

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ①

Allah – As-Salam: The Source of Peace!

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْمَلِكُ
ٱلْقُدُّوسُ ٱلسَّلَامُ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُ ٱلْمُهَيْمِنُ
ٱلْعَزِيزُ ٱلْجَبَّارُ ٱلْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۖ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ
عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ ②

“He is Allah, and there is no god beside Him, the Sovereign, the Holy One, the Source of Peace, the Bestower of security, the Protector, the Almighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is Allah, far above anything they associate with Him as His partners.”

(Surah Al-Hashr -- 59:24)

In this Ayah of the Holy Qur'an **that I just recited** from Surah Al-Hashr, along with some other Beautiful Names of Allah, His name ***As-Salam*** is also mentioned. Elaborating Allah's name ***As-Salam***, Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as) in *The Philosophy of the Teaching of Islam* says:

“He is the Source of Peace, that is to say, He is the God who is fully safeguarded against all imperfections, afflictions and hardships. Not only that, He provides peace and security for all. This meaning is obvious that if He Himself had been afflicted with misfortunes, or was to be killed by people, and He was to be frustrated in His designs, then on seeing such bad examples how the hearts could be satisfied that such a God would surely deliver them from misfortunes?”

(The Philosophy of the Teaching of Islam, p. 101)

Therefore, it is extremely important for us to have a clear understanding of this beautiful name **As- Salam**. This name designates Allah's special attribute of being the SOURCE OF

PEACE. Once we have proper insight of this special attribute of Allah, it would become easy for us to make a stronger connection with Him, to mould our lives accordingly and ultimately to feel secure and protected being at peace with Allah, with His creatures, and with our own selves.

As explained by Hadhrat Masih-e-Maud (as), our God *As-Salam* is fully safeguarded against all imperfections, afflictions and hardships; He is fully secured from any harm or suffering. However, some world religions, ancient and modern, make a compromise with God being fully safeguarded, and being above pain or suffering.

For example, in India some of the Hindu gods and goddesses are worshipped who were either killed by others or they themselves had committed suicide. Such is their goddess Chinnamasta who is shown as standing with her own severed

head in one hand and a sword with which she cut her head in the other hand, and jets of blood are shown spurting out of her bleeding neck.

Similarly, another Hindu god is worshipped in some parts of India by the name of Aravan. He committed suicide as a self-sacrifice to win the favor of the famous and terrible Hindu goddess named Kali.

In South America, during Maya civilization, according to Aztec faith traditions, to provide sustenance to the universe their gods sacrificed themselves; and by self-immolation they helped mankind to survive and enjoy the pleasures of life. The stars, the moon, the sun, the earth and the crops were all sustained, according to the Aztec religious beliefs, because the gods were sacrificing their own flesh and blood continuously for the sake of human nourishment. Therefore, human sacrifice was a part of their

religious tradition, because in that manner they thought they could repay their debt back to their gods for their sacrifices.

In Christianity, to save mankind from the punishment of the original sin committed by Adam and Eve, God Himself took the form of a man as His only begotten son to suffer death for the sake of humanity. He was inflicted with all sorts of physical pains and torture. He was arrested, beaten up, nailed down on a wooden cross, thirsted for water and bled to death.

Not only the God in the person of God's son suffered death, later on, in 1882, a German thinker by the name of Friedrich Nietzsche, who himself was a son of a Lutheran priest, declared that the heavenly God himself was also dead. And thus the phrase "God is dead" became popular in the Western thought.

In Judaism, during the Holocaust, when millions of Jews went through the horrendous sufferings, some of their thinkers also started to question the nature of God: How can God be so weak or

unconcerned by remaining merely a spectator of so many Jews being tortured and killed, and Him not doing anything? They concluded either God was dead, or that God Himself was a victim of all those sufferings along with the Jews!

In Islam, in contrast with all such concepts where God is neither secure from harm, nor at peace with himself, Allah is *As-Salam* -- He is above and beyond all weaknesses, inflictions, sufferings and self-imposed injuries and death. He is fully safeguarded and secure, and He is the Source of Peace and Security for mankind. It is mankind that needs peace and security through Him.

We know that maintaining peace has always been a major concern and a great challenge for mankind throughout history; but perhaps sustaining peace has never been as crucial in the past as it is at present time. Currently, mankind seems to be in full rebellion against God. Sinfulness and atheism are on the rise everywhere.

Our personal peace –peace of the hearts -- is fully disturbed through constant fear, distress and anxiety in our daily lives. And unfortunately the world at large is engaged in numerous bloody conflicts, and the danger of a disastrous global nuclear war that can annihilate a vast number of people and devastate a major portion of our natural environment is looming as a real threat.

