

**Peace in Islam:
An Overview of the Holy Prophet's *Sirah*
Dr. Nazir Ahmad Zargar***

This paper is a humble attempt to highlight the fact that the principles of peace enshrined in the holy *Qur'ân* and the *Sunnah* are not just rhetorical. They were put into practice first of all by none else than the Messenger of Allâh himself in full and then by his four *Khulafâ'* upto the greatest possible degree. The history of mankind, therefore, bears witness to the fact that the most successful order, based upon the ideals of peace and justice, the world has ever seen, was the order established by the Messenger of Islâm and his rightly guided *Khulafâ'* (Sig: *Khalifah*: Caliph).

From the very youthful days of his life, Rasûlullah (SAAS) had great inclination towards peace. The Makkans used to call him *al-sâdiq* (the truthfull) and *al-amîn* (the trustworthy).¹ Long back when after the death of Qusayy b. Kilâb, there took place serious tussle between Banu 'Abd Manâf and Banu 'Abd al-Dâr on the issue regarding the guardianship of Ka'bah and other affairs related to it. Amidst the atmosphere of war, talks of *sulh* began to be concluded and ultimately the possible bloody clash was averted and *sulh* was concluded. Lately when Rasûlullâh (SAAS) proclaimed Prophethood, he talked about this *sulh* thus:

مَا كَانَ مِنْ حَلْفٍ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَانِ الْإِسْلَامِ لَمْ يَزِدْهُ إِلَّا شِدَّةً

Islâm strictly keeps standing all the
peace agreements made during the days of
Jâhiliyyah (ignorance).²

Hilf al-Fudûl

In the absence of systematic central government especially in Makkah, the looting of caravans was a common thing to

*Contractual Lecturer, S.H. Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, 190006

happen. Oppression was rampant and life had turned into a virtual hell. This situation compelled the chiefs of Makkah to assemble one day in the house of 'Abdullah b. Jud'ân for a pact of peace and justice. The main articles of this charter were:

- i) We must take side of *mazlûm* (oppressed) and help him, be he a Makkan or an outsider.
- ii) We must stand against the *zâlim* (oppressor) whosoever he may be, unless and until he gives the oppressed his due. With respect to this agreement Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) later said:

لقد شهدت في دار عبد الله بن جدعان حلفا ما احب
ان لي به حمر النعم ولو ادعى به في الاسلام لا خيت

I was present in the house of Abdullah b. Jud'ân at the time of the agreement. If I am given a lot of red camels against this I will not accept and if (now) during the days of Islâm anybody calls me on the basis of such agreement I will gladly accept (and go for his help).³

The Issue of *Al-Hajr al-Aswad* (The Black Stone)

The Quraysh and other tribes of Makkah decided to rebuild Ka'abah after it got damaged due to heavy rainfall. When they reached the place where *al-Hajr al-Aswad* was to be installed, they started disputing as to who would place it. The issue became so dangerous that swords were drawn and people took oath to shed blood for gaining the opportunity to install the Stone. On the fifth day Abû Umayyah b. Mughîrah, the eldest among the Quraysh, suggested that the first man who could come the next morning would be accepted as judge. The next morning it was none but Rasûlullah (SAAS) who had reached on the spot first of all. He (SAAS) gave the judgment, neither in favour of his own self nor of his own tribe, but spread a cloth, put the stone on it and asked a chief of each tribe to take hold of the cloth to carry the Stone to its fixed place. He (SAAS)

then took the Stone himself and installed it. In this way a great war was averted by the decision of the man who was afterwards, divinely announced as the Mercy for the whole mankind. Later Rasûlullah (SAAS) expressed his wish to rebuild Ka'abah but he gave up his intention in order to not to give people chance to grow misunderstandings in their minds that would in turn disturb their peaceful atmosphere.⁴

Rasûlullah (SAAS) at Makkah

When Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) called the Pagans of Makkah towards Allâh, they first rejected him, then resisted and latter on inflicted brutal atrocities on him and his followers. But he, for the sake of peace, avoided all sorts of confrontation. In Makkah, the Muslims were asked to hold back their hands from their enemies:

الم تر إلى الذين قيل لهم كفوا أيديكم وأقيموا الصلوة واتوا الزكوة

(Al-Qur'ân, Al-Nisâ' 4:77)

Hast thou not turned thy thought to those who were told to hold back their hands (from fight) but establish regular prayers and spend in regular Zakat (4:77)

When the atrocities of the Pagans reached its heights, Rasûlullâh (SAAS) still did not think of any retaliation but ordered his companions to go to Abyssinia. This was the first *hijrah* which took place on Rajab, 5 *Nabawî*.⁵ The inhuman treatment by the Pagans continued and the second time avoidance of confrontation took place when Rasûlullâh (SAAS) asked one more group of *Sahâbah* to emigrate to Abyssinia (Habshah).⁶ The Islâmic principles and practice of peace were beautifully brought to light by Ja'far b. Abî Tâlib (R.A.) in the court of Negus thus:

