

by Imam Zafrullah Domun

Main Points:

A Muslim should be peaceful. A Muslim should practice self-control. Extract from Promised Messiah's writing of how we should behave. Comments on consequence of massacre in France. Hypocrisy of the West. The God that we should believe in. Counteract negative portrayal of the Holy Prophet by reciting more *Darood* on him.

After reciting the *Tashahhud*, the *Ta'uz* and the *Sura Al Fatiha* of the Holy Quran, Imam Zafrullah Domun said:

The true Muslim is a man or a woman of peace. When I say "true" I mean that Muslim man or woman who understands well all the fundamental teachings of Islam and does his or her best to put them into practice. You will all recall that our beloved prophet Mohammad (saw) gave the definition of a Muslim as someone who protects others from the harm of his tongue and that of his hands. Many might say that this is a very simple definition and most Muslims fall into that category. But unless and until all those who come into contact with us know that no harm will befall them we will fail in projecting that real definition of a Muslim as was wished by the Holy Prophet Mohammad (saw). As a husband, as a wife, as a son or a daughter, as a son in law or a daughter in law, as a brother or a sister as a neighbor or just as a coreligionist, as a citizen of any country we should understand that as a Muslim we should do no harm to anyone. If it happens that we have not been able to control ourselves and we happened to harm anyone we should as soon as possible present apologies and make appropriate amends for the wrong that we might have done. This is what is expected from a Muslim in his dealings with all those around him. I remember when I was young I read a quotation from one of the great Chinese philosophers who said "If you want peace in the land start by yourself. When there is peace in you there will be peace within the family, the city and eventually in the whole of society." These were not his exact words. It is a paraphrase of what he really said because I am quoting from memory. Anyhow it does give an idea of how we can go about spreading peace in society. These words are to be meditated upon in order to

understand what each one amongst us can contribute towards making our society more peaceful.

A Muslim is expected to learn and practice self-control. In order to get a great measure of self-control one should learn to be patient and to hold one's tongue. Very often we see especially amongst couples that a few misplaced words create a lot of dissension. We all should learn to speak the appropriate word "*qawlan sadida*" if we really seek marital and domestic bliss. Members of different groups, different Jamaats should behave amongst themselves in a brotherly and sisterly way. This is an important matter on which we should all reflect. In fact Hazrat Masih Maood (as) says:

“Be kind and merciful to humanity for all are His creatures: do not oppress them with your tongues or hands or in any other way. Always work for the good of mankind. Never unduly assert yourself with pride over others, even those who are placed under you. Never use abusive language for anyone even though he abuses you. Be humble in spirit, kind and gentle and forgiving, sympathetic towards all and wishing them well so that you should be accepted. There are many who pretend to be kind and gentle and forgiving but inside they are wolves. There are many who on the outside look pure but inside they are like serpents. You cannot be accepted in the presence of the Lord unless you are pure both on the outside and the inside.”

This is a small paragraph from the book “Noah's Ark”. As an Ahmadi Muslim who has joined the Jamaat of the Promised Messiah we are not allowed to discriminate between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. It is forbidden to us to abuse someone because he is a non-Muslim. It is expected of us that we should deal fairly with Muslims and non-Muslims. It is unfortunate that because some Muslims fail to understand the teachings of Islam as the Promised Messiah has explained them that we see that there are plenty of strife in many Muslim countries. It is forbidden for a good Muslim to abuse those who abuse him or her.

We all know about the massacre of some journalists in France last week. Islam does not allow anyone to go and kill journalists for what they publish. Out of their ignorance these journalists think that it is their right to ridicule everything even religion and personalities who are dear to a large group of people. They say they do so in order to defend freedom of speech. But it is debatable whether freedom of speech means that you can hurt the feelings of 1.6 billion Muslims around the world. Nonetheless the teachings of Islam do not allow us to respond to this abuse by abuse or by violence.

Western countries are hypocritical in their attitudes. They have created Israel on Arab lands in 1948 although they did nothing when Jews were being butchered by Hitler. Do not ever think that they lifted their little finger for the Jews. They fought the Second World War because they fought Hitler who wanted to extend the German empire throughout Europe and they expected it to last 1000 years. The western powers came to know about concentration camps by the end of the war. The persecution of Jews has been going on throughout Europe for centuries and it culminated with Hitler's plan to eliminate them all. But for those who are aware of the true history Jews have enjoyed protection throughout the Ottoman Empire for about three centuries and they were quite safe in Spain under Muslim rule.

The state of Israel has been created by the Americans. This is a long history and since its creation Jews are being protected by the Americans. In France there is a law that forbids anyone to deny that the holocaust existed. These people would be accused of being anti-Semitism. So even there and in many other countries there are exception to what they call free speech. In fact in Article 10 of the European convention on Human Rights there are several exceptions to the freedom of speech. Some of them are "interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, prevention of disorder or crime, protection of health or morals, protection of the reputation or the rights of others, preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary". But when Muslims ask them to pass laws to make the lampooning of the prophet an offense they refuse. This is their double standards.

