

THE SPIRITUAL QUEST OF IRAN

Unity, the Imamiyya, Spiritual Healing and World Peace

The Credo of the Imamiyya

It is Incumbent on All Surrendered People
to Search, Find, Study and Implement
the Universal Teachings of their Own Hidden Guide,
for World Peace and Unity.

PREFACE - THE AGREEMENT OF RELIGIOUS PEOPLE

On the Necessity for, and Promise of, a Unified World Leadership

What the world needs, and is promised, is unified leadership, and in its absence, a means of preparation for it.

It is evident that we, as a world, are preparing for it both personally and universally. Not only is it the promise of all three Abrahamic faiths, its very necessity and our evident preparation for it will create the space for it and it must then arise.

IN PREPARATION FOR A UNIFIED LEADERSHIP

The Confluence of Muslim and Christian Teachings

A Community of believing Muslims, Christians and Jews lies in the understanding and religious teaching that the world not only stands in need of Unified Leadership, but that its arrival is a promise in all our faiths, and that in our human evolution we are preparing for it.

The new concept of the Oneness, or Unity, of Religion requires only the given understanding that all people are, in one way or another, created by and believers in the One God Who created them, or not. And if not, then that is a personal peril. But the social preparation by nations and the United World Religions for the emergence of a Unified World Leadership requires that warring sects cease in mutual understanding, or not, and be destroyed. War is hell. Peace is Heaven. The choice is ours.

This is an especially pertinent message to all peoples of religion whose favorite pastime is derogation of others in favor of themselves and their own personal belief that they are on the right path and others are destined for the fires of hell eternally. This tendency is human universally among religions and spiritual beliefs, but the correction of these misunderstandings is the responsibility of the people of each religion, so that the One Truth of the existence of God and His Infinite Mercy To All may arise prevalent.

The concept of the Mahdi, the Hidden and Awaited Guide, is probably little known in the world of Christian peacemakers, but it is a very real and thoroughly viable

parallel to the Christian belief in the Second Coming of Jesus, which is also believed in and adhered to by Muslims.

The Meaning of "Imamiyya"

A note for Muslims who are seeking further information and guidance about the Imam al-Mahdi and who have overcome any tradition of discrimination against the Shi'a, I recommend the book "Al-Imam al-Mahdi - The Just Leader of Humanity" found on al-islam.org. If you have any arguments about this theological view, I can only insist that you study deeply the history of our religion, looking clearly, as any modern peacemaker must, at both sides of any argument you may discover. We will get together through Unity, and not through separation.

He carries the flame of love in his left hand and the sword of keen discrimination in his right.

"Imamiyya" is the word that the Shi'a use to indicate their inner and outer spiritual path.

The Shi'a have a science similar to tasawwuf (the gnostic science and study of the Sufis and Sunni Muslims interested in the path of spiritual development) called `Irfan. They do not place the same degree of importance on it as it is to them similar to the study of psychology in the Western culture, interesting and of value, but not a day to day necessity except to the few who are interested or practice professionally. Since they consider themselves on the right path already, it is thought that the benefits of the study of `Irfan are inherent in their beliefs and practices. And they are, but awareness is better than happenstance.

The Imamiyya are the people who believe in, study and prepare for the advent of the Imam al-Mahdi, the twelfth descendant of the Prophet Muhammad who is known to be still alive and waiting for the world to prepare for his just leadership. As believable as this may be to first-time students, or not, the incredible body of knowledge that has been gathered in the course of this work toward preparing the world for just government is of inestimable social value and the teachings of these people, who are the Shi'a, cannot and should not be taken lightly or dismissed as irrelevant.

Even allowing for disbelief in the physical possibility of this event, the advent of the Imam is an article of faith for the majority of Muslims, Shi'a and Sunni. It is certainly the Islamic equivalent to the awaiting of the Second Coming of the Messiah, which is also believed in by the Muslim majority. In fact, the Islamic belief is that they will arrive together and work in concert to unify the truth of faith in and surrender to the One God, which will bring the final peace and unity to an evolved humanity. It is in this belief that the prophecies of all the founders of major world religions will come true. That there will be peace on earth and that the humble shall inherit a heavenly dwelling place, and that those who fought against it shall have no place in it.

This body of social harmony and justice teachings is preserved and developed in the Muslim religious universities all over the world and held in the hearts of most

believers. Why then should it not be studied by universalists and world peace ideologists searching for the ultimate form of just world governance?

For a perfectly contemporary summary of the beliefs and arguments of the Shi`a, please read the above mentioned book.