O king! We were an ignorant nation worshipping the idols, eating dead meat, doing bad deeds, breaking kinship, ill-

treating our neighbours and the strong among us was suppressing and oppressing the weak such was our condition. Amidst this, Allâh sent His compassionate Rasûl (SAAS) to us. He is one among us whose noble ancestry, truthful and trustworthy nature and modesty we all know very well. He invited us towards Oneness of Allâh and to worship Him alone and giving up idol worship. He told us to tell truth, pay the amâna (trust), respect the kinship, love the neighbour and forbade us from doing unlawful acts, shedding of blood, telling lie, eating up orphan's property and launching false charge against chaste women. He also enjoined us to offer Salâh and pay Zakâh.⁷

The Prophet's just nature was so known to everyone that even his dreaded enemies could not deny it, although out of their jealousy and strong feelings of hatred, they would often make it a point of jest. Ibn. Hishâm writes that one day a man from Arâsh (or Arâshah)⁸ came to Makkah with some camel. Abû Jahl bought the camel but evaded to pay the price. The seller stood in the presence of a gathering of Quraysh and complained against Abû Jahl and called them to help him. They pointed towards Rasûlullah (SAAS) who was passing by and told him that he was the right person who could help him (they wanted to make fun of Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) as they knew Abû Jahl's enmity against him) The man approached Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) and told him his sad story. He said: اطلق اليه (let us go to him). He went along the man and asked Abû Jahl اعط هذا الرجل حقه (pay this man his due). Abû Jahl was so frightened that he at once gave him his due. Then Rasûlullah (SAAS) said to the man: الحق بشاكك to go and enjoy.⁹

Although idol worship was strongly condemned right from the very beginning, the Muslims were never allowed to lose patience and launch any attack, secret or open, on Ka'abah to

throw out the hundreds of idols the Mushrikûn (polytheists) had placed inside it.

Hijrah

At last when all peaceful means failed, Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) decided to leave Makkah for a peaceful abode where he could safely establish the society on the fundamental of *Tawhid*.¹⁰

Thus for the establishment of true peace and justice, he avoided war and confrontation and left even his native land. On reaching Madînah he did not make any conspiracy against the Makkans nor did he gather the people of Madînah to launch an open war against them. He instead discouraged such intentions in these words:

اتما تنفى الرجال كما تنفى النار خبث الحديد

Madînah expels out bad people as fire washes out rust from iron.¹¹

The *hijrah* marks the start of an era that put, for the first time in human history, before the world the practical shape of real peace and true justice because, in the words of Karen Armstrong "it was at this point that Muhammad (SAAS) was able to implement the Quranic ideal fully and that Islam became a factor in history."¹²

Masjid in Islâm

At Madînah, one of the first actions of Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) was to build a simple *Masjid* (mosque; literally a place of prostration), the place wherein Allâh alone was to be glorified. The aim was *Tawhid*, which frees a man from all fetters of physical and mental slavery and gives him real freedom in the fullest of its sense.

ولن المساجد لله فلا تدعوا مع الله احدا

(Al-Qur'ân, Al-Jinn 72:18)

And the places of worship are for Allah

(alone): So invoke not any one along with Allah. (72:18)

The *Masjid* was built on the basis of *taqwâ* and its aim was not to spread mischief. Therefore, a place built in the name of masjid and practically used for spreading fasâd (mischief) is not a true masjid. The masjid gives, to the sincere worshippers, a sense of purity and holiness:

والذين اتخذوا مسجدا ضرابا وكفرا وتفرقا بين المؤمنين وارضادا
 لمن حارب الله ورسوله من قبل وليحلفن ان اردنا الا الحسنى والله
 يشهد انهم تكذبون لاتقم فيه ابدا لمسجد اسس على التقوى من اول يوم
 احق ان تقوم فيه طافيه رجال يحبون ان يتطهروا والله يحب المطهرين

(Al-Qur'ân, Al-Tawbah 9:107-108)

And these are those who put up a mosque by way of mischief and infidelity—to disunite the believers and in preparation for one who warred against Allah and His Messenger aforesaid. They will indeed swear that their intention is nothing but good; but Allâh doth declare that they are certainly liars. Never stand thou forth therein. There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men who love to be purified; and Allah loveth those who make themselves pure. (9:107-108)

The command for justice and worshipping Allâh in the mosque was given simultaneously:

قل امررتي بالقسطواقيموا وجوهكم عند كل مسجد وادعواه مخلصين

(Al-Qur'ân, Al-A'râf 7:29)

Say: "My Lord hath commanded justice: and that ye set your whole selves (to Him) at every time and place of prayer, and call upon Him, making your devotion sincere. (7:29)

