

Chapter Nine: The Attitude to Peace

Peace in general is exalted in the Egyptian school textbooks, both as a humane and as a religious value. From Grade 2 onward it is declared to be Egypt's goal. But when examined more deeply, it turns out to be something conditional, both on the political and religious levels. On the political level, peace is made conditional on reciprocity on the part of the enemy, which is interpreted as acceptance of the Arabs' demands. On the religious level, peace is made conditional on the interests of the Muslims at a given moment. If they are stronger than the enemy, peace is legally rejected. The meaning of peace in itself – as presented to the Egyptian students – does not exclude war, which becomes tantamount to exalting war in the name of peace.

Peace Is an Exalted Value Upheld by Egypt

The Arab Republic of Egypt loves peace.
Booklet of Arabic Script, Grade 2, (2002) p. 50

Egypt has not aspired to war, but to peace.
Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 8, Part 1, (2002) p. 59

We, the Egyptians, ...love peace...
Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 2 (2002) p. 3

The world is about to [...believe...] in the peace for which Egypt calls."
Language Exercises, Grade 8 (2002) p. 109

The Way of Power and Prosperity

What do we learn in this lesson?

2. The value of peace and fraternity among people.
3. The importance of the nation's unity...

Implied Issues

- Tolerance and education for peace.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) p. 9

"The Nobel Prize

...Implied Issues:

- Education for peace.

Arabic Language: Read and Discuss, Grade 5, Part 2 (2002) p. 37

Peace, rights and justice are exalted values we should stick to and uphold.
Arabic Reading, Grade 9, (2002) back cover

The Hymn of Peace

Peace, peace, peace, peace
We have made peace our motto
And in the name of peace we have gathered here
Let you make our days, my God
Upon this land, glad tidings of peace
Peace, peace, peace, peace
O Lord, you are peace
And peace is from you, and also peace greetings
To your command the people's affairs are submitted
And the people's hearts are in front of you
If you so wished, harmony would prevail on earth
And if you so wished peace would prevail on earth...

Exercises

Answer:

- A. What is the Egyptians' motto?
- C. What does the poet ask from God?

Arabic Language: Read and Think, Grade 3, Part 2, (2002) p. 15

Write the following in the regular [Naskhi] script:

We have made peace our motto and in the name of peace we have gathered here

Arabic Language: Read and Think, Grade 3, Part 2 (2002) p. 16

Peace has become a goal.

Arabic Language: Read and Discuss, Grade 5, Part 2 (2002) p. 38

The flags of peace flutter over the region of the Middle East.

Language Exercises, Grade 9 (2002) p. 110

We have filled it [the Arab East] with a smiling peace.

Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) p. 24

The Egyptians support the call for international peace.

Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) p. 35

People want peace to prevail.”

Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) p. 27

The people love peace.

Arabic Language: Read and Express – Exercise Booklet, Grade 4, Part 2 (2002) p. 16-answers side

Peace is the hope of [all] peoples.

Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) p. 6

Write an essay about the importance of peace in the life of peoples.

Write an essay about the role of Egypt's sons in returning the rights to their owners, in liberating the land and in establishing the peace process.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts – Exercise and Activity Booklet, Grade 8, Part 2, (2002) p. 23

Peace is a tree with an extended shadow, whose branches die by the fire of war.

Booklet of Arabic Script, Grade 4, (2002) pp. 24, 61

Peace is an Islamic Value

The peace of Al-Qadr Night [the 27th of Ramadan] is a peace [intended to be] eternal. Peace [as a Heavenly gift] is never disturbed. Peace was sent down [to mankind] on Al-Qadr Night, but it is we who implement it or not. If we implement it, the peace of Al-Qadr Night will be extended to all times. [But] if we hinder its mission, then peace will remain as one that was sent down on Al-Qadr Night, and we will be the ones who have refrained from benefiting from this peace.

The Miracle of the Qur'an, Grade 9, (2002) p. 89

Islam calls for security and peace in His words [in the Qur'an]: "If they incline to peace make peace with them and put your trust in God..." And [God also] said: "Do not commit aggression. God does not love the aggressors." ... Thus we see that Islam is bent upon establishing internal security and [upon] establishing external security, so that the people will live in stability and tranquility and not be terrified or afraid.

Security in Islam, Grade 10, (2002) pp. 26-27

If they incline to peace make peace with them and put your trust in God.

