

Concept of Peace in World's Major Religions: An Analysis

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Abstract- Peace has been a long cherished dream of humanity since times immemorial; but its relevance and scope in the modern world has increased many-fold. The word Peace having no agreed upon single definition has been explained by some, as tranquility or quiet, freedom from disturbance or conflict, absence or cessation of war, a state of security or order, and a reconciliation after strife etc. It could however be best understood and appreciated by absence of the antonyms like war, conflict, unrest, violence, terrorism, destruction etc. Religion is central to the existence of almost every society and has been defined as “*a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of life and the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a supernatural agency*”

All major religions of Humanity have always prescribed calm and exhorted people for universal brotherhood. Whereas Ahimsa or non-violence forms a cardinal principle of almost all Aryan religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism; the Semitic religions; the Judaism, Christianity and Islam that share the basic concepts of Monotheism, Prophets and Life after death; describe peace and reconciliation among intra and interreligious groups as carrying great rewards in the hereafter. Religions usually incorporate a code of ethics that concern the behavior of the individual; but men don't always live up to the standards they profess.

This paper, tries to analyze with scientific objectivity, the perspective of peace in sacred texts of different 'Major World Religions'; their ethical commandments for peace and war as well as the ways and means of achieving this goal. The paper concludes with the argument that to make the world a better place to live, the religions rather than nation states will have to come forward; promote tolerance, engage in interreligious dialogues and devise a strategy for ending conflicts to reap the dividends of peace with patience and wisdom.

Key words: Dialogue, Islam, Peace, Religion,

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Introduction:

Peace has been a long cherished dream of humanity since times immemorial that always remained a mirage for man. But its relevance and scope in the modern world has increased many fold. The term "peace" has innumerable connotations. The word Peace having no agreed upon single definition has been explained variously as tranquility or quiet, freedom from disturbance or conflict, absence or cessation of war, a state of security or order, and reconciliation after strife. It could however be best understood and appreciated by absence of the antonyms like war, conflict, unrest, violence, terrorism, etc.

The New Webster Dictionary defines peace as:

“A state of tranquility or quiet; freedom from civil disturbance; a state of security or order within a community provided for by law or custom; specifically, absence or cessation of war; a state of reconciliation after strife or enmity etc.”¹

Religion is central to the existence of almost every society and has been defined as “a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of life and the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a supernatural agency”²

All major religions of Humanity have always prescribed calm and exhorted people for universal brotherhood. *Ahimsa* or non-violence forms a cardinal principle of almost all Aryan religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The *Semitic Religions*; the Judaism, Christianity and Islam share the basic concepts of Monotheism, Prophet-hood and Life after death as fundamental beliefs, though they have differences in their *shariahs*. But as regard their teachings all of these prescribe mercy, peace and reconciliation among intra and interreligious groups as carrying great rewards in the hereafter. The widening gulf between essence and praxis of different religions and association of recent escalation of violence with a particular religion demand special attention.

Most religions offer teachings on war and conflict. And over time religion has been at the heart of conflict between nations. Religions usually incorporate a code of ethics that concern the behavior of the individual; but men don't always live up to the standards they profess.²

The relationship between religion and peace in general is quite controversial. ⁴Some scholars, such as Asghar Ali Engineer, argue that Islam as a religion is all peace and does not allow for violence.⁵ⁱ On a wider scale, Engineer generally rejects drawing any integral relationship between any religion, including Islam, and violence. Rather, he sees violence as a social phenomenon that takes place as a result of certain negative conditions in specific societies where religion may be manipulated as a result. What a religion teaches can, therefore, be different from how its followers hold it to be in practice, due to the influence of “self-justifying groups” such as religious or political institutions or cultural traits.⁶

Place in world religions: We have endeavored to find out from holy texts of religions; a) their teachings on peace, b), Restrictions on violence and c), the social phenomena that contribute to creation of peaceful atmosphere among individuals and communities.

1. HINDUISM

Hinduism is the most ancient of all living religion of the world. It was not founded by any individual prophet. Though Hinduism preserves an exhaustive list of sacred scriptures; mainly the *Vedas*, *Upnishads*, *Bhagvad-Gita* and *six Darshanas* form the fundamental scriptures and great storehouses of Hindu philosophy.³ Though it has undergone tremendous changes in essence and praxis over the centuries the original texts speak volumes about its rich heritage. Peace is an essential part of Hinduism. By examining the core teachings of Hinduism, it is possible to demonstrate the way Hinduism guides individuals in accomplishing global peace, through attainment of inner peace.

