

## ISLAM CONDEMNS VIOLENCE

"Not only did the terrorists hijack planes and destroy life, but they also hijacked the peaceful religion of Islam and split the brother and sisterhood of mankind." (Yusuf Islam)

### The sanctity of Human Life

Al- Quran 6:151

"...take not life, which God hath made sacred, except by way of justice and law: thus doth He command you, that ye may learn wisdom." Islam considers all life forms as sacred. However, the sanctity of human life is accorded a special place. The first and the foremost basic right of a human being is the right to live. The Glorious Quran says:

Al- Quran 5:32

"...if any one slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people."

Such is the value of a single human life, that the Quran equates the taking of even one human life unjustly, with killing all of humanity. Thus, the Quran prohibits homicide in clear terms. The taking of a criminal's life by the state in order to administer justice is required to uphold the rule of law, and the peace and security of the society. Only a proper and competent court can decide whether an individual has forfeited his right to life by disregarding the right to life and peace of other human beings.

Islam enjoins upon all Muslims to work actively to maintain the balance in which God created everything. Terrorizing the civilian population can never be termed as jihad and can never be reconciled with the teachings of Islam.

Al- Quran 5:2

"Do not let your hatred of a people incite you to aggression."

Al- Quran 5:8

"And do not let ill-will towards any folk incite you so that you swerve from dealing justly. Be just; that is nearest to heedfulness"

Al- Quran 16:90

God commands justice and doing good and giving to relatives. And He forbids indecency and doing wrong and tyranny. He warns you so that hopefully you will pay heed.

### **History of Tolerance**

Muslims ruled Spain for roughly 800 years. During this time, and up until they were finally forced out, the non-Muslims there were alive and flourishing. Additionally, Christian and Jewish minorities have survived in the Muslim lands of the Middle East for centuries. Countries such as Egypt, Morocco, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan all have significant Christian and/or Jewish populations.

This is not surprising to a Muslim, for his faith prohibits him from forcing others to see his point of view. The Glorious Quran says:

Al- Quran 2:256

“Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And God heareth and knoweth all things.”

From the Life of the Prophet

Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) sent a message to the monks of Saint Catherine in Mount Sinai:

"This is a message written by Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, far and near, we are behind them. Verily, I defend them by myself, the servants, the helpers, and my followers, because Christians are my citizens; and by Allah! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be changed from their jobs, nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims' houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God's covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they (Christians) are my allies and have my secure charter against all that

they hate. No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, this is not to take place without her own wish. She is not to be prevented from going to her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation is to disobey this covenant till the Day of Judgment and the end of the world."

### Islam – The Great Unifier

Far from being a militant dogma, Islam is a way of life that transcends race and ethnicity. The Glorious Quran repeatedly reminds us of our common origin:

Al- Quran 49:13

"O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)."

Thus, it is the universality of its teachings that makes Islam the fastest growing religion in the world.