The role of *masjid* in the spiritual life is great. Establishment of *Salâh* being the very purpose of its erection, it is mentioned thus:

ان الصلوة تنهى عن الفحشاء والمنكر

(Al-Qur'ân, Al-'Ankabût 29:45)

Verily, As-Salât (the prayer) prevents from Al-Fahshâ' (i.e. great sins of every kind, unlawful sexual intercourse) and Al-Munkar (i.e. disbelief, polytheism and every kind of evil wicked deed)¹³ (29:45)

Thus the *masjid* is the place wherein the Muslims learn how to live disciplined life. It also gives them peace of mind and heart when they remember their Lord and offer *Salâh*:

اقم الصلوة لذكري

(Al-Qur'ân, Tâhâ 20:14)

And perform As-Salât (Iqâmat-as-Salât) for My Remembrance (20:14)

الا بد كر الله تطمئن القلوب

(Al-Qur'ân, Al-Ra'd 13:28)

Verily, in the remembrance of Allâh do hearts find rest. (13:28)

The *masjid* is a place where true knowledge is gained and a person of bad intention has nothing to do with the real spirit of it:

Abû Hurarah narrates that Rasûlullah (SAAS) said:

One who comes into this *masjid* of mine (Al-*masjid al-Nabawiyy* at *Madinâh*) with the intention to seek knowledge or to impart it, he is like a *mujâhid fî sabîlillâh* (one who strives in the Way of Allâh) and who comes with any other purpose, he is like that person who sees towards other people's wealth with greed.¹⁴

Thus at the very beginning the Message of Islam in Madīnah was of peace and calmness. The peaceful nature of the *masjid* and those who pray in it can be imagined by the fact that it is not allowed to talk about worldly affairs in it save the remembrance of Allāh let alone talking about any mischief mongering. Even loud talking is prohibited in the *masjid* be it even the very remembrance of Allāh, when it disturbs any worshipper in *salāh*.¹⁵

Brotherhood between The Muhajirīn and The Ansār

First of all, after the construction of *Masjid al-Nabawiyy* Allāh's Messenger (SAAS) established *Mawākhāh* (brotherhood) between the *Mahājirin* of Makkah and the *Ansār* of Madīnah. The basis of it, according to Ibn Qayyim was that both the groups would share each others joy and sorrow,¹⁶ and its purpose according to Muhammad Ghazzālī, was to dilute prejudice and bias of Jahiliyyah and to undo all considerations of race, colour etc. so that the criterion of highness or lowness would be nothing but *taqwā*.¹⁷

The fact is that this brotherhood was not hollow with no reality on the face of earth but Rasūlullah (SAAS) gave it a practicable shape by connecting its reality with blood and property, it involved hearts rather than tongues.¹⁸ The holy Qur'ān testifies this reality in these words:

ان الذين آمنوا وهاجروا وجاهدوا باموالهم وانفسهم في
سبيل الله والذين اؤوا ونصروا اولئك بعضهم اولياء بعض

Those who believed, and emigrated and fought for the faith, with their property and their persons, in the cause of Allāh, as well as those who gave (them) asylum and aid, —these are (all) friends and protectors, one of another. (8:72)

On this Abdullah Yusuf Alī Writes:

..., and their good friends in Madīnah, who

gave them asylum and every kind of assistance, moral and material. Under the magnetic personality of the Holy Prophet (SAAS) these two groups became like blood-brothers, and they were so treated in matters of inheritance during the period when they were cut off from their kith and kin.¹⁹

Mithâq of Madînah

In Madînah *Rasûlullâh* (SAAS) had to deal with three types of people:

- i) his *Sahâbah* (R.A.) (Companions),
- ii) the old and original tribes of *Mushrikîn* who had not embraced Islam yet, and
- iii) the Jews²⁰

The *Mushrikûn* were having a deep sense of enmity against *Sahâbah* (R.A.) (*Muhâjirûn* and *Ansâr*) but they could not dare to meet them face to face. On the other hand the Jews, consisting of three famous tribes of Banû Qaynuqâ' (allies of *Khazraj*), Banû Nadîr and Banû Qurayzah (both allies of *Aws*), had for long been raising hatred among *Aws* and *Khazraj* and giving rise to bloody wars like that of Bu'âth etc. For their own selfish ends, would not wellcome Islâm which had come to unite them all in a peaceful relationship.²¹

Therefore, for the establishment of the peaceful and just order, Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) undertook the great task of uniting all of them in a common bond. An agreement was made between the *Muhâjirîn*, the *Ansâr* and the Jews. This is called Mithâq of Madînah and its main articles are described by Ibn Hishâm in his book on *sirah*. The document starts with the following words:²²

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ هٰذَا كِتَابٌ مِّنْ مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِیِّ بَیْنَ الْمُؤْمِنِیْنَ

وَالْمُسْلِمِیْنَ مِنْ قُرَیْشٍ وَیَثْرِبَ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ فَدَحَقُّ بِهِمْ وَجَاهِدُ مَعَهُمْ

"In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most

Merciful. This document is from Muhammad the Prophet (SAAS) (an agreement) between the Muhâjirîn and the Ansâr and him who followed them and became one of them and accompanied them in Jihâd.”

