

Concepts of Peace and Peacemaking in Islam

Key virtues

Peace

Compassion

Mercy

Forgiveness

Forbearance

Patience

Clemency

Generosity

Justice

Equality

Peace

'Peace is a Word Spoken by a Merciful God!' (Quran 36:58)

- Islamic peacemaking is a teaching and tradition that has the potential to transcend divisions.

58. (It will be said to them): *Salâm* (peace be on you) — a Word from the Lord (Allâh), Most Merciful.

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبِّ رَحِيمٍ ﴿٥٨﴾

Quran 36:58

Islamic Peacebuilding

'It may be that God will grant love [and friendship] between you and those whom ye [now] hold as enemies. For God is Oft-Forgiving, Most-Merciful' (Quran 60:7).

- From a religious or spiritual perspective peacebuilding makes explicit the connection between 'inner' and 'outer' peace

7. Perhaps Allâh will make friendship between you and those whom you hold as enemies. And Allâh has power (over all things), and Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

عَسَىٰ اللَّهُ أَن يَجْعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الَّذِينَ عَادَيْتُمْ
مِنْهُمْ مَّوَدَّةً ۗ وَاللَّهُ قَدِيرٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٧﴾

Quran 60:7

Peace

Negative peace refers to the absence of violence but can include latent conflicts

Positive peace is the restoration of relationships, establishment of justice, and the creation of just social systems that serve the needs of the whole population

Peace is the framework within which conflicts unfold non-violently and creatively into positive change

Diversity and Unity

‘O humankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain hath spread abroad a multitude of men and women.’ (Quran 4:1)

*In the Name of Allâh,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.*

1. O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwâ (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allâh through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship)¹¹¹. Surely, Allâh is Ever an All-Watcher over you.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ
وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا
وِنِسَاءً وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ

إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾



(Quran 4:1)

Diversity and co-existence

'O mankind! We created you from a single [pair] of a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may come to know one another. Verily the most honoured among you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you. (49:13).

'And had your Lord so willed, He could have surely made all human beings into one single community: but (He willed it otherwise, and so) they continue to hold divergent views' (11:118).

118. And if your Lord had so willed, He could surely have made mankind one *Ummah* [nation or community (following one religion i.e. Islâm)], but they will not cease to disagree.

وَلَوْ شَاءَ رَبُّكَ لَجَعَلَ النَّاسَ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً
وَلَا يَزَالُونَ مُخْتَلِفِينَ ﴿١١٨﴾

(Quran 11:118)

Tolerance and co-existence

256. There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in *Tâghût*¹¹ and believes in Allâh, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allâh is All-Hearer, All-Knower.

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ
أَسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ
سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿٢٥٦﴾

(Quran 2:256)

2. "I worship not that which you worship,
3. "Nor will you worship that which I worship.
4. "And I shall not worship that which you are worshipping.
5. "Nor will you worship that which I worship.
6. "To you be your religion, and to me my religion

لَا أَعْبُدُ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٢﴾
وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٣﴾
وَلَا أَنَا عَابِدٌ مَّا عَبَدْتُمْ ﴿٤﴾
وَلَا أَنْتُمْ عَابِدُونَ مَا أَعْبُدُ ﴿٥﴾
لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ ﴿٦﴾

(Quran 109:1)

Sacredness of life and Non-violence

29. O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves unjustly except it be a trade amongst you, by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves (nor kill one another). Surely, Allâh is Most Merciful to you.^[1]

يَتَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ
بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَطْلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً
عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِّنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا ﴿٢٩﴾

(Quran 4:29)

32. Because of that We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land — it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind. And indeed, there came to them Our Messengers with clear proofs, evidences, and signs, even then after that many of them continued to exceed the limits (e.g. by doing oppression unjustly and exceeding beyond the limits set by Allâh by committing the major sins) in the land!^[1]

مِنَ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ
مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا
فَكَأَنَّهَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ
جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ
بَعَدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

(Quran 5:32)

Forgiveness and reconciliation

40. The recompense for an evil is an evil like thereof; but whoever forgives and makes reconciliation, his reward is with Allâh. Verily, He likes not the *Zâlimûn*