A Quote from Valmiki Ramayan says: “A superior being doesn't return evil for evil.”

“Speak the truth, speak what is pleasant, but don't speak the unpleasant truth”. *Manusmriti* 4:138.

A Vedic Prayer:

“May there be peace in the heavens, Peace in the atmosphere, peace on earth,

Let there be coolness in water, healing in the herbs;

And peace radiating from trees,

Let there be harmony in the planets, and in the stars,

And perfection in eternal knowledge! May everything in the universe be at peace!

Let peace pervade everywhere at all times!

May I experience that peace with my own heart”

YajurVed, 36:17

Ahimsa (a very important belief in Hinduism) means trying to fight injustice and evil but without using any physical force. Mahatma Gandhi was a great advocate of Ahimsa who, through his ‘*Satyagraha*’ based on peaceful, non-violent protest, successfully led India to freedom. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, “*Gandhi was the first to interpret ahimsa positively and in the sense of a social obligation*”.⁷ Gandhi believed: “*Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.*”⁸

Most religions offer teachings on war and conflict. And over time religion has been at the heart of conflict between nations. The war is not forbidden in Hinduism. The gods of the Vedas are asked to send prayers to help in battles and to take soldiers who are killed in battle straight to the afterlife. The Hindu approach to war and peace are found in many of the scriptures, but the Laws of Manu, the Rig Veda and the *Mahabharata* make important points.

The Mahabharata (in the *Bhagavad Gita*) a sacred text, expresses the Hindu attitude to war and peace through the terrible dilemma faced by Arjuna. Arjuna faced going into battle against his kinsmen, his cousins and teachers and the thought of the slaughter that would follow appalled him. Krishna gave him the advice that it is sometimes necessary to fight a just war to overcome evil forces. Krishna reminds Arjuna that to fight for peace, justice and truth is to fulfill the law of God. ***Bhagavad Gita(2:31) says:*** “Think thou also of thy duty and do not waver. There is no greater good for a warrior than to fight in a righteous war.”

Hindus believe that it is right to use force in self-defense:

“May your weapons be strong to drive away the attackers,
may your arms be powerful enough to check the foes,
let your army be glorious, not the evil-doer.”

Rig Veda 1-39:2

The Laws of Manu tell Hindus about the right ways to behave during war. It says that *Kashatryas* should fight out of duty. “They must show honor and mercy and not attack the elderly, women or children. Also they must not attack people who are asleep or who have surrendered.”

The Rig Veda sets down the rules for conduct during a war as:⁹

“The warrior should not poison the tip of his arrow, he must not attack the sick or the old, a child, or a woman or from behind. These are sinful acts and lead to hell even if the warrior is the winner.” *Rig Veda 6-75:15*

2. BUDHISM

Like all of the major world religions, Buddhism at its core, is a religion of peace. Buddhism, one of the Aryan religions, founded by Gautama Buddha (b.567 BC) is regarded as a Godless religion (*agnostic not atheistic*), for unlike other religions, it doesn't entertain belief in God as a central concept.³ The basis of Buddhism is essentially a moral philosophy or an ethical way of life aimed at personal reform. One of the principles laid down by Buddha makes it abundantly clear.

“*One must renounce all desires and all thoughts of lust, bitterness and cruelty. One must harm no living creature. One must abstain from all killing. One must work in an occupation that benefits others and harms none.*”¹⁰ In Buddhist texts *Ahimsa* (or *avihiṃsā* in Pāli) is part of the Five Precepts (*Pañcasīla*), the first of which has been to abstain from killing. According to Buddha, the true path of salvation is attainable not by worshipping God but by doing good.¹¹

The five commandments of Buddha or *Panchshila*) include:³

- Do not kill any living being.
- Do not take what is not given to you.
- Do not speak untruth.
- Do not take intoxicating drinks.
- Do not commit adultery.