انهم امة واحدة من دون الناس

Verily they are one ummah against all other people.”

Then it mentions various tribes like Muhâjirûn from the Quraysh, Banû ‘Awf, Banû al-Hârith, Banû Sâ‘idah, Banû Jusham, Banû al-Najjâr, Banû ‘Amr b. Awf, Banû al-Nabîr and Banû al-Aws and says about all of them separately.

This is the first written constitution of the world.²³

The contribution and achievements of this constitution can be summarized as under:

1. It built the Madinân society on the strong foundations of brotherhood.
2. It put an end to all discriminations of caste, colour, ethnicity, tribal prejudice.
3. The Muslims were considered one Ummah on the basis of Dîn not on blood relations or birth place. Thus they would all help the poor and would justly give financial assistance to the debtor so that he could justly pay the creditor his due.
4. The non-Muslims are given full religious freedom including legal and judicial freedom as well.
5. The polytheists and the Jews were not allowed to give asylum to any Qurayshî. This in turn left no door open for the Jews to spread mischief in Madînah as had been their old behaviour.
6. The Muslims and the non-Muslims were considered as the citizens of the same state and both the groups were demanded to abide by their own norms and in case they had any dispute, they had to necessarily

submit before Allâh's Messenger (SAAS).

War and peace were considered indivisible i.e.; if there was war, it was for all and if there was peace, it was for all.

7. In case of murder or freeing of slaves (prisoners) paying of *diyat* (blood money) or *fiđyah* (ransome) was made collective responsibility of each tribe. In this way its fulfillment was ensured as an individual could easily escape in absence of any political power in those days.
8. By creating the fear of *Qisâs*²⁴ (law of retribution) and *diyat* (in case the guardians or heirs of the deceased accepted that) security was given to life and property, be it of a Muslim or a non-Muslim.
9. Nobody was allowed to give shelter to any wrong person so that crime in the society could not get any encouragement. In this way the age-old tribal custom of 'might is right' was put to end. It meant that justice and security was available to all and there was no consideration of anybody's tribal status in the matters of justice and equity.
10. The Jews were given freedom and security but it was not unconditional; they were in return demanded to keep peace and harmony alive, show loyalty and not to spread mischief in society.
11. The Muslims and the Jews as the citizens of the same state were demanded to live on the principles of mutual love and respect, peace and security, sincerity and reconciliation.

Briefly, this constitution made Madinah a well established state wherein peace dwelt and justice ruled.²⁵ It was the first great commonwealth which not only repeated and re-asserted the message of real peace and true justice, but also succeeded in illustrating it by actual practice.²⁶ One important event that

took place in the history of Madīnah was the efforts Rasûlullah (SAAS) made for *peace* and *reconciliation* prior to the *battle of Badr*.

Treaty of Hdaybiyyah

The treaty of Hdaybiyyah was a 'No War Pact' between the people of Makkah and Allâh's Messenger (SAAS). It took place in 6 A. H. in the month of Dhû al-Qa'dah when the pagans of Makkah had already come to know how strong power the Muslims possessed and the atmosphere was, to a great extent, favouring the Muslims. But Rasûlullâh (SAAS) decided to make reconciliation with the polytheists so that he could peacefully and successfully continue his Mission which the Pagans had repeatedly been trying to sabotage by using force. The Muslims were 1400, all wearing *ihram*,²⁷ a pilgrim uniform of unsewn white cloth, as they had intended to perform '*Umrah*'²⁸ which implies they had least intention to commit any sin or dispute let alone indulge in any quarrel.²⁹ Only sacrificial animals were with them without any war weapons.³⁰

The Quraysh came to know about this caravan. They sent Khâlid b. Walid with 200 horse riders to stop the Muslims. Khalid's army stationed at a place named *Kurâ'al-Ghamîm*. When Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) knew this, he changed his way and chose a somewhat difficult one to avoid the bloody fight. Then Rasûlullah (SAAS) said, "By Allah in whose hands lies my life I will accept their every condition except that which disrespects Allâh's commandments." Then the Quraysh sent a deputation headed by Budayl b. Warqâ'. He said to Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) that the Quraysh had decided to fight and stop him at any cost. Allâh's Messenger replied him that he did not intend to fight them; that wars had already ground the Quraysh and inflicted on them great losses. He then put following options before Budayl:

