hardly find a Muslim making obscene remarks against Jesus, Moses, Krishna, Rama or Buddha. As soon as you enter on Islam chat room, you will see a war of words going on at an unimaginable scale. There will always be some Christianity, Jews and Hindus hurling choicest of obscenities and invectives on the Holy Quran and Muhammad (S.A.W.). Helpless Muslims would not retort by the same kind of obscenities against symbols of other religions because they have been taught by their religion to pay as much of respect to them as they do to their own religious symbols. The power of Internet is in full display in the fight against Islam. This is another matter that this propaganda has only proved to be counterproductive. Islam continues to be the fastest expanding religion of the world, and its expansion has only multiplied in recent years in

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those very regions where the governments and the media are the biggest parties to that propaganda. Furthermore, this animus is only strengthening the resolve of those against whom it is directed.

A concerted campaign is being run all over the world, denigrating Islam as the religion that promotes violence and Muslims as the people that resort to violence. Clever remarks like “*Not all Muslims are terrorist but all terrorists are Muslims*” are being circulated to put Muslims on the defensive. The impact on Muslim masses has been profound, even though there is no way it can be measured. Unfortunately, most of the Muslim clerics and thinkers have become victims of this propaganda, and have adopted an evidently apologetic stand in their defence of the beleaguered Islam. Commoners however have responded by either becoming despondent at the condition of their fellow religionists or indignant at the treatment being meted out to them.

Islam has a much broader meaning of peace, and adopts effective and practicable methods to achieve its larger objectives of “Grand Peace”. It is only the Islamic concept of Grand Peace that can bring real peace in human lives, individually and collectively. Believers of Islam, not with-standing their shortcomings and their failures in practicing their religion in its true spirit, are much less chaotic, individually and collectively, than most of the other religious communities are.

It is in the fitness of things if the meaning of Grand Peace that Islam espouses is introduced at the very outset. It will then be easier for readers to better comprehend the developments in the past

few centuries and their impact on human life.

Let us first see how the world today understands peace. There are numerous definitions of peace, including those given by the world forums of eminence, individual thinkers and institutions. We will however concentrate mainly on the definitions given by the United Nations, which unquestionably is the biggest and the most powerful body of the community of nations that inhabits the earth. Let me reproduce here the definitions and programmes gives by the UNESCO Culture of Peace:

#### “An Agenda for Peace: Definitions

Peace is dynamic. Peace is a just and non-violent solution of conflicts. It generates an equilibrium in social interactions, so that all of the members of society can live in harmonious relations with each other. Peace is good for society. Where there is violence there is no peace. Where there is injustice and absence of liberty, there is no peace. In order for there to be an equilibrium in the dynamics of social interactions, peace must be founded on justice and liberty.

Preventative diplomacy is action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.

Peace making is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations.

Peacekeeping is the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally

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involving United Nations military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peace-keeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.

Peace-building is action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict. Only sustained, co-operative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems can place and achieved peace on a durable foundation.”

It can be noted that the above set of rules defining peace is primarily an agenda “to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur”, “so that all of the members of society can live in harmonious relations with each other.” This obviously is a *political definition of peace*. This definition is not only incomplete but is highly deficient in many ways. It will have dangerous implications because its very basis is erroneous. Though it speaks of peace as “dynamic”, the peace it promotes has hardly any dynamism visible: it is *static* rather than dynamic and *negative* rather than *positive*. Peace is regarded as essentially not a positive quality but mere absence of conflicts. In negative terms too, this indicates only the absence of armed conflicts. This definition of peace is neither *all encompassing*, including all that is positive nor *all abandoning* excluding all that is negative. This “peace” is primarily the brainchild of those who seek to promote a certain type of ideology and accompanied culture for their own selfish interests. What an irony! Peace based on selfishness! But this exactly is the peace that is

being promoted all over the world with utmost zeal, valour and planning. The consequences of such a strategy are what they should be. Total all-enveloping chaos at every level. The same approach is adopted in various other documents. See for example the following:

Appeal to the International Community from a Round Table of Institutions Who Have Won the Noble Prize for Peace (excerpts)

\* Peace is not only the absence of armed conflict, it is also a dynamic set of relationships of coexistence and co-operation among and within peoples, characterized by the respect for the human values set forth particularly in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with the concern to provide the greatest possible well-being for all.