This core teaching of Buddhism is supported by many examples from the sacred texts of this creed. An early Buddhist collection of verses on practice in everyday life, the Pali (Theravadin) *Dhammapada*, (the way of virtue) makes this abundantly clear:¹²

*"Hatred is never appeased by hatred.
Hatred is only appeased by Love (or, non-enmity).
This is an eternal law." (Verse 5/423)*

The famous, 8th century Mahayana poet, in his great work, the '*Bodhicaryavatara*', portrays the same theme through these verses:

"There is no evil equal to hatred and no spiritual practice equal to forbearance. Therefore, one ought to develop forbearance, by various means, with great effort." (Ch. 6, verse 2).

It is based on these principles of pacifism that Buddhism has found a place of prominence in the contemporary world torn by violence all around.¹²

3. JAINISM

Jainism is a living faith in India and its teachings claim to be of universal application.¹¹ In Jainism, the understanding and implementation of *Ahimsā* is more radical, and comprehensive than in any other religion. Killing any living being out of passions is considered *hiṃsā* (to injure) and abstaining from such an act is *ahimsā* (noninjury). The vow of *ahimsā* is considered the foremost among the 'five vows of Jainism'. Other

vows like *satya* (truthfulness), *asteys* (non-stealing), *Brahmacharya* (chastity) and *aparigraha* (non attachment) are meant for safeguarding the vow of *ahimsā*. The statement *ahimsāparamodharmaḥ* is often found inscribed on the walls of the Jain temples.

The system of *Jaina* ethics is optimized in the principle of three Jewels (*ratnatraya*) that include: the *Right faith*, *Right knowledge*, and *Right conduct*. These are the major contributory factors for achievement of a state of peace.ⁱⁱ¹¹

There goes the final saying of Mahavira: “truth, non-violence and penance are the root sources of religion”.³

The doctrine of Jainism is summed up in the maxim: “*ahimsa paramo dharma*”. All rules of conduct are based on mercy which has four forms: ³

- To perform a kind act without expectation of a reward.
- To rejoice at the well being of others.
- To sympathize with the distressed people to relieve their sufferings.
- To pity the criminals.

4. SIKHISM

One of the youngest religions based on numinous experiences of its founder Guru Nanak (1469-1539); the sacred text of Sikhism the *Guru Granth Sahb* contains pithy sayings and virtuous poetry of many mystic poets and seers. Sikhism is the most materialistic of Indian religions, as takes the material world to be potentially useful for the good of mankind. It has independent ethical system that requires man to serve one’s fellow-men in a selfless manner.¹¹ In addition to their exemplary hospitality, *langar*, charity and service to humanity; their sacred scriptures contain clear instructions and code of conduct for all situations.

Sikhs are well known as one of the brave and martial races and there is a sanction for just war against oppression. But at the same time there are laid down principles to be followed during such situations. Sikhism does not teach total pacifism but approves of any action to promote human rights and harmony. Guru Nanak (the first Guru) wrote:

“No one is my enemy; No one is a foreigner; with all I am at peace. God within us renders us incapable of hate and prejudice.”

DharamYudh is a war fought in the defense of righteousness, similar to the concept of a Just War. The conditions of *DharamYudh* are: ¹⁴

- The war must be the last resort - all other ways of resolving the conflict must be tried first
- The motive must not be revenge or anger; the army must be disciplined.
- Only the minimum force needed for success should be used
- civilians must not be harmed
- There must be no looting, territory must not be taken, and property taken must be returned.
- All treaties and ceasefires must be honored.

- No places of worship (of any faith) should be damaged.

- Soldiers who surrender should not be harmed.

5. **JUDAISM** Peace is a concept that is central to Judaism. Along with truth and justice, it is one of the three key Jewish values. The Hebrew word for peace is *shalom* which is derived from one of the names of God, meaning "complete" or "whole".²²The history of Judaism goes back more than three thousand years. According to Jewish traditions, when the Israelites left Egypt and reached the Sinai desert, God gave them the fundamental Ten Commandments that were to govern their social existence. These Laws and commandments are in fact meant to serve as guides to fostering a good relationship with God and other people. The 10 commandments/Decalogue of Judaism among others, include (6-10):

{Deuteronomy 5:6-21} &

Exodus,20:13}

- Honour thy father and mother.
- You shall not kill.
- You shall not commit adultery
- You shall not steal
- You shall not covet your neighbor's house, his wife, his servants, his animals or anything he owns.