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ
فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الظَّالِمِينَ ﴿٤٠﴾

(Quran 42:40)

96. Repel evil with that which is better. We are Best-Acquainted with the things they utter.

ادْفَعْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ السَّيِّئَةِ نَحْنُ أَعْلَمُ
بِمَا يَصِفُونَ ﴿٩٦﴾

(Quran 23:96)

‘...repel evil (not with evil) but with something that is better (*ahsan*) - that is, with forgiveness and amnesty.’ (Quran 23:96)

Reconciliation – key concepts

Sulh (صلح)

Peace, defined in opposition to conflict or war. Establishment of peace (a situation of non-conflict) between groups, an agreement or truce or settlement between groups to halt and prevent further conflict or violence. Establishing communal unity and peace, often through a visible public action negotiated by mediators working with both groups.

Musalaha (مصالحة)

Reconciliation between groups

Islah, al-Islah (الإصلاح, إصلاح)

Usually means 'reform', improve, but also used for the process of reconciliation

Reconciliation

- The concept has religious roots
- Is often not just *an* important issue, but *the most* critical one in any protracted conflict
- At the most basic level, reconciliation is all about individuals. It cannot be forced on people. They have to decide on their own whether to [forgive](#) and reconcile with their one-time adversaries.

Reconciliation

Stages in reconciliation process

- Truth (coming to acknowledge there is some merit to the other side's interpretation of events),
- Justice (gaining redress as a means of putting the past to rest),
- Mercy regard (forgiveness on the part of victims), and
- Security (expectations of peaceful coexistence)

Islam and Reconciliation

- Reconciliation is not just a physical process, but involves personal healing and, ultimately, forgiveness.
- ‘The recompense of an injury is an injury the like thereof; but whoever forgives and thereby brings about a re-establishment of harmony, his reward is with God; and God loves not the wrongdoers.’
(Quran 42:40)

Mediation, reconciliation and arbitration

- Differences from 'western' understandings
- Consultation, reconciliation, arbitration, settlement
- Justice (*qist*, *'adl*)
- Person / interest / position distinctions in 'western' mediation approaches
- But a number of useful approaches that can be used in certain settings

Balance and moderation against extremism

1851. It was narrated that Ibn 'Abbas said: The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to me on the morning of Muzdalifah: "Pick up (pebbles) for me." I picked up for him small pebbles (the size of broad beans). When I put them in his hand, he said: "Yes, like these. And beware of going to extremes in religious matters, for those who came before you were destroyed because of going to extremes in religious matters."

Comments: [Its *isnad* is *saheeh*]

١٨٥١ - حَدَّثَنَا هُشَيْمٌ : أَخْبَرَنَا عَوْفٌ عَنْ زِيَادِ
ابْنِ حُصَيْنٍ ، عَنْ أَبِي الْعَالِيَةِ ، عَنْ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ
قَالَ : قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ : عِدَاةَ جَمْعٍ :
« هَلُمَّ التُّطَّ لِي » فَلَقَطْتُ لَهُ حَصِيَّاتٍ ، هُنَّ
حَصَى الْحَدْفِ ، فَلَمَّا وَضَعَهُنَّ فِي يَدِهِ ، قَالَ :
« نَعَمْ ، بِأَمْثَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْغُلُوَّ فِي
الدِّينِ ، فَإِنَّمَا هَلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ بِالْغُلُوِّ فِي
الدِّينِ » . [راجع : ١٨٢١]

تخریج : إسناده صحيح.

Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Hadith no. 1851

'Truly, the religion is ease. Anyone who tries to outdo the religion in strictness, it will overcome him. So remain steadfast and be moderate, and seek help with journeys of the morning and evening and a part of the night.' Bukhari, Mishkat al-Masabih (Book of Prayer) no. 12

Other conceptual points

Individual **choice** – there is always a choice and always a choice to do good, and treat others with justice, generosity and kindness.

Individual **responsibility** – towards God, oneself and towards living in peace and harmony with others

Sacredness of life

Very strong aversion to disorder, discord and chaos

Patience and perseverance

Hospitality and the treatment of a stranger

Historical events that are based on negotiating treaties, truces and peace

Thank you!