- i. If the Quraysh wanted, I will make a

- peace agreement with them for a fixed time, so that they left him (Rasûlullah (SAAS)) to propagate his Message among rest of the people peacefully.
- ii. they should accept Islam like others who have accepted it.
 - iii. If nothing is acceptable to them still then (in the absence of war) they will enjoy convenience and comfort.
 - iv. and if they are hell-bent on waging war then I swear by Allâh in whose hands lies my life I shall fight them for my Dîn until my head is cut off from my body or Allâh implements His Commandment.³¹

The elders of Quraysh expressed their willingness for Sulh. But sensing this the youthful warriors of Quraysh tried to sabotage the peace process. They very secretly tried to attack the Muslim camp in the darkness of night, but were all arrested. Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) released all of them for peace was his only motive and he was out to nullify every move aiming to sabotage the process of peace.³²

Finally the document of the peace treaty was written down on the terms the gist of which follows:

The peace treaty shall be valid for ten years; it shall be a 'no war' pact. Muhammad (SAAS) shall go back this year without visiting the Ka'bah and shall come next year but will stay only for three days at Makkah. They will have no weapon with them except the sword and that too shall be in the sheath and the sheath shall be in the julubbân (bag etc.). Those among the tribes who want to join the Quraysh can do so and those who want to join the Muslims can do so. Anybody from among the Muslims or the Kuffâr who

goes to Madīnah shall be sent back but if any Muslim (from Madīna) goes to Makkah he shall not be sent back.

The Muslims can not take any of those Muslims who are already staying at Makkah with them to Madīnah, on the other hand if any Madīnan Muslim wants to stay at Makkah the Muslims shall not stop him.³³

A look at these terms testifies that the Muslims had been on the receiving end. But since peace was the ultimate aim of Allāh's Messenger (SAAS), he did not even care about his most beloved companions' reluctance in agreeing with this apparently benefiting only one side agreement.

Peace — the Ultimate Purpose

When the document was about to be written down, Rasûlullah (SAAS) asked 'Alî (R.A.) to write *بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ* (In the Name of Allāh the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful). Suhail b. 'Amr, the envoy of the Quraysh, did not agree with this saying that they did not know who *Rahmān* was and demanded that *بِسْمِكَ اللَّهُمَّ* (with the Name of Allāh) should be written. The Messenger (SAAS) told 'Alî (R.A.) to write the same. Then 'Alî wrote: this agreement is between Muhammad Rasûlullah (SAAS) (Allāh's Messenger) and the Quraysh. Suhayl again refused to accept this arguing that it was the very thing they rejected. i.e., Muhammad's (SAAS) Prophethood. He said that Muhammad b. 'Abdullah should be written instead of this. Rasûlullâh (SAAS) told 'Alî to rub the words "Rasûlullâh", but 'Alî said, "No, by Allāh, I will never rub off your name." So, Allāh's Messenger (SAAS) took the document himself and wrote: "This is what Muhammad b. 'Abdullah has agreed upon."³⁴

Fulfillment of the Promises

When both the parties were about to sign the document,

Abû Jandal (R.A.) a young man whom the Makkans had put behind the bars for his accepting Islâm came there. He had fled out of the jail. When he reached before Rasûlullah (SAAS) and the Muslims, the document of sulh had just been signed.³⁵ His condition was very much miserable. Suhayl rejected Rasûlullâh's request to leave Abû Jandal and dragged him to Makkah. The Sahâbah became furious but since Rasûlullâh (SAAS) was committed to make sulh he returned Abû Jandal, told him to have patience and consoled him by saying that Allâh would open way for him. The Sahâbah could not do any thing.³⁶

It is pertinent to quote some instances showing how desirous of peace Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) was that he missed no chance to bring about peace between people:

Sahl b. Sa'd (R.A.) narrates that there was dispute amongst the people of the tribe of Banî 'Amr b. 'Awf. Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) went to them along with some of his companions in order to make peace between them. The time for *salâh* became due but he (SAAS) did not turn up. Bilâl (R.A.) pronounced the *adhân* for the *salâh* but the Messenger (SAAS) did not turn up. So Bilâl(R.A.) went to Abû Bakr(R.A.) and said: "the time for the *salâh* is due and the Prophet (SAAS) is detained, would you lead the people in the prayer?" Abû Bakr replied, "Yes, if you wish." So, Bilâl pronounced the *iqâma* of the *salâh* and Abû Bakr went ahead (to lead the *Salâh*). The Prophet (SAAS) came walking among the rows till he joined the first row.³⁷ This shows that for making peace between people, Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) would even delay the offering of *salâh*, a price that could hardly be thought about that he would offer for anything else.