While explaining the verse, "*You shall not kill*" from Torah, a Jewish scholar observes:

"It is not enough merely to keep in mind the negative admonition not to kill, but to transmute human energy and efforts into peaceful and constructive actions"

Another injunction in the words of torah is as follows. "*What is hateful (or hurtful) to you, don't do to any other man.*" Referring to this verse of torah, one Jewish scholar has rightly observed: "*that is the whole of Torah, the rest is but commentary*"

Peace, according to the Jewish sages, is the ultimate purpose of the whole Torah:

"All that is written in the Torah was written for the sake of peace." *TanhumaShoftim 18*

"God announceth to Jerusalem that they [Israel] will be redeemed only through peace." Deuteronomy Rabah 5:15

The ideal world of justice in the words of the prophets is described as :

"And they (people) shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. "
(Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3)

6. CHRISTIANITY

The word peace is used in the Bible in a very broad sense. It takes in the wellbeing and health of people, as well as the absence of violence. The teachings of Jesus Christ are enshrined in the New Testament. The Jesus' well known 'Sermon on the Mount' goes as:

“To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also. And from him, who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either. Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him, who takes away your goods, do not ask them back.” (6:29-30)

Attaching great importance to peace Christ observed: *” Blessed are peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God”*. (5:9)

Christian Ethics: The New Testament in fact does not present a new code of ethical behavior, but it emphasizes a new motive for it.” A large part of Jesus’ teachings was ethical. When an earnest young man asked him, “what should I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus answered in accordance with the old law and said, “Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness and do not defraud. Honor your father and your mother”.

The contributions of Christian missionary schools, hospitals, relief and rescue operations and many more welfare schemes in the contemporary world need no introduction. Let us look at the scriptures that emanate such brilliant principles. Further the details of Christian ethics include the teachings of the Bible advising its followers to:

- Be fruitful: The message from parable of fig tree ... *“A believer should lead a fruitful life, and not just live for himself”*. Luke, 13:6-8
- Love your enemy: *“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the sons of your Father in heaven. For He makes His sun shine on bad and good people alike”* (Mathew, 5:44-46)
- Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. *“No one could expect others to be good to him, while he himself had no care for their feelings.”* Luke, 6:3

On questions of peace and war, Christian ethics seeks to combine Jesus’ message of love with the responsible exercise of power in society and the polity. Christian leaders and theologians have often sanctioned the use of violence in self-defense.

The Just War theory specifies conditions for judging if it is just to go to war, and conditions for how the war should be fought. The Just War Theory is largely a Christian philosophy that provides a guide to the right way for states to act in potential conflict situations. The theory is not intended to justify wars but to prevent them, by showing that going to war except in certain limited circumstances is wrong, and thus motivate states to find other ways of resolving conflicts. A just war is permissible because it's a lesser evil, but it's still an evil. ²⁴

Principles of the Just War

- A just war can only be waged as a last resort.
- A war is just only if it is waged by a legitimate authority.
- the cause is just (self-defense and the protection of innocent human life)
- A war can only be just if it is fought with a reasonable chance of success.

- The ultimate goal of a just war is to re-establish peace.
- The violence used in the war must be proportional to the injury suffered.

- The weapons used in war must discriminate between combatants and non-combatants.

III ISLAM & PEACE

Islam is the youngest revealed religion of the word. It is in fact not a new religion, but a revised and enlarged edition of eternal Divine religion based on Unity of God (*Tauheed*), medium of Prophets (*Risalah*) and the concept of After-life (*Akhirah*). Islam shares these three fundamentals with the other living Abrahamic faiths i.e. Judaism and Christianity. This is explicit from the *Quranic* text itself:

“The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah—that which we have sent by inspiration to thee—and that which we enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus.” (Al-Quran 42:13)

The relationship between religion and peace in general is quite controversial. Some scholars, such as Asghar Ali Engineer, argue that Islam as a religion is all peace and does not allow for violence. On a wider scale, Engineer generally rejects drawing any integral relationship between any religion, including Islam, and violence. Rather, he sees violence as a social phenomenon that takes place as a result of certain negative conditions in specific societies where religion may be manipulated as a result.^[4] What a religion teaches can, therefore, be different from how its followers hold it to be in practice, due to the influence of “self-justifying groups” such as religious or political institutions or cultural traits. [^{4,5}]