A Word about New Thought

And how it conforms to all religious and spiritual teachings of Unity
And is opposed to sectarian Christianity

I've often imagined myself as, and may even yet be, a good Christian minister. This is in keeping with the Sufi and Islamic precept of teaching to the people what they need to know in accordance with their knowledge and understanding at the moment, i.e. administering to their needs. And that is a principle of Just Government. But becoming a minister has, up until the advent of New Thought, been undesirable and impossible for me because of my unwillingness to speak in sectarian terms contrary to my beliefs and understandings.

Christians are for the most part good people and they need help too. And when allied in an understanding unity with the peaceful goals of the real Islam, they are a necessary and major force in the efforts of religion, unity and peace to establish a successful world governance once and for all. The real Unity, which we all love and rely upon, is strong, and it is by means of this Unity that we, as inhabitants of this planet, will eventually overcome adversity.

New Thought Christianity is exactly the message of Jesus, as he himself will bear witness on the day of true judgement, and it should be brought to the rest of Christendom. It is totally the right message for Christians and places them directly under the protection and guidance of God Himself and therefore under the respect and protection of any true universal government. This is especially true of any "Islamic" implementations of government, since it is well known that all peaceful beliefs and peoples are to be protected and encouraged to seek deeper into themselves, since eventually their search will lead to a true and easily accepted understanding of Islam.

Allah says in Qur`an "Indeed you must be victorious if you are true believers." This does not mean victorious simply by means of conquest since we as Muslims are only to conquer those who seek to conquer us, but it means victorious by means of invitation through open dialog and negotiations with those who are peaceful and amenable.

The opposition of New Thought to sectarianism is overt and the reasons are obvious. New Thought is the direct awakening and awareness teachings of Jesus to his people and to the people who profess to believe in him. It is to Christendom as the Qur`an is to the Arabs, i.e. come to set right what has gone astray and to confirm that which is true from the messages that came before. It is, in a sense, the very Second Coming, or, if not, most certainly the preparation of the people for that Second Coming. Muslims and Christians believe rightly in this event, as do many other faiths.

Muslims, however, believe also that the Mahdi, the rightly guided one from among them, who is a direct line descendant from the family of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), will arise simultaneously to unify and lead the world in prayer and to establish a just, peaceful benevolent governance in the land once and for all. This is not to be the governance by the sword of force and imposition of will, as many people fear and expect. Absolutely not. It is true that opposition to it will be dealt with strongly and the guilty will be punished appropriately to their offence. But it will be a government that is truly in accordance with the wishes of the people. Just, fair Merciful and benevolent, just what we've always wanted.

It is said that the Mahdi's implementation of Islam will be so strange to the people who expected it differently that they will not recognize it and turn away from it, seeking it elsewhere in the land until they cannot find it and are forced to return to him and accept his guidance. Such is now the concept of a true and everlasting peace in the hearts of the offended and vengeful people, many of whom are Muslims. But the healing work must be done.

So it is not to be thought that a truly Surrendered or "Islamic" government under the administration of such people of quality as the Mahdi and the Messiah would not be the actual heaven on earth that the true believers and humble people of the world believe is possible and are thirsty for. It will surely be that. "And upon the friends and believers in God there shall be no fear nor shall they grieve". This is exactly the promise of all the revealed scriptures and teachings brought by all the prophets and true visionaries. The prophet Muhammad taught that true vision is a 49th part of prophecy. This is because it is in harmony with truth, and that harmony lends weight and force to the truth and thereby helps the truth to manifest. This is why we are asked, even commanded, to stay on the side of truth and abandon all attachment to falsehood. This is the very surrender that is the practice and teaching of the Buddhists.

Rest assured that Muslims in the world will never be given control as long as they are under the driving influence of their fearful, vengeful and domineering selves. This is a problem for Muslims. The sooner Muslims in the world wake up and settle their own affairs and set right their own transgressors with right education, love and understanding and punishment exercised with Justice, Forgiveness, Understanding and Mercy, the sooner the world will be ready for the promised benevolent and peaceful government. And it is our job and duty to God prepare our hearts, minds, bodies and souls for that.

