

Utah Valley Ministerial Association

September 7th 2010

Love All Abraham's Children

Religious Leaders throughout Utah Valley are encouraged to share this statement with their communities of faith on this 9/11 weekend:

As members of the Utah Valley Ministerial Association we work for religious tolerance and a spirit of love between all believers. We decry the anti-Muslim actions and plans of many church leaders and members, such as those of the Dove World Outreach Center. Misguided or confused about the love of neighbor by which our respective faiths call us to live, leaders and members of this church and others are engaged in harassment of Muslims, and in the planning of an "International Burn the Qur'an Day," to be held on September 11th. Such open acts of hatred are not a witness to Christian faith, but a grave trespass against the ninth commandment, a bearing of false witness against our neighbor. They contradict what Judaism, Islam and Christianity stand for. That is why we call on our brothers and sisters on this 9/11 weekend to "Love All Abraham's Children".

Bereshit (Genesis) 35:9-11 tells us how Jacob became Israel: "God appeared to Jacob again when he came from Paddan-aram, and he blessed him. God said to him, 'Your name is Jacob; no longer shall you be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.' So he was called Israel. God said to him, 'I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall spring from you.'"

Hebrews 11:17-19 reminds us how Jesus' crucifixion stands in the tradition of Isaac's Binding: "By faith Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He who had received the promises was ready to offer up his only son, of whom he had been told, 'It is through Isaac that descendants shall be named after you.' He considered the fact that God is able even to raise someone from the dead—and figuratively speaking, he did receive him back."

AL-BAQARA (THE COW) 2:135-137 reminds us to stick with our roots and focus on the one true God of Abraham:

"They say: 'Become Jews or Christians if ye would be guided to salvation.' Say thou: 'Nay! I would rather the Religion of Abraham the True, and he joined not gods with Allah.'

Say ye: 'We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to all prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: And we bow to Allah.'

So if they believe as ye believe, they are indeed on the right path; but if they turn back, it is they who are in schism; but Allah will suffice thee as against them, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing."

Judaism, Islam and Christianity are siblings and equally children of our father Abraham. Let us this weekend remember to love one another as our God loves us.