After the massacre of last Wednesday the same newspaper has issued another edition of its paper with a cartoon of the Holy prophet on its cover. The usual circulation of this weekly was around 60,000 copies and this special edition has been published in 16 languages and its circulation is 5 million. There is no doubt that this action of theirs is offensive to all Muslims. But we do not say that anyone should go and kill those who are responsible. The time is for patience and prayer. Some Muslim countries and journalists have expressed their disgust at this provocation. Unfortunately many newspapers around the western world have published this cover on their first page in the name of freedom of speech. Some have refrained and amongst them is the Dutch newspaper that published the cartoons about the Holy Prophet (saw) in 2005. A spokesman for the paper said that they were afraid of reprisals. It seems they have learned their lessons.

By Allah's Grace the values that the Holy Prophet (saw) has taught us through Islam are far more important than the values held by the West. Many in West have espoused values that have eliminated God from their existence. In Islam what we are taught makes Allah the center of our existence. Western societies are materialistic and they do not care at all

for what is spiritual and that is why they promote values which descry religion. We members of Jamaat Ahmadiyya have a great responsibility in teaching others what the true values of Islam are and how they should be practiced. Fortunately Allah sent the Promised Messiah and he came to teach us how to really practice Islam and how we should behave towards others. Concerning Allah you will recall that he said:

“Relevant to a proper observance of my teaching it is essential that one should firmly believe that there is an all-Powerful, all- Sustaining Supreme Being, the Creator of everything, Change-less, Everlasting and Eternal. He does not beget, nor was He begotten. He is Holy, so that there is no need or occasion for Him to go on the cross or suffer in any way or be subject to death. He is such that being far removed, He is still very near; and being very near He is very far. Although He is One and absolutely unique, His manifestations are diverse and multifarious. Whenever there occurs in man a new change, for the changed man He becomes a new God, dealing with him on the basis of a fresh manifestation, the man witnessing a change in God in proportion to the change in himself; Not that there occurs any change in God, He being Eternal, Changeless and most Perfect in Himself, but with every change in a man for the better, God also reveals Himself to him in a fresh and clearer manifestation. With every progressive effort on the part of man God also shows Himself to him with higher and more powerful manifestations. He displays an extraordinary manifestation of His Power and glory only, when man shows an extraordinary change in himself –this being the root and the bedrock basis of the marvels and miracles witnessed at the hands of all servants of God. Belief in this God, with these powers, is the foremost essential condition of our movement. Inculcate this belief in your hearts, giving priority over all considerations of the self over its comforts and relationships. By means of actions in the field of your daily life, with unflinching courage, show a steadfast loyalty in His way. Others in this world do not give Him preference over material means and the support they get from their friends and relations. But do you give him the first place, so that in heaven you should come to be reckoned His own people.....”

How grateful we should be to Allah who out of His sheer Grace has sent us Hazrat Masih Maood (as) with such noble teachings. These are the teachings that can bring about peace in the world. His are the teachings that can help brothers to live peaceably with their kind. These are the teachings that ennoble the human soul so that it might soar as high as it is destined to. These are the teachings that have been given to us so that we might practice them in our daily life and enrich ourselves spiritually thereby. So we should pause and reflect how far we are keen in putting these teachings into practice even if others ridicule us. The teachings of Islam are the best. They provide for the smooth development of all human faculties in all domains of life. Unfortunately because in some Muslim countries there have been abuse in the implementation of these teachings that

some people are saying that our teachings are not good at all for the modern world. However that is not the case. Allah makes it quite clear that the teachings of the Holy Quran lead to what is best. It is therefore incumbent upon each Ahmadi Muslim to teach others that our ideas, our practices are the best and they can sow the seeds of peace in the world. Unfortunately Muslim countries are plagued with leaders who think that they have a sort of divine right to lead the people and to impose their interpretations on the world. Had Muslim leaders understood their own responsibilities and how they should have strived to work for their own people and the Muslim Umma at large Islam would have become a very powerful force for doing good in the world. We should not make any mistake about it that the western powers, despite their public declarations, do not want Muslim countries to progress because they know that sooner or later they would be overtaken. They use all the means at their disposal to foment trouble in Muslim countries and make it appear as if these troubles are homegrown. Since the Second World War there have been many such examples. All the great powers namely England, France and the United States have been particularly guilty of ruining what Muslims try to construct.

To counteract what these people say negatively on the Holy Prophet (saw) let us respond by sending even more Darood on him. Our teachings impose upon us to be patient in the face of great provocation. Let us commit this affair in the Hands of Allah and let Him deal with these people in the best way that He decides. May Allah help each Muslim in the world who is aggrieved by the cartoons on the Holy Prophet to remain patient and resigned. Of course those who can should write books and articles to show that the Holy Prophet (saw) was not at all what they try to depict him to be. May Allah be with us and help us all. Ameen.