\* Peace is increasingly threatened each day by the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction, by the great economic and social inequalities, which divide mankind, and by contempt for basic human rights and the dignity of the individual.

\* Peace requires ever greater efforts to overcome these threats. It is only possible in a world in which the observance of international law replaces violence, fear and injustice, in which states voluntarily agree to limit their national sovereignty in the general interest, and in which states employ existing procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes between nations. To build such a peace, everyone must feel a responsibility and should be educated in that sense from childhood.....

Finally, the round table asks the mass media to employ to a greater extent their skills and

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immense resources towards building and maintaining peace, to foster a spirit of equity and solidarity among peoples and to draw attention to the personal and collective sacrifice inherent in the pursuit of those ideals.

Suggestions for moving towards a Culture of Peace:

Revisit history to discover how people contributed to their cultures.

Research non-military actors and make them models to be emulated.

Research women's roles in the development of their societies, and the causes and consequences of violence against women.

Promote peace goals as the dominant factor in all forms of art.

Teach the need to be aware of, and take responsibility for, the consequences scientific discovery can have for society as a whole.

Promote responsibility for the well-being of the local and global community, including protection of the natural environment.

Promote gender-specific analysis in all areas of human activity, encouraging women to organize themselves to make an impact on decisions that affect society.

Teach co-operation rather than competition, solidarity for mutual support, and appreciation for the rich diversity of multicultural societies.

Combat racism and discrimination, teach respect for human rights, for human life and the dignity of the person.

Promote economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights to create conditions for peace,

disarmament and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The above quoted documents fail to mention peace at individual and family levels, and only focus on national and international violence. There are others, mainly the spiritual masters belonging to different religions including mystics, who stress on individualistic notion of peace (Spiritual definition). For them, the tranquility of mind and soul represent the true peace, which is attained through belief in God or gods, through meditation, devotion, self sacrifice and other spiritual exercises ranging from *self appeasing* ones to *self-sacrificing*. They tend to ignore family and social dimensions of peace, their argument resting on the premise that if individuals are peaceful society will automatically be peaceful as well. They tend to bury in the cemetery of their ideology the fact that hundred per cent of the members of society can never be truly peaceful, and that a very minuscule percentage is enough to cause disastrous consequences. There is another definition of peace, the social one that is promoted by sociologists for whom the equality of the distribution of wealth is the chief motive. They argue that if the distribution of wealth and opportunities in society is not equitable there is no way peace can be ensured.

The truth however is that no definition of peace can be complete unless it takes into account the following:

First, human existence has three essential constituents: Individual, family and society. For peace to carry any real meaning, it has to be at all these three levels. Peace at individual level means *physical, mental, social and spiritual*

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*health*, to which must be added what we understand as *satisfaction*. Peace at family level means *cordial relationship between spouses, between parents and children and among children themselves, and the absence of all irritant in a peaceful family life*. Peace at social level means *peaceful co-existence of all human beings that inhabit the earth anywhere, individually or as communities and nations, and the absence of all forms of exploitation, oppression and conflicts*. Thus individual health, family peace and social order may be regarded as the three essential constituents of Grand Peace.

Second, peace must involve *all the stages of life*: foetal, paediatric, adult, geriatric, and postdeath life. This alone can lead to eternal peace.

