

## **Peace: Not a Dream, but a Reality**

I live in India, a proud nation which has, time and time, seen its brave sons and daughters fight against injustice and evil and be the bearers of peace and harmony. In the words of A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, one of the greatest Indian men to ever live, "Where there is righteousness in the heart, there is beauty in the character. When there is beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home. When there is harmony in the home, there is order in the nation. When there is order in the nation, there is peace in the world."

We need peace now, more than ever. As the world falls deeper into darkness and calamity, be it COVID-19, Climate Change or civil wars, we should not focus on what divides us, but rather on what unites us- our humanity. Where did Sardar Vallabhai Patel get the strength to start revolutions like the Civil Disobedience Movement or the Quit India Movement, when the very people of India were being divided based on their caste, religion etc? He, and every other freedom fighter, believed that we could overcome the enmity and hatred between us, because they were mere dust in front of the power of peace, unity, and compassion.

"You find peace not by looking, but by giving." This is such a beautiful and eye opening quote by Mr Debashish Mridha, not only because it perfectly sums how peace is actually about, but also as it is a wake up call for the world about our distorted vision of everlasting peace.

Peace is something that we all aspire for, but have not achieved yet. The reason is because we preach and demand for peace in this world, but remain silent spectators of the injustice around us. We expect a messiah to descend from the heavens and save the world and its children of the excruciating pain they go through every day. Yet, we do not believe that we can all be the messiahs.

It is the 21st century, yet still we see an upheaval of crimes against innocent Black and Asian lives. 75 years after the Holocaust that forever tainted our history pages, we continue to see the Uyghur Genocide where Uyghur Muslims are forced to live the most inhumane conditions, simply because of their religion! Remember our dreams of no poverty, no hunger, no discrimination, no wars, or no crimes? Remember our dreams of hoping that

every child in this world slept with a smile on their face, untainted with evil or harm?

Therefore, the first step for achieving peace is to not view it as a dream, but an attainable reality. There is peace even in a storm; we can do this!

We must stop looking for someone to be our eternal savior, and take the mantle of peace in our hands. Lao tzu once said “If you want to establish peace in the world, there also must be peace among and in the nations... If one wishes for peace in the cities, then there also must exist peace between neighbours. And all this begins with peace of mind”. There is such a plethora of spellbinding diversity of races, cultures, languages, religions, people etc around us. Mankind is so blessed to witness the celebration of its kind everyday and witness the reaping of its seeds of united hardwork. Then why do we let this blessing convert to societal boundaries that divide us? We must look beyond that distorted facade and recognise that our unity lies in our human compassion, our ability to feel and love for the people we care for.