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دار العلوم زكريا

ص ب ١٠٧٨٦ لينيشيا. ١٨٢٠
مقام ٣٨٥ جولدن هاوي، زكرا بلك ٨،
خلوتنج، اوفيتيا الجنوبية
هاتف: ١٠٨١ / ٨٥٩ ١٩١٢ / ٨٥٩ ١١ ٢٧
فاكس: ١١٣٨ / ٨٥٩ ١١ ٢٧

Multifaith Activities and The Abrahamic Accord – Misuse of the Name of Sayyiduna Ibrahim ‘Alaih-i-Salaam

Sayyiduna Ibrahim عليه السلام *Khaleelullah* (the bosom friend of Allah Ta’ala) has been praised with many qualities in the Noble Quran. He has been termed as Qaanitan (devoutly obedient), Ummatan (worthy of being emulated or an embodiment of goodness found in an entire nation), Haleem (extremely tolerant), Musliman (completely submissive), Awwaham Muneeb (tender-hearted, ever-penitent) and amongst other qualities, Shaakiran (grateful). His generosity, sincerity and spirit of sacrifice are renowned.

One quality that Allah Ta’ala praises Sayyiduna Ibrahim عليه السلام with at numerous places is that of Hannifan. Haneef means one who is purely right and steadfast on the deen of truth, forsaking all other pathways. *Khaleelullah* عليه السلام demonstrated this quality time and again even when he was an absolute minority, rather an individual, against an entire nation who were entrenched in shirk (polytheism). He was not swayed by being a minority by the greater good of a united nation or even family unity in engaging his own father respectfully. He did not succumb even when his life was threatened with the fire. In summary, he did not compromise his deen for anything.

Sayyiduna Ibrahim عليه السلام warned his nation that national unity and mutual love which is based on compromising the essentials of belief will result in eternal disassociation and mutual hatred, saying in Surah al Ankabut:

“Indeed, you have only taken idols for worship as a means of attaining mutual love between yourselves in the life of this world. But then on the day of Resurrection you will disbelieve in one another and you will curse each other. Your eternal abode is the fire of Hell. For the likes of you there shall not be any helper (against divine punishment).” (21:25)

The Abrahamic and other Accords attempt to give legitimacy to other faiths as a means of eternal salvation in the Aakhirah. The only means of eternal salvation for anybody after the coming of Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم is to enter the fold of Islam, believing in Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم as the final messenger of Allah Ta’ala.

It is therefore ironic that the very name of Sayyiduna Ibrahim عليه السلام is misused for promoting exactly the opposite of what he stood for. The Abrahamic Accords, other “Accords”, multifaith and interfaith projects compromises the very principles of deen or entails being part of prayers of other religions, albeit with flowery slogans such as peace and unity, (the pure shariah of Islam has demonstrated peaceful coexistence on the premise of justice better than any being), is exactly what Sayyiduna Ibrahim عليه السلام stood against.

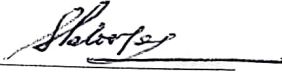
Over and above warning his people emphatically about the harms of associating partners with the One Great Allah, he completely disassociated and distanced himself from them and their activities. He even took it further by declaring open enmity towards them until they came to the deen of truth. Allah Ta’ala defines this as the excellent model in Surah al Mumtahinah:

“There is truly an excellent model for you in (the firm stand) of Ibrahim and those with him when they said to their people: we are free of association with you and with all that you worship, apart from Allah. we have disbelieved in you (for your disbelieving ways). Thus, open enmity and hostility have become apparent between us and you forever, until you believe in Allah alone.” (60: 4)

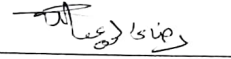
Similarly, our beloved Nabi صلى الله عليه وسلم emphatically warned the disbelievers of Makkah at the very outset in clear terms, without compromise, even when being severely persecuted. Suarah al Kafiroon was revealed when the disbelievers made an offer of a multifaith compromise that would end persecution of the Sahabah رضي الله عنهم. The apparent repetition of four verses is to lay emphasis and stress on not compromising. It also indicates that the One Allah Ta’ala worshiped by the Muslims and the many idols worshiped by the disbelievers can never be joined into one religion. Some commentators opine that the apparent repetition is also to refute the compromise being made in the present or in the future, and that even the methods of worship can never be mixed. The concluding verse: “For you is your religion (or recompense) and for me is my religion (recompense)” (109: 6), means the two religions can never be joined in any way whatsoever, and dispels any hope of a compromise being made in the perfect and complete deen of Islam. It definitely does not mean that one has a choice of a religion in order to attain eternal salvation. It is therefore highly lamentable that an incorrect interpretation (tahreef) of the very surah is used to actually promote interfaith activities in the Tasheel series, which would be highly detrimental to the Imaan of young learners in the Makaatib.

The nephew of Sayyiduna Ibrahim عليه السلام, Sayyiduna Lut عليه السلام was sent as a Nabi to the city of Sodom and its surrounding areas. Together with disbelief, they were the first people to initiate homosexuality. Sayyiduna Lut عليه السلام prohibited them continuously, until eventually they were destroyed with more divine punishment than any other nation. Sayyiduna Lut عليه السلام, together with prohibiting them from this act also unambiguously distanced himself from their actions when they threatened him with banishment, saying: "I am indeed of those who severely despise your actions." (26: 168)

In summary, there is no room for compromise in the complete and pure deen of Islam.



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Mufti Ridha al Haq