Sahl b. Sa'd (R.A.) narrates that once the people of Qubâ'

fought with each other till they threw stones on each other. When Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) was informed about it, he said, "Let us go to bring about reconciliation between them."³⁸

'Âishah رضى الله عنها narrates that once Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) heard the loud voices of some opponents quarrelling at the door. One of them was appealing to the other to deduct his debt and asking him to be lenient but the other was saying, "By Allâh I will not do so." Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) went out to them and said, "Who is the one who was swearing by Allâh that he would not do a favour?" The man said, "I am that person, O Allâh's Messenger! I will give my opponent whatever he wishes."³⁹

Yet another example brings to fore clearly the Messenger's (SAAS) enthusiasm for and great inclination towards making reconciliation between people. Even if it would be a small matter, he would not leave it unsolved for a spark neglected can burn the whole house. Narrates 'Abdullâh b. Ka'b that Ka'b b. Mâlik told him that in the lifetime of Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) he demanded his debt from Ibn Abû Hadrâd in the Mosque. Their voices grew louder till Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) heard them while he was in his house. So he lifted the curtain of his room and called Ka'b b. Mâlik saying, "O Ka'b!" He replied, "Labbayk! O Allâh's Messenger!" He beckoned to him with his hand suggesting that he deduct half the debt. Ka'b said, "I agree, O Allâh's Messenger!" Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) then said (to Ibn Abû Hadrâd), "Get up and pay him the rest."⁴⁰

Rasûlullâh's (SAAS) letters convey peace

After the *sulh* of Hudaybiyah, Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) sent letters to various tribal *shaykhs*, provincial officials and neighboring kings.⁴¹

Through these letters Rasûlullâh (SAAS) intended to invite important people to Islam. One important thing commonly found in almost all letters is the sentence: accept Islâm, you will attain

peace.

Madīnah— A Peaceful Abode for All Communities

Madīnah at the time of Allāh's Messenger (SAAS) was a heterogenous society inhabited by the Muslims (*Muhajirūn* and *Ansār*), the Jews, the Christians and the polytheists. The great task before Him (SAAS) was how to unite all these diverse sections of society into a common system so that Madinah could become a peaceful abode for all of them. The *Muhājirūn* of Makkah and the *Ansār* of Madīnah were united through *mawākhah*.⁴² To deal with other groups, the Prophet (SAAS) adopted the realistic approach; accepted these people and gave their individual existence legal approval. He protected their interests and guaranteed them all facilities and rights on the basis of equality and justice. In His time, the Jewish population in Madīnah was considerable. Although they, after his immigration into Madīnah, became his bitter enemies,⁴³ he, from day one, tried to treat them with justice and mercy and always tried to win their hearts by giving them the same status as citizens as given to the Muslims.

The constitution of Madīnah, mentioned above, is the indication of Rasūlullāh's (SAAS) liberal and compassionate approach towards the Jews.⁴⁴ Rasūlullāh (SAAS) fought no war with the Christians.⁴⁵ He, instead, "entered into treaty with several Christian tribes, promising them his protection and guaranteeing them the free exercise of their religion and to their clergy undisturbed enjoyment of their old rights and authority."⁴⁶

In the year of Deputations, came a Christian embassy from Najran. They were very much impressed by Rasūlullāh (SAAS) but their ingrained habits and customs prevented them from accepting Islam. They argued with him (SAAS) and he proposed a *mubāhalah*, i.e., a solemn meeting, in which both sides should summon not only their men, but their women and children, earnestly pray to Allāh, and invoke the curse of Allāh on those

who should lie. The Christians declined and instead submitted that they wanted to return to their own place, live on their own religion leaving him (SAAS) on his own religion. They also requested him (SAAS) to appoint a person who would judge between them in their property matters. He (SAAS) dismissed them in spirit of tolerance with a promise of protection from the State in return for tribute.⁴⁷ Not only this but he (SAAS) allowed them to offer prayer in *Masjid Nabawiyy* according to their own religious teaching before talking to them.⁴⁸

The charter Allâh's Messenger (SAAS) granted to the Christians of St. Catherine monastery in 6 A. H. is, in the words of S. Amir Ali "one of the noblest monuments of enlightened tolerance that the history of the world can produce."⁴⁹ The charter enjoined on all the Muslims that they should protect the Christians, defend their churches, the residences of their priests, and guard them from all injuries. They were not to be unfairly taxed; no bishop was to be driven out of his bishopric; no Christian was to be forced to reject his religion; no monk was to be expelled from his monastery; no pilgrim was to be detained from his pilgrimage. Nor were the Christian churches to be pulled down for the sake of building mosques or houses for the Muslims. Christian women married to the Muslims were to enjoy their own religion, and not to be subjected to compulsion or annoyance of any kind on that account. If Christians should stand in need of assistance for the repair of their churches or monasteries, or any other matter pertaining to their religion, the Muslims were to assist them. Should the Muslims be engaged in hostilities with outside Christians, no Christian resident among the Muslims should be treated with contempt on account of his creed. Any Muslim so treating a Christian should be accounted recalcitrant to the Messenger(SAAS). It was declared that any Muslim violating and abusing what was ordered in the charter should be regarded as a violator of Allâh's testament, a transgressor of His