Bloodshed is occurring daily in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon, Egypt, Gaza, Pakistan, Kashmir, Burma, Somalia, Mali and Uganda – to name only a few places. Many of these violent conflicts are carried out most viciously along ethnic and religious lines. Armies, terrorist organizations, guerrilla forces and irregular militias are battling each other. At times rebellious mobs fight against forces of their own governments. Consequently helpless civilians are becoming their targets. In addition to innumerable deaths, thousands upon thousand men, women and children are injured and are being displaced. The number of refugees is mind-boggling! Property and infra-structures are

severely damaged. Arms sales are increasing; military expenditures are rising; world economy is being derailed; and a threat of nuclear war is now very much heightened.

Not only that, in many countries drug lords and their armed gangs are playing havoc and destroying peace of our communities! In addition to all this, another big cause of the loss of peace is increased immoral behavior at domestic and social levels. Modern technology has provided various tools, making the moral and ethical lines blur, and causing a rapid decline in mental tranquility and social peace. Thus, the body, mind and soul – all are anxiously looking for peace to be attained and sustained at all levels.

Without any doubt, this tremendous loss of peace in every shape and form is due to one major factor: It is that mankind is disconnected with Allah *As-Salam* – the real Source and the Reservoir of Peace. Breaking away from *As-Salam* brings disturbance and destruction on mankind.

There is no peace because the personal connection with God --Who is the Fountainhead of Peace -- is broken. There is no peace because the commandments of God *As-Salam* are being ignored. There is no peace because the personal example set by the Messenger of Allah (s.a.w.s.) is not being followed to live a righteous and peaceful life. There is no peace because the world at large has not accepted yet the teachings of the Promised Messiah (as) who was sent by Allah *As-Salaam* to eliminate violence and conflicts that cause bloodshed. There is no peace because humanity is still unwilling to accept the sacred system of Khilafat, which is established by Allah *As-Salam* to bring peace at home, in society and at national and international levels.

Allah the Exalted has given the name “*ISLAM*” to the way of life that He commands us to adopt.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

“Surely, the true religion with Allah is Islam”

(Surah Aal- Imran -- 3:20)

The very name ISLAM means PEACE and SECURITY attained by surrendering one’s rebellious ego to the Will of God. To be a Muslim one cannot imagine any other way but to completely yield to the Will of God, and give up all self-centered desires by resisting all misleading temptations.

To establish peace on earth Allah *As-Salam* commands a most comprehensive teaching:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ
ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ
وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

“Verily Allah commands you to act with Justice, to confer benefits upon others, and to do good to others as one does to one’s close blood-relatives, and forbids evil which pertains to your own selves, and evil which effects others, and prohibits revolt against lawful authority. He warns you that you may remain mindful.” (Surah Al-Nahl--16:91).

Allah *As-Salam* says in the Holy Quran:

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي
الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا^ط وَمَنْ
أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا^ط

“He who killed a person – unless it be for a murder or for creating disorder in the land – it shall be as if he killed all mankind; and whoso saved a life it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind.” (Surah Al-Ma’idah --5:33).

Allah *As-Salam* makes it very clear that He does not love those who create lawlessness, disorder and violence in society:

كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِلْحَرْبِ
أُطْفِئَهَا اللَّهُ^{٦٥} وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَسَادًا^ط وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ^{٦٥}

“Whenever they kindle a fire of war, Allah extinguishes it; and they strive to create disorder in the earth, and Allah loves not those who create disorder.” (Surah Al-Ma’idah -- 5:65)

Allah *As-Salam* makes it very clear to us that once peace and security are established, then peace and tranquility should not be disturbed and all hopes should always be put in the Source of Peace:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا
وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا ۚ إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ
قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٧﴾

“And create not disorder in the earth after it has been set in order, and call upon Him in fear and hope. Surely, the mercy of Allah is close to those who do good.” (Surah Al-A’raf --7:57)

In addition, Allah *As-Salam* also instructs us that family members, neighbors, employees, travelers and even strangers should be given the utmost care and security. The elderly, widows, orphans, the handicapped, poor and needy should be provided all necessary financial and emotional help. These teachings and many more coming from Allah *As-Salam* lay down the foundations of a peaceful society on the firm ground of justice, benevolence, mutual love, respect for human life, respect for law and order, and selfless services rendered to others.

On human level, the perfect example, the best of the very best of such a submission to the will of Allah *As-Salam* and to be safeguarded against all evil designs of his enemies can be found in the person of our beloved Prophet Muhammad Mustafa (s.a.w.s). Allah *As-Salam*'s shining light was upon him each and every moment of his entire life. Allah *As-Salam* kept His promise not only to safeguard the Prophet, but also had promised to protect and safeguard the Holy Quran as well. The original Arabic text as it was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) is exactly the same over the centuries, fully protected and safeguarded. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) not only received the Holy Qur'an as a universal message of peace for all mankind and for all times to come, he was also the Holy Qur'an in action! He was the Holy Qur'an personified. He remained connected with *As-Salam* under bitter persecution by his enemies; many of his followers were tortured and at times savagely murdered. He set his personal example, and his Companions followed him in remaining patient, forbearing, courageous and prayerful for their brutal and vicious

enemies who wanted to kill him and to finish the religion of Islam.

