

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Friday Sermon

HADHRAT AMIR'UL MUMINEEN MUHYI-UD-DIN

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(Summary of Friday Sermon)

After having greeted all his followers (and all Muslims) round the world with the Salutations of Peace, Hazrat Muhyi-ud-Din (atba) read the Tashahhud, Taouz and *Surah Al Fatiha* and then said:

Throughout ages, history has borne witness to the inequalities which man inflicts upon himself. He callously degrades some of his identical selves (humans like himself), while elevating others. Thus, man and man got separated through the passage of time because of colour, race, creed, culture and ethnicity. Some became superiors while some inferiors. And the inferiors had to comply with the wishes and commands of those who had the upper hand upon them, for if they refuse to do so, they would be severely punished and degraded further. Prophets of Allah came to bring about a change in that state of affairs. The commandments of Allah came through to bring about hope in the life of those whom society viewed as inferior and as having no dignity and the freedom to express their rights as fellow human beings.

Prophets of Allah tried their best to bring about a change, but every time their heartfelt wishes were crushed until the ultimate saviour of mankind was born and promised to create a new world where every man should live as equals, for this is the absolute command of God Almighty who has created all humans alike, except in piety, for those who are truly pious, they are those who truly realise the goal of life, and that of their own creations and presence on earth. That promised hope came in such a country where hope was previously absent, where men and women were treated as the worst of animals, where it existed such a society which were devoid of human attributes. It was in that society which Allah chose to raise His greatest and the seal of all prophets (last law-bearing prophet), to accomplish a miracle by transforming the lives of those barbarous people, and teaching them humanity, morality and spirituality.

Unfortunately, despite the clear signs of Allah, of Islam and the Holy Prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh), by sending and implementing respectively the divine commandments to bring about transformation in the lives of those barbarous people, and turn them in real affectionate and compassionate human beings and servants of God, yet despite all these, Islam and its prophet are vehemently viewed as greatest promoters of terror for some ignorant people who have not studied the heart itself of the extraordinary life of the best of men and prophets of Allah.

In the context of the Abolition of Slavery which is commemorated in Mauritius every February 01 – and for which it is a public holiday – I have chosen to talk to you about one allegation against Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It is alleged that Islam encourages slavery, but it is a fact that Islam is the greatest enemy of slavery, and has put an end to all modes of reducing men to slavery which were current in pre-Islamic days. Islam forbids the reduction to slavery of men who are captured for no reason, or merely because they belong to a hostile tribe or nation, or who have been taken prisoners in worldly wars.

It permits only of such prisoners of war being reduced to slavery who are captured in a war undertaken by the enemy with the object of enforcing the renunciation or acceptance of a religion by means of the sword. And can it be doubted that such an attempt is an offence which places those who are guilty of it beyond the pale of humanity?

Those who express their abhorrence at the loss of a man's physical freedom must consider that the man who is thus punished was seeking by means of the sword forcibly to prevent men from worshipping God and to hand over their souls to the bondage of Satan. Had he been successful in his object, thousands and hundreds of thousands of men should have been compelled to forsake the truth and would have been consigned to eternal darkness.

Does such a man deserve to have his freedom restored to him till he repents of his guilt and is truly sorry for his conduct? For what is slavery? It is the restricting of a man's freedom till he discharges his share of the responsibility for his guilt and he pays his share of the cost of the war. Is there any moral or political reason which prohibits the taking of prisoners of war, and to get work out of them?

Strangely enough, nowadays it appears to be regarded as permissible and proper to keep whole countries in the bonds of social, political or financial slavery, till they are able to pay their quota of heavy war indemnities, and yet the keeping of only such men who have been guilty of actual participation in a war of the kind that I have just mentioned, in imprisonment till they are able to pay their respective shares of the cost of the war, is condemned as improper and inhuman.