Islam literally means peace and is defined as submission to God, which means that peace can not be obtained without total submission to be the Lord of the universe. Similarly Iman means total satisfaction, which again can be obtained only through an undivided devotion to God. When the Quran calls, "Enter Islam wholeheartedly" it does not merely invite its adherents to follow the institutionalized system of Islam; it also informs them that the real, comprehensive and long lasting peace can be achieved only through total acceptance of the system of God. The Quran states: "*The System for you is the (system of) Peace*" and "*Call them to the House of Peace*". In Islam, peace is not just a state of the absence of war or chaos in society; it has the broadest and the most comprehensive meaning, in terms of extents, depth and longevity, including all the components of peace described above. It has to be neither

just personal nor just family, nor just social; it has to be at all the three levels and in the widest discernible sense. At *individual* level, it does not merely mean the peace of mind; it encompasses physical, mental and social health. At *family* level, it comprises peaceful relationships between husband and wife, and among children themselves. At *social* level, it does not only indicate the absence of war or chaos but also means the absence of all forms of crimes and social tensions, and prevalence of mutual brotherhood and justice. Peace is also not something bound by time or space; it is as much for this world as for Hereafter; peace is *eternal*. This is to be ensured that Islam's message of Grand peace has to percolate down to the lowest strata of society. And this is to be done in a way that the world does not feel threatened by the emergence of an institutionalized and political Islam, but instead learns to apply the moral and socio-economic principles of Islam for the benefit of the whole mankind.

This can be seen that Islam uses *all the possible means* to achieve its goal of Grand Peace. In the modern world, dominated by what I call economic fundamentalism, Fundamental Rights are given paramount importance, Fundamental Duties are largely ignored and Fundamental Prohibitions are virtually prohibited. Islam, on the other hand, espouses a three dimensional system giving an equal emphasis on Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Fundamental Prohibitions. If we want to achieve the true peace, this three dimensional approach is indispensable.

*(The writer is the director, International Centre for Applied Islamic, Saharanpur, India)*

# MANAGE TIME FOR SMOOTH SAILING IN THE BOARDS (Class 10 and 12 Exams)

Compiled by Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

*We wish all the best to intending candidates for the Board Exams.*

## CBSE NOT TO RESCHEDULE BOARD EXAMS

The class X and XII board exams will commence from February 15, 2020. From last year, the board has shifted the exam from the first week of March to February.

While the class XII exams will end on March 30, class X exams will conclude on March 20, 2020.

Amid the ongoing nationwide protests, several national, state-level and entrance exams have been rescheduled. Numerous universities have also cancelled their internal exams that will now be held at a later date. Speculations were rife on CBSE board exams getting rescheduled.

However, Sanyam Bhardwa, controller of examinations, CBSE has assured that the exams will be held as per the schedule and no changes will be made to the announced dates.

Even in cases of curfews previously, students appearing for the exams along with teachers and parents have been allowed to travel to the

venues after presenting the admit cards, adds Bhardwaj.

*(Courtesy: Times of India 30/12/19)*

Managing your time effectively is an important part of studying. One common mistake is creating an overly restrictive schedule which does not work. The second mistake is telling yourself that scheduling just does not work for you. Try to be realistic and honest with yourself when determining those things that require more effort and those that come easier to you. The following list will guide you through time management.

Think about when your brain works best—morning, night or the middle of the afternoon. Plan your things to do list accordingly. If you are going to read a difficult article for the first time, don't start at 10 p.m unless you are comfortable staying awake during the late hours. Do something less demanding in these hours, organize your notes, or write the next day's thing to do list.

***Schedule and priorities:*** Have a regular study time and place each day. This helps to get you into the study mode. Get everything you need before you start studying. Make a list of what

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you have to do and list it in order of importance. Schedule the important stuff first.

**PLAN YOUR SESSIONS:** Do the difficult stuff first. That way, when, you reach your saturation phase you will only have to grapple with very simple things.

**TAKE BREAKS:** Don't study longer than 50 minutes at a stretch. Use the other ten for a run around the block or to eat a snack (i.e. take a break).

