

PROPHET (PBUH) AS A PEACEMAKER

INTRODUCTION :

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent not only towards a specific nation or group of people but to the whole humanity at all the times. Prophet (PBUH) is known as remarkable peacemaker. His life and teachings are a perfect example of peace, bringing people together and resolving conflicts. He promoted peace in all aspects of life, including personal relationships, community harmony and even in dealing with other nations. He (PBUH) was sent as a messenger of peace and mercy for the whole humanity, not to the Muslims only. Allah says:

"And We have ^{not} sent you, except as a mercy to the worlds."

(Al-Quran, 21:107)

Prophet (PBUH) was an exemplar for the Arabs of the seventh century and is also a role model for humanity living now at the beginning of 21st century as well as times to come.

ISLAM AND PEACE

The fabric of Islam accentuates the concept of peace as the word Islam itself has been derived from another Arabic word "Salam" which means "peace" and the literal meaning of Islam is "to enter into peace." Allah Almighty strongly emphasized on the promotion of peace. As we review the verses of the Glorious Quran, we will find that many a time it speaks about and encourages people to bring about peace. Allah Almighty says:

"Peace, a word from a Merciful Lord."

(Al-Quran, 36:58)

Islam always taught the importance of peace, forgiveness and avoiding unnecessary fights.

HISTORICAL REVIEW OF PROPHET'S

PEACEMAKING EFFORTS

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized the importance of peace in personal conduct, community interactions and even during warfare. His teachings encouraged forgiveness, reconciliation and the avoidance of unnecessary conflict. There are several key incidents which highlights his role in fostering peace.

ERECTION OF HAJR AL-ASWAD

Even before announcing his Prophethood, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) had been making efforts to promote peace in Arab society. The incident of the erection of Hajr Al-Aswad is the one example of that effort. The Kaaba was damaged by a flood and the Quraysh tribe decided to rebuild it. When the reconstruction reached the point where the Hajr Al-Aswad was to be placed, dispute arose among the tribes and it was feared that a civil war would break out, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) resolved the issue in such a peaceful manner that history is unable to

Present such example. Prophet (PBUH) put the Black Stone in the middle of a piece of cloth and ask representative from each clan to hold one of the edges of the cloth and raise it close to its place. Then the Prophet (PBUH) picked it up with his own noble hands and put it to its original place. This solution averted a potential conflict.

CONQUEST OF MECCA

Another profound example of the Prophet's (PBUH) peacemaking nature was during the conquest of Mecca in 630 AD. After years of persecution and hostility from the Quraysh, the Prophet (PBUH) entered Mecca with a large army. The Meccans feared retribution but the Prophet (PBUH) declared a general amnesty, stating "Go, you are free." He (PBUH) strongly instructed Muslims to raise slogans of peace and said,

"Today is the day of mercy,
today is the day of mercy."

This act of mercy transformed enemies to allies and solidified the peaceful spread of Islam.

THE TREATY OF HUDAYBIYYAH

One of the most significant incident that highlight the Prophet (PBUH) role as a peacemaker is the "Treaty of Hudaibiyah". In "628 AD", over "1400" Muslims led by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) traveled from Madina to perform Umrah. According to tradition, the Makkans were supposed to allow pilgrims without arms to perform Umrah. However, concerned about the large Muslim group, the Quraysh leader sent "Khaled Bin Walid" with "200" fighters to block them. To avoid confrontation, the Prophet (PBUH) changed the route and arrived at "Hudaibiyah". He (PBUH) sent "Hazrat Usman-e-Ghani (RA)" to negotiate, but the Quraysh detained him and spread a rumor of his death. In response, the Prophet (PBUH) took an oath from his followers at Rizwan to defend their faith which is known as "Bait-e-Rizwan".

Alarmed by the Muslims determination, the Quraysh sent "Suhail" to negotiate, leading to the treaty of Hudaibiya. Although some terms seemed unfavorable to the Muslims, the Prophet (PBUH) signed it to avoid bloodshed. Over time, the treaty proved beneficial, easing tensions and leading non-believers

to visit Madinah. The "Holy Quran" later called this treaty a "clear victory".

"Verily, we have given you a manifest victory."

(Al-Quran, 48:1)

CONSTITUTION OF MEDINA

The Prophet (PBUH) also demonstrated his peacemaking skills through the drafting of the constitution of Medina also known as "Charter of Medina". It was a written agreement consisting of 52 articles - numbering of clauses differs in different sources. It was indeed a great effort for promoting peace and co-existence of people from different religions. Between "624 to 627 AD", Medina was attacked three times by Quraysh and their allies. In all these battles, Muslims were not the aggressors, rather they only protected their area. The Charter of Medina is considered one of the first written constitution in the world and is a remarkable example of the Prophet's (PBUH) efforts to build a peaceful society.

RESOLUTION OF TRIBAL CONFLICTS

The Prophet (PBUH) also played a pivotal role in resolving long-standing tribal conflicts. The Prophet (PBUH) actively worked to mediate disputes and foster unity among the tribes. One notable example is the reconciliation between the "Aws" and "Khazraj" tribes of Medina who had been in conflict for generations. Through his wisdom and leadership, the Prophet (PBUH) brought these tribes together, creating a unified and peaceful community.

THE INCIDENT OF TA'IF

An incident that profoundly illustrates the Prophet (PBUH) patience and commitment to peace is his journey to Ta'if in 620 AD. Seeking support and refuge, the Prophet (PBUH) traveled to Ta'if where he was met with hostility and violence. The people of Ta'if rejected his message and pelted him with stones, causing him physical harm. Despite this, when "Angel Gabriel" offered to crush the town between two mountains, Prophet (PBUH) refused, praying instead for their guidance and forgiveness. This incident showcases the Prophet's (PBUH) enduring compassion and his preference for peace over vengeance.

HIJRAT To KEEP PEACE INTACT

In Makkah, when the brutality and savagery crossed all limits, Muslims were left with no option, but to leave their homes. So in "622AD", they migrated to Medina. But, the important thing to note here is that in spite of all the sufferings the Holy Prophet (PBUH) always prayed to Allah for guidance for the Quraysh.

PEACEMAKING DURING WARFARE

Even during warfare, the Prophet (SAW) adhered to strict principles that aimed to minimize harm and promote peace. He (PBUH) instructed his followers to avoid harming non-combatants, including women, children, the elderly and even the environment. During the "Battle of Badr", Prophet (PBUH) offered freedom to the prisoners of war on one condition that each of them would teach art of reading and writing to "10 Muslims". This act of peace and kindness towards prisoners of war still remain unprecedented in the annals of human history.

CONCLUSION

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) dedicated his life to promoting peace. His life offers valuable lessons in making peace, resolving conflicts and the power of forgiveness, making him a true symbol of peace for everyone. Prophet (PBUH) himself emphasized and promoted peace. He said:

"Shall I inform you of something more excellent than fasting, prayer and almsgiving? It is reconciling between people."

(Tirmidhi)

These teachings and examples from the Prophet's (PBUH) life serve as timeless guidance for anyone seeking to promote peace and harmony in the society.