commandments, and a slighter of His faith.⁵⁰

In order to appreciate Rasûlullâh's (SAAS) endeavors for the establishment of a just and peaceful order, it is important to take into consideration the condition of whole Arab society at that time. An organized administrative or judicial system was entirely absent. So there was political instability. Tribal system was there, of course, but the influence of the *Shaykh* (tribal chief) was limited to his tribe. And if a tribe became too big, it would split up into numerous divisions with a chief for each sub-tribe. Madînah, as mentioned above, was no exception to this. Its citizens lived in uncertainty and suspense, and anything likely to bind the conflicting parties (Banû Khazraj and Banû Aws) together by a tie of common interest could not but prove a boon to the city.⁵¹

Even why Rasûlullâh's (SAAS) *hijrah* to Madînah proved a remedy for the disorders from which it was suffering for Islâm gave them an orderly discipline of life and brought the unruly passions of its people under the discipline of laws enunciated by an authority superior to individual caprice.⁵² Earlier, a short time before *hijrah* took place, two deputations from Madînah came to Allâh's Messenger (SAAS), one after the other. Both of them pledged him(SAAS) their word to obey his teaching. These are called as the first *Bay'ah* (pledge) of 'Aqabah that comprised twelve men and the second *Bay'ah* (pledge) of 'Aqabah amounting to seventy-three in number. The teachings of peace of the first *bay'ah* were: "We will not appoint anything as partner to Allâh; we will not steal, neither will we commit adultery or kill our children; we will abstain from calumny and slander; we will not disobey you (Allâh's Messenger (SAAS)) in any thing that is right."⁵³

References and Notes

1. There is direct relationship between the words *al-amanah* and *al-amin*. Both words are derivatives of the word *amn*, meaning peace.
2. Ibn Hisham, *Sirah al-Nabi*, ur. tr. by Mawlana Ab. jalil Siddiqi, Delhi, 1995, V.1, pp.158-159.
3. Ibid, Pp.159-60.
4. Shibli Na'mani, *Sirah al-Nabi*, Lahore, 1408H., V.1, Pp.116-17.
5. It comprised of 12 men, 4 women. Its Amir was 'Uthman and his wife Ruqayyah was with him. See Safi al-Rahman Mubarakpori in *Al-Rahiq al-Makhtum*, Aligarh, 1988, p.143. Ibn Hisham says it was 'Uthman b. Maz'un heading the group. See his *Sirah op.cit*, V.1, P.356.
6. They were 83 men and 18 women. See Salman Mansurpori, *Rahmatun lil Alamin*, Delhi, IPH, 1980, vol. 1, P. 58.
7. Ibn Hisham, op. cit., vol. 1, p.369.
8. A branch of Khuth'am tribe.
9. Ibn Hisham, op.cit., vol. 1, p. 427-28.
10. The reason why Allah's Messenger decided to leave Makkah and why did he ask his companions to go to Habshah earlier can be understood by the fact that he would not tolerate the people's state of disbelief and would feel suffocated out of his extreme love for mankind. The holy Qur'an explains this profound grief of the holy Prophet in these words: "Thou wouldst only, perchance, fret thyself to death, following after them, in grief, if they believe not in this message." (18:6)
11. Bukhari, chap., *al madinah tanfi al khubth*, vol. 3, p. 60.
12. Karen Armstrong, *Islam a Short History*, London, 2002, p. 13.
13. It is said by Ibn Abbas and Abdullah b. Mas'ud : if the *Salah* if any one does not prevent him from *al-fahsha'* and *al-munkar* (all kinds of evil and sinful deeds), then his *Salah* increases him in nothing but loss, and to be far away from his Lord. See Tafsir Al-Qurtubi, cited in Hilali and Khan, vol. 29:45, p. 535.
14. *Sunan ibn Majah*, cited by Mas'ud Alam Qasimi in *Islami Ma'asharah mayn masjid ka kirdar*, Delhi, IOS, 1409H., p. 13.
15. Mujibullah Nadwi, *Islami Fiqh*, Delhi, Taj Company, vol, 1, p. 236.
16. Safi al-Rahman Mubarakpori, *Al- Rahiq al- Makhtum*, p. 290.
17. M. Ghazzali, *Fiqh al-Sirah*, Dar al- kitab al- Arabi, 1370H., p.