And it will be alongside of and in cooperation with the Christians, and the Buddhists, and all the peaceful people of the world, so get used to it. It is the rule of "Peace Now" which will correct and set right the transgressions of the past and prevent them with mercy, understanding and benevolence in the future. It is predicted that many and most of the Christians will become, which means that they are already and whether they know it or not at this point is irrelevant, Muslim by definition. This is evident in the understandings of New Thought, which are based solely upon the singular concept of Surrender to a Benevolent God. And Muslims begin everything with "Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem", with the name (Al-llah!) of the One, the

Compassionate, the Merciful. And in our call to prayer, heard all over the world five times a day, we say "Hayya `ala as-Salah, Hayya `ala as-Salah -- Hayya `ala al-Falah, Hayya `ala al-Falah, Come to prayer, come to prayer -- come to your success and prosperity, come to your success and prosperity.

As long as our people are not in keeping with true unity there will be disunity and the perception of necessity for a fearful, oppressive government will remain. When the people demonstrate that they are both peaceful and self-governing, their power will be obvious and manifest and the fearful need for oppressive government will disappear. It is then that the just leaders will emerge. Until such time they will remain hidden. It's as simple as that. And of course there will be those who will out of fear want to cling to their old ways, and many will resist futilely and need to be convinced with arms to surrender their old ways of fear and oppression or die in their attempt to remain established. And many will be killed in the heat of the struggle simply because their offenses were too grievous to the people to be pardoned. But nevertheless, a genuine peace, with a true and loving government based on social harmony and benevolence will rule. It is not only promised, it is the will of the people.

THE SPIRITUAL QUEST OF IRAN

Introduction

The Spiritual Quest of Iran is the Spiritual Quest of the Imamiyya. It is the Spiritual Quest of the Muslims and the Spiritual Quest of Individuals. It is the World Quest for Universal Guidance. It is available through our expectation of it and our preparation for it.

The ideas on these pages are being written for presentation to many of the various organizations for world peace. It is the intent of the author to point out to western peacemakers a little known and very important part of world religion and society, specifically the esoteric understanding of the Shi`a in general as to the true nature and purpose of the Islamic revelation and reality. It is entitled "The Spiritual Quest of Iran".

It is hoped that it will be of value not just for the West, but may serve as a reminder to all of us as to what our real purpose, and the purpose of Islam, here on the planet is - to add our value to the peace, love and joy and harmony for all of humanity.

Peace and love is the work not just of newborn babes and little children but the work of the intelligent and the innocent and the wise and the knowing people of the world. We Muslims may have blown the proper implementation of this message the first time as history shows us that Islam was changed into a religion for the strictly selfish reasons of personal salvation and escape through conformity from tyrannical persecution. Hence the outcome of our position in the world. It is possible and apparent that we did not treat the message in accordance with its true value and it was as a consequence, taken away from us. Be that as it may, we should by now know better. I am convinced that we cannot and will not fail again. There is of course

no blame for the past. It was and is a part in preparation for the inevitable evolution of humanity.

In recognition of which, please take into consideration the rapidly rising Sunrise in the West. Realize that the American people are quickly realizing God in all things (abundant evidence is available for those who would care to notice) and are for the most part on the side of peace and international Unity. It's a huge, significant and ultimately successful movement. It is the actualization of the Universal Salvation Principle and Divine benevolence in action. It is the miracle we have all been looking for. We ARE taking care of our internal affairs. The healing movements taking place in the United States are unprecedented in world history, and gaining rapidly in momentum, as they are destined to do.

The new/old interpretations of significant meanings represented on these pages are certainly mine, and I do believe them to be the accepted and true meanings. But even if I am wrong, an intelligent reader will see how they are being put into practice in the search for enlightenment, guidance and success by the growing numbers of people worldwide. This search is indeed, or will certainly lead to, the search for a Universal World Guidance and to the investigation of the Shi'a `Ithna `Ashari, or "Imamiyya" understandings of the implementation of the true Islamic teachings will certainly arise. This is what I am suggesting. This is what I am doing. We must be prepared.

The more the teachings of the Imamiyya are implemented in a reasoned acceptance of current events, the more they will be recognized and accepted and dealt with by the world in the manner they were intended. I know for a fact that these reasonings are very popular and mainstream among the majority of practically minded scholars of present day Iran, and I present here with them my reasoning as to why the limiting, personally fearful and controlling views of the letter-strict and punishment-oriented thinking of the current controllers of Irani affairs must be changed. It is for the good of the world, and certainly in keeping with the wishes of the hidden guide of us all. I am writing your history as it is happening, and by doing so, helping to cause it. I hope that this presentation of the new/old facts will be considered in the proper spirit and assisted with and by the will of a reasoning people and clergy.