**AVOID GETTING STUCK:** If you can't figure something out, skip it, and get help later. However, skipping everything is not allowed.

**DIVIDE AND CONQUER:**

Break your projects up into smaller bits, and complete those bits one by one.

**SET MILESTONES:**

Setting milestones help to manage the time and task better. You can also set rewards for reaching those milestones.

**REWARD YOURSELF:** The reward can be small, like treating yourself to some ice cream, or larger, like buying that new outfit you have had your eye on. Rewards also don't have to cost money, like going to play some basketball with some friends at the park. Enjoy yourself when you pass a milestone, stick to your reward plans to make them worth the effort.

**REVIEW REGULARLY:** Regular reviewing benefits taking stock of the work done. We have said this before. It's important. Better read it again. Also monitor your progress at reasonable

periods and make changes where necessary. If you find that you are consistently allotting more time than necessary to a specific chore, change your future schedule accordingly.

**SAY NO TO DISTRACTIONS:** No matter how attractive they are unless, of course, its on the schedule.

Time management is an important component of an effective study habit. Individuals have their own ways of managing time. Try using this grid while managing your time-urgent and important, urgent but not important, not urgent but important and neither urgent nor important.

When planning study time for your exams, answer these two questions. How much time do I need to devote to studying for the exam and how much time do I have to study for this exam?

It's fairly easy to determine the answer for the second question. But the first question calls to arrive at a definite answer. Your answer can be accurate or near accurate if you ask yourself the following questions.

- \* How much time do I usually spend studying for this type of exam? What results have I got? (if you usually spend three hours and you are getting D grades, perhaps you need to reassess the time spent?

- \* What grade do I feel get?

- \* What special study do I have to do?

- \* Organise the material you need to study, pace yourself and check to see how much hour of review. How does this compare to what you

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have left to study?

Following these tips will help you secure a good result. What's better you will be stress free during preparations.

***TAKE IT EASY, BOARDS ARE LIKE, ANY OTHER EXAM***

Tufail Ahmad name changed, a class 12 student, is under pressure, His neighbour, Latif, scored 94% in the class 12 Boards a year ago and Tufail Ahmad's parents expect him to perform a lot better. He is not the only one in such a situation. With the Boards just two months away, many students find themselves weighed down by expectations.

As Dr. Jitendra Nagpal, a senior psychiatrist at Moolchand Meditly pointed out, comparisons with other students, parental expectations, and peer pressure are major concerns for students attempting their Board exams.

"These concerns bog students down, leading to severe examination stress which can be defined as a feeling of anxiety over one's performance, the results and reaction of parents and friends," he said.

A class 10 student admitted to having a tough time dealing with parental pressure. "If parents, don't force their expectations on the students, they can make their own goals and achieve them. When I have made my target of the day on a certain amount of syllabus that I will cover, my parents shouldn't force me to study more". A parent admitted that "With college admissions becoming difficult these days, is an increased

parental pressure on children".

Much harm can be caused by expectations, said a parental coach. Parental expectations driven by their social standing can hamper a student's performance. It is imperative to create a comfort zone and generate a "we are with you" feeling among children, especially during exams", said the parental coach.

As to how is he dealing with parental pressure, a student from the Indian School said; I want to become a doctor but my parents expect me to join the family business after finishing my studies. Seeing my unfinishing dedication, they accepted it, and gave me five years to turn my dream into a reality.

***DO NOT IGNORE YOUR EYES***

1. Take a five minute break after every 50 minutes of studying as a regular routine.
2. Make sure the room has enough light. Studying in a dark room leads to eye strain.
3. If your eyes start aching and you can't see clearly while reading, you may require glasses, see an eye specialist.
4. Blink frequently whenever you study for long periods at a time. Blinking helps in keeping your eyes moist.
5. Sleep for 7-8 hours for optimal eye comfort.
6. Wash your hands properly before using contact lenses.
7. Drink plenty of water.