

Islam: A Religion of Peace

Islam is a monotheistic religion that is currently severely misunderstood and misinterpreted in the minds of many westerners today; it has moreover been degraded and associated with violence, war, and actions that are inhumane because of religiously motivated terrorism and the links that have been forged, wrongly so, by terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda, ISIS, Taliban, and Boko Haram. The fact remains that Islamic extremists in the Middle East and elsewhere globally advocating terrorism as a means to an end by preaching a version of Islam so extreme and fabricated made up rhetoric are in practical purpose contradicting the true principles upon which the spiritual edifice of Islam is structured. A true reading of Islam reveals that Islam is a religion of peace and justice and from its core values emanates respect for life and human dignity, affecting all ideals and actions that guide the day to day life of the Muslim.

It is a mistake to form any idea of that religion from the activities of some vested extremist groups. The best way to understand Islam is through its holy source. The holy source of Islam is the Qur'an; and the model of morality in the Qur'an is completely different from the image of it formed in the minds of some westerners. The Qur'an is based on the concepts of morality, love, compassion, mercy, modesty, self-sacrifice, tolerance and peace, and a Muslim who truly lives according to these moral precepts is highly refined, thoughtful, tolerant, trustworthy and accommodating. To those around him he gives love, respect, peace of mind and a sense of the joy of life.

The word Islam means submission to Allah the Almighty, the Creator and Lord of all creation, with the entire soul and body, by obedience. According to Quranic Principles, Allah is the most beneficent and merciful who knows all man's rightful needs, who enjoins all that is good and warns against all that is evil. Thus, according to Islamic teachings Allah's revealed Law is perfectly suited to the universal needs, rights and responsibilities of man

The concept of peace finds prominence in the teachings of Islam. The word "Salam" means "Peace" and is derived from the same Arabic three letter root SLM as the word Islam. The root word of Islam is 'Silm', which means peace. So the spirit of Islam is the spirit of peace. The first verse of the Quran breathes the spirit of peace; it reads: "In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate." This verse is repeated in the Quran no less than 114 times. It shows the great importance Islam attaches to such values as Mercy and Compassion. One of God's names, according to the Quran, is As-Salaam, which means Peace. Moreover, the Quran states that the Prophet Muhammad was sent to the world as a mercy to mankind. A perusal of the Qur'an shows that most verses of the Qur'an (and also the Hadith) are based on peace and kindness, either directly or indirectly. The ideal society, according to the Qur'an is Dar as-Salam, that is, the house of peace.

Islam, a religion of mercy, does not permit terrorism. In the Quran, God has said:

“God does not forbid you from showing kindness and dealing justly with those who have not fought you about religion and have not driven you out of your homes. God loves just dealers.”

According to the Qur'an, one of the greatest sins is to kill a human being who has committed no fault:

“...If someone kills another person - unless it is in retaliation for someone else or for causing corruption in the earth - it is as if he had murdered all mankind. And if anyone gives life to another person, it is as if he had given life to all mankind. Our Messengers came to them with Clear Signs but even after that many of them committed outrages in the earth”.

Thus, the religion of Islam and the moral teaching of the Qur'an are not the supporters of terrorism and the terrorists, but the remedy by which the world can be saved from the scourge of terrorism. The moral teaching offered to humanity by Islam is one that will bring peace, happiness and justice to the world