People want and need personal liberation first, then they will tend to the problems of the world. It is my contention that not until there are a sufficient number of spiritually liberated people (i.e. free and choosing Muslims consciously surrendered) to guarantee the ultimate success of the movement will the Imam appear, and that it is those who understand the true liberation who will be true assistants to the Iman. Just my opinion, mind you. The rest will be, as it should be, guided by their quest for freedom and will be helped by God and those already surrendered. It is happening, and will be completed, sooner or later.

I define Muslim as "liberated through being consciously surrendered, and following an inner guidance toward a unified and benevolent self-governance for the benefit of the people". Free Guided Muslims (surrendered) - is that not our goal of our society? The goal of our society and societies is one, that liberated and guided people come together to discuss means of a betterment for the world.

The student agitation is therefore for liberation, free will and change. It is only from there that they can make their free choice, or not, to accept, study and implement the teaching of Islam for world peace. The lifting of any fear for the need of popular oppression for the students of Iran will lead only to the furthering of that preparation. It will and must happen anyway, and as you will see, is not a bad thing. The need for oppression will be no more and the light of self-governance will arise in the hearts of all people, this is a guaranteed outcome. Why not simply accept it now?

The Spiritual Quest of Iran

The Spiritual quest of Iran IS the Spiritual quest of the Imamiyya and IS the Spiritual quest for Just World Guidance. For all of us who are seekers, the spiritual quest for the hidden guide is the spiritual quest. Our quest is not solely the quest to know God, which is the healing of wounds and the search for and establishment of certainty. It is also the quest for a living guidance. For without this guidance or the search for guidance we are left only with the self-evidence of the existence of God, the "wahdat ul wujud", or the "oneness of existence", which is the realized basis of all spiritual teaching. From the standpoint of that self-evident truth we are still left with the question of universal truth and world governance. This need is made obvious. So the question remains whether to be left alone to be guided by our desires for increased material well-being, which in itself is not a bad thing but without community involvement suffers the risk of leading eventually to loneliness and individual ruin, or to choose a path to follow with a community and a leader, as do the Buddhists, Christians and Sufis, to mention only a few.

The Spiritual quest and obligation of the Muslims is to solve the riddle of World Unity and resolve the differences among themselves and with the supposed 'other' religions, organizations and spiritual paths. Disagreement with this need is a sign of sectarianism and the creation of separation. Part of that quest must lead to a contemporary, not emotional, study of Islamic history and the true intent of the revelation as opposed to the intent of the people who received it and obviously interpreted it to suit their personal desires at the time.

It has been accepted over and over again by learned Sunni scholars at all major universities, such as Al-Azhar and other places of scholarship throughout history that the Shi`a people are justified in their faith and should and must be accepted by the Sunni majority as people who have preserved the truth of their message and its true intent. There are innumerable books written on this very subject by irrefutable Sunni scholars.

Unfortunate it is that these people were so persecuted and under attack that they had to fall back into a life of defensiveness and literary argumentation and were not afforded the opportunity to promulgate the true intent of the message. So their hearts too, got buried, and we now witness the final manifestation of that in a clerical rulership of Iran, where the rule tries to be by the letter but not by the heart. But it is incumbent upon us to try once again, in the spirit of universal peace, to be accepting of all peoples and their creeds, and especially investigate the claims of the esotericists among the Shi`a, most of whom refer to themselves as the Imamiyya. For it is with

them that the concept of an awaited universal guide, not just for Muslims but for the whole world, resides.

It is understood by the Imamiyya and a great Muslim majority that the awaited universal guide will not appear until the environment of the world has been made, by the people, secure for him. This is in keeping with the spiritual law of human personal development also. A child born in an insecure environment will be forced by parental interpretation of circumstance to conform to the needs of that environment. He will naturally and eventually give up and lose contact with his original intent and set about in a semi-cooperative way to help in the establishment of a peaceful environment, sacrificing by force his own truth and spiritual agenda until such time as he is secure enough to pay attention to the rediscovery of his own true nature and personal intent.

Unfortunate again, that many of these lives remain so embroiled in the putting out of endless fires, even to the extent of creating them because they have gotten so good at putting them out, that it never occurs to them there might be something better to do, another, or a better, way.

Enter at this point the "spiritual" teachings of a mythic and "mystic" quest, and the necessary decision that everyone faces at one point or another in their lives, to pay attention to it, or not. The acceptors of the challenge become the believers and enter into the pathway of self-investigation and spiritual reform, leading to the transformation of self and others, and this is how the true Islam of genuine Surrender to Peace is promulgated. The rejecters of it choose of their own accord to remain in denial, and for the most part out of fear of meeting their Lord. These people can and should be helped to understand the Mercy of God by the example and teachings of the others who have genuinely surrendered and who truly see the right way.