Islam provides that every prisoner of war who is held in slavery is entitled as of right to purchase his liberty on payment of his proportionate share of the expenses of war. If, therefore, a slave does not prefer his slavery to his freedom, why does not he, or why do not his relatives or his countrymen, purchase his freedom by payment to that oppressed nation whose religion they had attempted to destroy, his share of the expenses of the war which was thus forced upon the latter?

As opposed to unislamic military frame of minds and strategies, Islam provides even the fairest of judgements for all, for the innocents as well as the culprits. In Islam, the culprits being held as prisoners of war, aka slavery are given clear options to have their freedom back. They are well treated, until these prisoners or their families or nation give the proper payment for their liberty. Slavery in the actual sense of holding in bondage innocent people and depriving them of their basic human rights is clearly inhuman and is condemnable in Islam. Islam strives to protect the rights of each individual in society, Muslims as well as non-Muslim. But if people try to create problems and uses the sword to prevent other people from realising God's truth, and seek to harm them in the process and depict Islam in a wrong way, then Islam's laws come to put these kinds of people in their place and make them taste the fruits of their deeds until proper payment is given – just like any criminal in any court of justice in the world who have to pay the price of his/her crime either through a given number of years of imprisonment, or life-imprisonment or even capital punishment – *“to be hanged till death!”* (or death through the electric chair). If other nations apply such kinds of treatments for their criminals, and if it happened that in the territory of the Muslims, a non-Muslim has penetrated the territory (or even a non-Muslim native) to cause harm to the religion of Islam and to deviate the Muslims, is it not the right of the Muslim court of justice to mete out proper justice? Is then Islam and the Muslims to be blamed or the people behind such heinous strategies?

The world is evolving at full speed, yet the basic rights to freedom of religion and faith is being trampled upon, and Islam continues to be target of so much hatred. Despite the good faith of Islam to promote the rights of one and all in the best of ways as commanded by the God of all mankind, yet it is being blamed for many devilish acts, whereas the accusers are themselves filled to the throat of such acts which inevitably depict them in a poor light. Then why pinpoint Islam, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the Muslims and frowning on the divine commandments in the Quran when they are devising strategies to bring law and order to the peak so that criminals may be punished severely for their acts. Why blame Islam, and the Quran's Allah to have devised such perfect laws which they are themselves secretly following so as to remedy many ills of this world? They copycat the Quran's laws and pass them as their own whereas Allah and His Prophet (pbuh) already laid down the foundations of all remedies and equalities so that all people may live in peace and harmony and that only the true culprits are punished and even later on pardoned for their behaviours.

Islam represents the perfection of religion, the pinnacle of freedom of faith and religion. It invites to equality of man and woman; each has their role to play, and each are not each other's slaves. If you are an employee, then there is an employer who pays you, but the beauty of Islam is that the employer despite the payment he gives you must respect the human that you are and thus treat you in the most decent way. You are an employee, not a slave. You have rights, and can use them to make yourself be heard. Islam gave you that right, and slowly but surely the global society is trying to make it up to the Quranic teachings to have those rights reflected into its constitution. Islam is for all mankind, not only Muslims, but those who are truly God-fearing and pious are those who really benefit to the most the verities and actualities of the Quran, the perpetual source of light and guidance for all mankind.

May Allah guide you and me and humanity at large to respect the rights of others, of the innocents, the wrongly oppressed and victims of the machinations of men for the greed of the world. What is a territory and of what value it is if in gaining it you lose the true faith with which you were born with? Equality in submission to the Almighty was your constitution Oh man, then why change that constitution to establish your vain desires and selling them to the temporary cupid sires of this world? Be not slaves of your vain passions; learn to cultivate passion of devotion to the Lord who ask nothing of you but the lasting promise to be ever His for all times. That you worship Him and do not betray Him!

May Allah enable us to respect the Quran and all its commandments and help this modern society to realise the beauty of the Quran and Islam. *Ameen, Summa Ameen, Ya Rabbal Aalameen.*