That's why we the Muslims are instructed by Allah *As-Salam*:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

“O, ye who believe! You should invoke blessings on him, and salute him with the salutation of peace!”

(Surah Al-Ahzab -- 33:57)

For the present times, Allah *As-Salam* has sent the Promised Messiah (as) to revive the teaching and practice of peace as set out by the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s). Indeed, the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.s) instructed his Ummah not only to accept the Messiah when he arrives, but also to convey his SALAM to him. Now, this very special and unique instruction of conveying the SALAM of the Holy Prophet (s.a.w.s.) to the Messiah has its own deep significance to the establishment of PEACE through the Promised Messiah (as). That's why one of the revealed names given to the

Promised Messiah (as) by Allah is ***Salamati ka Shehzadah*** -- **the Prince of Peace.** *(Tadhkirah, p.1061)*

The Promised Messiah (as) made it obligatory for all men and women who decide to accept him to follow the Ten Conditions of Ba'a'it which include a pledge “that under the impulse of any passion, he/she shall not cause any harm whatsoever to the creatures of Allah in general, and Muslims in particular, neither by his/her tongue nor by his/her hands nor by any other means” (Condition IV). Another condition is “that he/she shall entirely give up pride and vanity, and shall pass all his/her life in lowliness, humbleness, cheerfulness, forbearance and meekness” (Condition VII); and again another condition is “that he/she shall keep himself/herself occupied in the service of Allah’s creatures, for His sake only, and shall endeavor to benefit mankind to the best of his/her God-given abilities and powers” (Condition IX). What else could be a better foundation for enduring peace than sincerely adopting these conditions and molding our lives accordingly?

After the Promised Messiah (as) passed away, all of his Khulafa have always kept guiding us how to live in peace, and how to resolve the issues of conflict. Under their guidance, the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community have learnt how to remain patient and steadfast under all kinds of persecutions and extreme atrocities inflicted upon them by their opponents.

At international critical times, the Ahmadiyya Khilafat has always fore-warned Heads of States and political leadership of the world to take necessary steps to avert possibility of war. Recently, Khalifatul Masih V, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) advised the political leaders of USA, Britain, Israel and Iran to take concrete steps to avoid war in the Middle East which can spill over and become World War III. Hadhur also addressed the European Parliament in Brussels earlier this month calling for universal peace. Thus, the office of Khilafat e Ahmadiyya is fully engaged in

a continuous process of soliciting and maintaining peace in the world.

To initiate the process of establishing peace, the first step is within our own hearts and thoughts. To start with, we have to have a *Qalb-e-Saleem* – a sound and secure heart – a heart at peace. We need to ask ourselves if our souls have really surrendered to our Loving and Benevolent God *As-Salam*. If we feel a vacuum inside us, then it is time to take heed and start seeking Allah's help most earnestly through prayers and remembrance of *As-Salaam*.

After that, the next step is to start thinking about our attitude towards members of our own families. If our relations with our close relatives -- wives, husbands, siblings, parents, children, and in-laws leave a lot to be desired, then it should be a cause for deep concern for us! The most significant element to maintain domestic harmony is peace between wife and husband! Love and respect, care and service are its ingredients.

Moving forward, peace in society does not come by blunt rivalries, mutual jealousies, and pulling each other down; it comes by serving each other, to be beneficial to others by taking constructive steps to assist each other – by helping others to reach their potential goals, by protecting them from harm – and thus by reflecting Allah’s attribute of *As-Salam* in our social environment.

Similarly, interfaith peace is achieved and maintained, as explained by the Promised Messiah (as) in his last book “Paigham-e-Sulah” (Message of Peace) by better understanding of each others’ faiths through respectful and productive dialogues, by finding good virtues in others, by bringing the commonalities to light, by understanding that all religions were originally initiated by none other than Allah *As-Salam* to establish peace, that is, Islam on the earth.

And above all, we have to pray for our political leadership and policy makers that they stay away from the paths that may lead

to destructive wars. Wars do not solve any problems, but increase human suffering, pain, starvation, and bring loss of countless lives!

Once we have these fundamentals in place, only then we can raise our hopes that our end shall be in peace, and we will be accepted by Allah *As-Salam*, and He will have us in His presence – in His Paradise on this earth and in the Hereafter – in peace and full security.

إِنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ وَعُيُونٍ ۖ
أَدْخُلُوهَا بِسَلَامٍ أَمِينٍ ۝

“Verily, the righteous will be placed amid gardens and fountains.

Enter therein with peace, in security.” (Surah Al-Hijr --15:46. 47)

May Allah grant us all the ability to become deserving of Allah *As-Salam*’s pleasure, so that we all could hear the greeting of peace for us coming from the very Source of Peace:

سَلَامٌ قَوْلًا مِّن رَّبِّ رَحِيمٍ ۝

“Peace – a word of greeting from the Merciful Lord.” Ameen!