The guides to this Surrender and the pathway in it are, for the most part in Islam, the Sufis and the enlightened among the rightly guided populace. They have in common that they have received their truth and authority from the family of the prophet (Ahli-bait) themselves. For the general knowledge of all it must be accepted that all faiths have within them the concept of leadership and the principles of guidance and harmonious cooperation in peace.

The concept of an awaited universal guide is not exclusive to the Muslims. Christians also await the return of the Messiah, and the Jewish people are still awaiting theirs. There is, however, a lot of confusion within the Islamic world concerning him, his identity, time of arrival, conditions for emergence, and his intent. All agree that his emergence will be the certain end of unbelief, but it is said that his criterion for judgment will be different from that of the people, and that he will know the truthful by the hearts and not by the outward profession. This necessitates a preparation on the part of the Muslims in their hearts which we accept. This is literally the creation of a welcoming and safe place in our hearts and in our environment, the world, for a just administration by the arriving messengers of the truth of the times.

Many spiritual organizations in the West and the East are unified in the same opinion, that the world must be brought by personal, individual, group, national and worldwide effort to the place where it is safe for a true world leadership to emerge. This means that personal prejudices must be investigated and cleared away. These are, in any case, the imperatives for salvation, both personal and worldwide.

The obligations of the Muslims are many, but paramount among them is to love the family of Muhammad (pbuh) and to practice the Sunnah (spiritual practice) of "Rahmatun-lil `Alameen", being nothing but a "Mercy unto all the worlds". Each person on the planet, by God's leave and Mercy, lives in one of these worlds, so it is then obvious that it is the duty of Muslims to practice compassion to all and to speak to each according to their needs and understanding. The understanding and practice of compassion (Rahma) is also the point and purpose of the Buddhist teachings as well as the Christian.

Religion is only rejected for two reasons. One is its abuse by its holder upon the rejecters, causing them to flee from its oppressive abuse, which is their right and duty, and God is with the oppressed; and the other is simply that 'other things', i.e. personal concerns, are taking priority in the mind. If true religion can be shown to be not just the understanding of these 'other things', but their actual resolution, then the mercy and understanding is demonstrated and the path of the real solution is opened.

Oppression is discrimination against any person or group of people. Discrimination is always a result of ignorance. If we really knew the plight and circumstances of people, our hearts of mercy would open to them. But it is our lack of understanding of the human situation that causes us to discriminate against, and thereby oppress, others. Qur`an says, "They seek to destroy that which they do not understand".

It is often said that we become what we hate. Thus the rich eventually taste poverty and the oppressors eventually become oppressed. Because by fleeing from it they are affirming it, not resolving it. And it is from oppression that the oppressors are fleeing in the first place, and, in an attempt to guarantee their own safety, they feel it necessary to oppress others.

In the case of Iran, it is inevitable that the youth, after fleeing the oppression of their very defensive/offensive fathers, will turn, on their own, to the spiritual quest for real truth, based on non-violence, non-oppression, true freedom and the search for the truth of their reality. But they must, and I say must, discover their own reality first. They cannot and will not accept it hearsay. This is the case for any child.

After studying the myriad of spiritual paths open to them by the West, they will come to some conclusions. One of these conclusions is that there is truth in all of them. After exhaustively investigating the truth in all paths they will necessarily have to investigate and realize that which is true in Islam, and then in their own particular history, that of the Shi'a and the `Ithnal `Ashari, or Imamiyya.

It is at that point that they will discover the reality of the Hidden Imam and his particular parallel to their own lives. He is the "Hidden Guide". He went undercover as a result of the intense oppression that ruled the 'Islamic' world at the time. Like all

"inner children" he hid out and took on the colors of the environment so as to not be discovered and persecuted. And likewise, he waits for us to create a safe environment for his eventual emergence.

In an oppressive world, we are all doing the same. Yet nevertheless, this creates in our hearts a yearning for truth, safety and true self-expression that result in what is known as a 'spiritual' quest for our 'true' self. It is kept for the most part secret and shared only cautiously with those who might be of like mind. Hence we have the 'punk' generation in the USA.

When they realize the desperate need for world peace and a truly universal, humanitarian government, which they will and do, they will realize the universal value of the true teachings of Islam. They will also realize the point and purpose of the occultation of the Twelfth Iman, the "hidden" guide, who exists, in part, in all of us.