

## Article

A Muslim is identified by what he does and not what he thinks : Dr. Aslam Parvaiz  
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Dr Aslam Parvaiz

New Delhi: Prof (Dr) Mohammad Aslam Parvaiz, former Vice-Chancellor of Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), Hyderabad on Saturday underlined that the Quran does not allow cherry picking and he whose knowledge and practice is limited to only 3.5 verses of the holy book is not a Muslim.

Elaborating this , Dr Parvaiz said the problem with our Muslim brethren is that their Islam is limited to 3.5 verses which includes namaaz, roza, Haj, etc., and a majority of Muslims mistakenly believe that if they follow these practices then they are fulfilling all commands of Allah.

He was speaking at a webinar organised by the Central Board of Dawoodi Bohra Community on June 20, 2020, on the topic Current Indian Situation and Muslim Society – A Qur’anic Perspective.

Continuing his speech, he called out this belief saying these 3.5 verses do not make the Qur’an. “Just because one is not following the rest does not mean the rest does not exist,” he said, adding, “Those who have not read and understood the Qur’an are not even aware of what else is written.”

The professor gave a whole new perspective to the interpretation of the holy Quran. By highlighting the social standing of Muslims in India and the community’s limited exposure in various professional sectors, he said the population of 14.2% Muslims in India but their share is 3% in the IPS/IAS field. He further said that a disappointing 4.4% Muslim representation in the health sector while there were approximately 21% Muslims in Indian jails and another 25% of them were beggars. He regretted that even after 70 years of independence, the country’s Muslims continued to lag severely behind other communities in the socio-economical spheres and merely served as vote banks for politicians.

Bringing in a reference here to the Qur’an, the professor said that if Muslims want to improve their lot and be accepted in the Indian and global society, they must read the Qur’an, understand it and then follow it because Qur’an teaches one to be a good human being.

“If we improve ourselves as human beings, speak well, respect everyone, tolerate everything and behave well then we will not be rejected by others,” he stated, stressing that the problems Muslims face in the society can be resolved if they worked on these aspects.

Dr Parvaiz even blamed the social media for contributing to the spread of unrest in the society. Most people tend to believe whatever is circulated on social media and follow it leading to more problems, he said.

He reiterated that every Muslim has to improve self because the Qur'an allows no exception. "Adopt a holistic system of education and submit yourself to the divine order", he said.

He clarified that submission to the divine order is different from prayer and worship referring to the common belief that if one prays and observes all rituals then one's responsibility as a Muslim is complete. "You can become a Muslim only by submission to the divine order. No cherry picking is allowed", he stressed.

The professor said that to become a true Muslim, read the entire Qur'an, understand it and adopt it completely as your lifestyle....adopt all practices written in the Qur'an. "Do we see any chaos in Nature, he questions. "No, everything is in perfect balance. And when you subscribe to this system then you will attain peace because imaan inside means peace outside," he added.

He further elaborated that the holy book teaches Muslims to respect all humans. "Whenever you speak, speak good because it is the absolute hukum of Allah. If someone says something bad about your Allah it does not mean you should hit back at him. The Qur'an commands you to always speak the good. We are committing a sin whenever we speak ill of anyone," he said.

"As a true Muslim, I am what I do and not what I think," said Dr Parvaiz. "My amal is a reflection of what I am and it is very important that one's deeds have to be compatible with his beliefs."

He concluded his hour-long talk saying that for the Muslim there is no other way other than to return to the Qur'an.

"Read it and follow it. Understand it and put it to practice," he said. "The Qur'an is not meant to be kept on a shelf in the house."

The talk was followed by a Q&A session and the professor answered several questions from participants that had joined the webinar. Thousands attended the event through Zoom and Facebook.

The webinar was hosted by Shaukat Ajmeri, vice-chairperson of the Central Board of Dawoodi Bohra Community (CBDDBC). Introduction of the guest and topic was given by Irfan Ali Engineer, general secretary of CBDDBC. Cmdr Mansoor Ali Bohra, chairperson of CBDDBC, ended the event with a vote of thanks.

Dr Parvaiz heads the Islamic Foundation for Science and Environment, India, and has a doctorate in plant physiology from Aligarh Muslim University. He is a science communicator with five books and more than 350 popular science write-ups to his credit. He recently established a Qur'an Center in New Delhi where students of Grade IX and X are provided free coaching for Math, Physics, Chemistry and Biology and also imparted knowledge of Qur'anic teachings with meanings.