

Love for All Hatred For None

A Peaceful Message to the World

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven...

(Matthew 5:44-45)

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By Navida Sayed – UK

Burning Scriptures – a Biblical teaching?

On the ninth anniversary of September 11th, 2001, a Christian evangelical church in the United States of America, the Dove World Outreach Centre, is planning to hold a 'Burn a Koran day', citing Islam as an evil religion and claiming that 'Islam is of the devil'. The centre is defending its plans by referring to a Biblical reference from The Acts of the Apostles chapter 19 Verse 19.

And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, we adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

(Acts 19:11-20)

This is the only such incident of "book burning" recorded in the New Testament. However, for verse 19:19 to be used in support of Christians gathering together to burn the scriptures of other faiths

publicly is not logical and is unsupported by any other Christian teaching. The scrolls that are burnt in this verse are burnt by their owners themselves, the implication being that they are aware that what is contained within is not truthful and they fear being disgraced as those who had been using Jesus' name to drive out demons were disgraced. They openly confess their actions and then burn the scrolls to show they are putting an end to such practices in the future.

This is a completely different scenario from the one being presented by the Dove centre to justify burning the Qur'an. In fact burning a Holy book of believers of another faith was not and could not have been the teaching of Jesus, who taught love, compassion and forgiveness.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

(Matthew 5:5)

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

(Matthew 5:7)

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 5:9-10)

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and unjust

(Matthew 5:43-45)

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

(Matthew 6:14-15)

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

(Matthew 7:1-2)

And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

(Mark 11:25)

And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

(Matthew 9:10-13)

In light of these clear teachings we urge the Dove World Outreach Centre to reflect upon the peaceful message of Jesus (peace be upon him) which is clearly a message of peace, not hatred.

Burning – an act of hatred not harmony

Burning the Holy Qur'an would be a most provocative act and would achieve nothing but to cause distress and anger to millions of peace-loving people worldwide. We believe that burning any religious scripture is directly contrary to the teachings of not just Christianity (as explained above) but all of the world's major religions.

Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.

(Psalm 97:10)

Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another.....

(Ephesians 4.32)

Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

(Proverbs 20:22)

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

(Romans 12:17-18)

(All Biblical references from the King James version)

The Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, His Holiness, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad has said that religious extremism of all kinds had to be eradicated. He said:

“Religious extremism, be it Christian extremism, Muslim extremism or any other kind is never a true reflection of the religion. Indeed a number of churches have condemned this act. There is nothing wrong with intellectual or theological debate but this should be conducted within the bounds of decency and tolerance. Instead what we are seeing is hatred being spread.”

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community has always expressed deep concern that some so called Muslims have tarnished Islam's name with their cruel and hate filled acts. Those who perpetrate such acts fail to realise the true teachings of Islam. The Holy Qur'an was sent as a gift to mankind and its teachings are filled with love, tolerance and respect. It is through such attributes that we can achieve peace, an objective that His Holiness has repeatedly emphasised saying:

“The world needs peace, love and brotherhood. The world needs an end to wars. Instead of walls of hatred being erected we need peace to prevail and for this to occur people of all faiths must join together. As I said there is nothing wrong with debates but they should take place in a peaceful and respectful environment.”

We would like to reiterate that Islam categorically

rejects and condemns every form of terrorism. It does not provide any cover or justification for any act of violence, be it committed by an individual, a group or a government. According to Islam, no religion can sanction violence and bloodshed of innocent men, women and children in the name of God, since all religions came from God Who sent His prophets to create peace.

The Holy Qur'an champions the sanctity of life:

...whosoever killed a person – unless it be for killing a person or for creating disorder in the land – it shall be as if he killed all mankind; and whoso gave life to one, it shall be as if he had given life to all mankind.

[Ch.5: V.33] (Translated by Maulawi Sher Ali)

This verse leaves no doubt that in Islam there is no justification whatsoever for terrorism.

We invite the world to open a civilised dialogue and to study Islam at first hand in light of its true teachings and in light of a community that reflects its most peaceful message.

The premise of Ahmadiyya Muslims is '**Love for All, Hatred for None**' – a peaceful and inclusive motto that extends to our Christian and Jewish brothers and sisters and indeed all of God's creation.

We hope that by engaging in civilised dialogue we can build bridges, remove misunderstandings about Islam and Christianity and lead the way together to create a more peaceful and harmonious society.

Views on the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community

"All of us hugely admire the work of the Ahmadiyya Community here in the United Kingdom as we do across the world."

Rt. Hon. Jack Straw MP, former Justice Secretary UK

"... if the world was lived by the Ahmadiyya principle of 'Love for All, Hatred for None', then human rights workers, peace activists, and the many fine NGOs working on conflict resolution would all be redundant and could go home. You set a fantastic example in the Ahmadiyya community to the rest of us, not only in publishing that slogan but putting it into practice in your own lives."

Lord Eric Avebury (Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs, and Founder of the Parliamentary All Party Human Rights Group)

"In the past hundred years you have given so much to the society in the United Kingdom and to societies everywhere globally. You are among those who give and do not only take. You give so much to so many societies that I have seen and felt and listened to and watched. I believe that in the next hundred years we all have to come together and we have to fight and fight and fight again to take discrimination off the face of the earth."

Baroness Emma Nicholson (former MEP, Vice President of the Foreign Affairs Committee and Member of the EU Human Rights Committee)

"Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community are renowned throughout the world for their devotion to peace, universal brotherhood and the Will of God. Wherever Ahmadis live in the world, you are renowned for enthusiastically participating in the larger community."

The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, the Prime Minister of Canada