The very word Islam (from the Arabic *silm*) connotes peace. One of the attributes of Allah described in the Quran is ‘As salaam’, which means peace and security. *In the Quran, divine guidance is likened to the path of peace.* (Al-Quran, 5:16). According to Islam, paradise is the ideal human abode, and is thus called ‘home of peace’. It is also mentioned that people of paradise will greet each other with the word, ‘salaam’ (peace).¹³

Though Islam promises the ideal world of peace only in the hereafter; the efforts for establishing order in the human world carries great reward in the next world irrespective of the outcome of these efforts in this world. The Islamic concept of peace encompasses whole range of human sphere may it be political, social, family or personal life. Peace being the greatest concern of man, all religions attach much importance to it. But Islam’s concept of peace needs to be studied in more detail as, in the present times; violence is mostly spoken of with reference to Islam.

Concept of peace in Quran and Hadith: There are many verses in the Qur’an that prefer peace to war and forgiveness to hatred.⁶ This is evidenced by the fact that only some 60 verses out of 6,666 verses in the Qur’an deal with the rules of war and armed *jihad* (0.6%), while the rest deal with faith and moral issues.

Islamic primary texts the Holy Quran and the *Hadith* of Prophet (PBUH) are replete with instructions and exhortations for peace. Let’s have a look at few *verses* from the Quran:²²

“Allah calls to the home of peace”. (Al-Quran; 10:25)

“Disturb not the peace of the earth after the fair ordering thereof by God.” (Al-Quran 7:56& 7:85)

In Islam, the right to life is an absolute value:³⁵ *“He who kills a soul unless it be (in legal punishment) for murder or for causing disorder and corruption on the earth will be as if he had killed all humankind; and he*

who saves a life will be as if he had saved the lives of all humankind.”

(Al-Quran 5:32)

Now let's turn to precedence from the *Sunnah* of Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH):

The prophet of Islam (PBUH) was a man of peace and reconciliation. He urged his companions to ask God for peace. For the prophet's main task was the communication of divine message to the people and an atmosphere of peace and good will was essential to perform this duty.

“God grants to peace what he doesn't grant to violence” (Muslim:2593)

“Do good to those who harm you” (Al-Tirmidhi)

"One, who betrays, harms, or deceives a Muslim, is not of us." (Muslim,101,102.)

"A Muslim is one from whose hand and tongue people are safe. A believer is one from whom people know that their wealth and lives are safe." (Bukharî, *Iman*, 3, 5; Muslim, *Iman*, 64, 65; Nasaî, *Iman*, 8, 104, 105.)

It becomes thus amply clear that Islam is primarily a religion of peace having nothing to do with violence. Or the violence prevalent in the contemporary world has no sanction from the Quran or the life of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH).

Jihad in Islam The word jihad is derived from the Arabic '*Juhd*' which actually means to struggle, to strive, to exert oneself to the utmost to achieve one's goal. Therefore, in the Islamic sense, Jihad means to struggle or strive in the way of God.²

Al-Farabi (874-950) a renowned Muslim philosopher, maintained a clear distinction between “war” and “jihad” in his writings. War is only one form of jihad, which refers to military action. The true essence of jihad for al-Farabi is the internal struggle within one's soul between the forces of reason, on the one hand, and one's desires on the other, with the aim of the first to control or moderate the second so that virtue may prevail. More important is that the jihad for justice is grounded on the moral concept of responsibility to Allah. While Muslims struggle all the time to excel in their attempts to follow in the path of Allah, the way in which they interpret His laws is still bound in social, historical and political realities.⁴

Similarly in the words of Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi: “ Like other major religions of the world, Islam does have a place for this minor jihad or the armed struggle, but its scope and indications carry certain riders before embarking on such an important campaign. Granting permission for Jihad the Quran clearly indicates its purpose:

“Permission is granted to those who are fighting because they have been oppressed...those who have been expelled from their homes without any just cause...” (Al-Quran, 22:39-40)

“And what is the matter with you that you do not fight in the way of God for the oppressed men, women, and children who pray: ‘Our Lord, take us out of this town whose people are oppressors, and appoint for us from Thee a guardian and a helper” (Al-Quran,4:75)

“Prepare against them (i.e., the enemy) with whatever force and trained horses you can in order to frighten thereby Allah's enemy, your enemy, and others besides them who you do not know but Allah knows them.”