- 140-41, cited in *al Rahiq*, p. 291.
18. Details of *Mawakhat* can be seen in the books of Sirah as to how the *Ansar* offered the *Muhajirin* that if the latter wished to go for marriage the former would then divorce their more than one wives for them which the *Muhajirn* mostly did not accept. The *Ansar* also divided their properties to rehabilitate their bretheren who had migrated from Makkah.
 19. Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *Commentary of the Holy Qur'an*, ex.n. 1239.
 20. *Rahiq al- Makhtum*, p. 277.
Ibid, p. 280-83.
 21. Ibid, p. 280-83.
 22. *Ibn Hisham*, op.cit., vol. 1, p. 554-61.
 23. Dr. Hamidullah, *Khutbati Bhawalpore*, Delhi, IBF, 2000, p.241.
 24. Discussion on *Qisas* here is beyond the scope of this paper.
 25. Dr. Muhammad Yasin Mazhar Siddqi, *Ahdi Nabawi mayn Tanzimi Riyasat wa Hukumat*, Delhi, Qazi Pub. And Dist., 1988, p. 37-43.
 26. S.M. Iqbal, *The Way to Peace—A Muslim Point of View*, The Islamic Review, March 1965, p. 15.
 27. Meaning sacrosanctity.
 28. Unlike *Hajj* the *Umrah* can be performed throughout the year. Its procedure is that one should go out of the sacrosanct limit of Makkah and from outside the limit put on *Ihram*, then come to Makkah and perform *Tawwaf* (circumambulation of the holy Ka'bah), but in the first three rounds he should walk straight with moving shoulders, and then in the last four rounds he should walk in the ordinary gait, then go to Safa Marwah and perform seven rounds.
 29. See (Al-Qur'an, Al-Baqarah 2:197).
 30. Dr. Hamidullah, *Rasuli Akram ki Siyasi Zindagi*, Delhi, Taj Company, 1986, p. 105.
 31. *Al-Rahiq*, p. 528-30. This clearly indicates that the avoidance of war and talks of peace from Allah's Messenger's side were not as a matter of any weakness on his part at such a crucial juncture when the Muslims were helpless. One can imagine their commitment when latter they took oath to lay their lives for the sake of Allah when the rumour of Uthman's murder spread among them. Refer to the event of the famous *Bay'ah Ridwan* in the books of Sirah.

32. Ibid, p. 532. See also Ibn Kathir, vol. 5, part 26 (Al-Fath 48:24).
33. This is the gist of what has been written in the books of Sirah. See also *Muslim*, chap. *Sulh Hudaibiyah*, and *Bukhari*, "kitab al-Sulh" (The Book of Peacemaking), vol. 3.
34. Ibid., vol. 3, p.
35. Ibn Hisham, *op.cit.*, vol. 1, p.216.
36. *Rahiq al- Makhtum*, p. 536.
37. *Bukari*, "kitab al Sulh" chap. Ma ja'a fi al islah bayna al nas, vol. 3, p.
38. Ibid, chap. "Qawl al- Imam li ashabihi: idhhabu bina nuslih"
39. Ibid, chap. "Hal yashir al Imam bi al sulh"
40. Ibid, chap. "Al sulh bi al dayn wa al 'ayn"
41. In addition to the Sirah books, a good discussion about these sacred letters can be seen in Dr. Hamidullah's *Rasuli Akram ki Siyasi Zindagi*, p. 140-87, 233-39, 311.
42. On the *Mawakhah* see above in the foot note.
43. The Jews of Madinah were very rich people. They were money lenders on high interest rates. They would show very cruel and cunning behavior when they demanded money back from the poor debtors. In case the latter failed to return the debt in time, they would keep their women and children in mortgage. People therefore, generally hated them. But since they were under the burden of their debt, they had to suffer patiently. That automatically gave the Jews unquestioned supremacy. They also adopted the policy of divide and rule. The civil discord at Madinah caused through the long-standing feud between the Banu Khazraj and the Banu Aws was repeatedly being fuelled up by the Jews. But Rasullullah's advent bound together the warring tribes, usury was prohibited and governing powers were shifted into the hands of the holy Prophet. This made the Jews avowed enemies of Islam and the Muslims.
44. Detailed discussion on the general clemency which the holy Prophet showed towards the Jews seems out of place here.
45. Sabah al-Din, *op.cit.*, p.72.
46. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam*, Delhi, Adam Pub. & Dist. 1997, p. 47-48.
47. Ibn Hisham, *op.cit.*, vol. 1, p. 671. See also Yusuf Ali, *op.cit.*, ex.n. 400. During the time of the holy Prophet Najran was one of the provinces like al-Yaman, Taymah, etc., which Arabia was

divided into. The holy Messenger appointed a *Wali* (governor) over each one of these provinces who was enjoined to establish law and order and administration of justice.

48. Ibn. Kathir. *Op. cit.*, vol. 1, part 3, p. 72.
49. Amir Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, Delhi, Kitab Bhawan, 1997, p. 68.
50. *Ibid*, p. 69.
51. Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
52. *Ibidem*.
53. Ibn. Hisham, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 482. See also Arnold, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