(Al-Quran,

8:60)

We can infer from these verses that Islam allows armed struggle in certain situations with specific aims and proper discipline. E.g. Oppression (22:39, 4:75) & religious persecution (22:39-40); consolidation of military might to frighten the enemy; (8:60) and self defense. (2:190).

Further there are rules to be followed by armed men, even during jihad differentiating it from the indiscriminate use of violence. Islam teaches that Muslims should be strong in order to defend themselves, but that does not mean they have to become aggressive and unjust. Fighting should be directed only against fighting troops, and not against civilians. Thus, the Quran says:

“Fight in the way of God those who are fighting against you; and do not exceed (the limits). Verily Allah does not love those who exceed (the limits).” (2:190)

Following the tradition of Prophet of Islam, Abu-Bakr, the First Caliph once instructed *Yazid ibn-Abi Sufian*: “I give you Ten Commandments: *Don’t kill a woman or a child or an old person, and don’t cut trees or ruin dwellings or slay a sheep but for food. Don’t bum palm trees or drown them. And don’t be spiteful or unjust.*”²⁴

Islam is the religion of peace. It therefore enjoins peace even in war when the enemy is inclined to peace.

“If the enemy is inclined towards peace you should also incline towards peace and trust in God.” (Al-Quran 8:61)

The truth is that Islam in the full sense is a religion of peace. In no way it is a religion of war. In Islam peace is the rule and war is only a rare exception. Further any stray *acts of aggression are not enough for Muslims to rush into war.* ⁽¹⁸⁾ Just because the term “jihad” is misused by some Muslims for their political agenda, Muslims don’t have to abandon this noble concept of their faith. Many Muslims describe only the major (spiritual) jihad and shy away from the jihad in the sense of armed struggle for defense. As Muslims, we stand by our teachings and don’t need to apologize for it even if some misguided souls hijack the terms of faith for their own political ends. ⁽¹⁶⁾ It is no exaggeration to say that Islam and violence are contradictory to each other. An attempt to bracket violence with Islam amounts to casting doubt upon the very eternity of the Islamic religion. The truth of the matter is that, all the teachings of Islam are based on the principle of peace.¹⁷

IV Conclusions: *As “Allah calls to the home of peace” (Al-Quran; 10:25), let’s respond positively...!! And here lies the wisdom.* From the whole discussion we can draw few practical lessons that could be applied for achieving a lasting peace in this world and the hereafter where we need it most.

- **Education:** Religions usually incorporate a code of ethics that concern the behavior of the individual; but men don’t always live up to the standards they profess ⁽²⁾; The religious leaders will have to come forward and take the responsibility of bridging this gap through moral education of young generation and reconnecting them to original sources of their religions.
- **Inter-Religious Dialogue:** Dr. Hans Kung, a Professor of Ecumenical Theology rightly echoes all peace lovers when he says *“there will be no peace among nations, without peace among the religions and there will be no peace among religions without dialogue among the religions”*.² So the need of the hour is to come closer to each other through religious tolerance and intercommunity dialogues.
- **Be pragmatic in controversial matters.** It is greatest wisdom to be content with pragmatic goals when the ideal goal is not achievable.¹⁸

- **Right Information:** There is a lot of misinformation and misunderstanding of the Islamic faith. It is essential that Muslims be judged in the light of Islamic ideals: Islam should not be judged in the light of what Muslims do in the name of Islam.⁽¹⁹⁾
- **‘Return good for evil’** Make a friend out of foe as the power of peace is stronger than power of violence. (Al-Quran 41:34); (Mathew, 5:44-46)
- **Be Fruitful:** (Luke, 13:6-8); and a *Hadith* from *KanzulUmmal 16/44154*: Hadith: “*The best amongst mankind is one who benefits humanity*”

In conclusion I leave you with these thoughts for today:

- 1) "There is no path to peace; peace is the path." (A.J. Muste)
- 2) Let there be peace everywhere and “Let it Begin with me”.

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