Booklet of Arabic Script, Grade 4 (2002) pp. 26, 63

The Qur'an calls for peace many times, as in the [following] words: "If they incline to peace make peace with them and put your trust in God", "O Believers, enter peace all of you and do not follow in the footsteps of the devil, for he is a true enemy of yours". Therefore, no wonder that the greeting

of Islam is “peace upon you”, for Islam is a religion of peace for [all] mankind and it wants the banners of security and tranquility to flutter over it. **(Reading, Grade 11 (2002) p. 9)**

Islam is a religion of peace for [all] mankind. What are the laws that it has enacted in order to realize that?

Reading, Grade 11 (2002) p. 10

The law of Islam orders its followers to make peace with those who make peace with them and not to unsheathe their weapons except against the oppressors. God has said [in the Qur’an]: “If they incline to peace, make peace with them and put your trust in God. It is surely He who hears all and knows ” (Al-Anfal, 61)

... The law of Islam respects the treaties and pacts that are concluded between Muslims and non-Muslims and orders its followers that if there is a truce, or an agreement to stop fighting for a period of time, or a contract of free passage for individuals, between themselves and their enemies, they [i.e., the Muslims] should be faithful to their treaties, as being faithful to one’s treaties is one of the traits of God, one of the traits of His prophets and one of the traits of the good.

... In short, the law of Islam makes peace with those who make peace with it and orders its followers to fight those who commit aggression against their faith, or homeland, or their honor, or their freedom, or their dignity, or their property...

Peace in the law of Islam is the rule. As for wars – they are exceptional cases not recognized by the law of Islam, except for the purpose of defending religion, or the homeland, or life, or property, or honor, or freedom, or human dignity, or for the purpose of assisting the oppressed, making truth prevail, and abolishing falsehood.

Spreading peace, security, and tranquility, as well as cooperation among the people in [matters of] kindness and piety [all] are a fundamental principle in Islam. The holy Qur’an has also made peace one of God’s names and one of His attributes... The Muslims’ greeting to one another, which joins together man and his brother man, is peace [salam]. A Muslim will say to another [Muslim] whenever he meets him or departs from him “Peace upon you and God’s mercy and blessings”. In the noble [prophetic] sayings [hadith], the Messenger says: “God has made peace our nation’s greeting and our Protected People’s protection...”

... Thus, we find that peace, protection and tranquility are fundamentals of the law of Islam. Moreover, the word “Islam” in itself is derived from the letters of “peace” [salam].

Therefore, we conclude our talk about peace in Islam with this prayer: “God, You are peace, peace is from You and peace returns to You. Greet us, O God, with peace and remove from our ranks malice, hatred and feud.”

Exercise

- Islam calls for peace. When does it resort to jihad?

Facilitated [Islamic] Jurisprudence, Grade 8, (2000) pp. 264-67

Write the following [sentence], once in a regular script and once in a cursive script:

“God, you are peace and peace is from you”.

Arabic Language: Read and Discuss, Grade 5, Part 2 (2002) p. 38

Suffice it [to say] that the word “peace” is one of God’s splendid names and [one] of His great characteristics... Suffice it [to say] further that the term “Islam” itself is derived from [the word] “peace” [salam]. Anyone who looks attentively at the precepts of the Islamic religion, will see that it, of [all] religions and missions, is most entitled to be named the religion of peace, because the light of peace radiates in its commands and interdictions...

Islam has ordered its followers to spread this virtue among themselves and among all peoples... The law of Islam has ordered its followers to spread the spirit of peace even with the ignorant ones... It also ordered them to respond to the spirit of peace even with their enemies...

The Creator has made [the phrase] “the House of Peace” [Dar al-Salam] one of the names for Paradise ... and has made the very word “peace” the believers’ greeting there... He has made [the phrase] “Peace upon you and God’s mercy and blessings” the greeting of the Muslims among themselves.

There are many noble Prophetic Sayings [Ahadith] that have ordered the Muslims to feel the spirit of peace in their souls and in their transactions with others, so that no harm or aggression [is caused] by them to others."

Studies in Theology: Tradition and Morals, Grade 11 (2001) pp. 309-313

Legal Restrictions in Islam regarding Peace

As can be seen from the following quotations, peace in Islam is not an absolute value, but rather it is conditional. If it coincides with the Muslims’ interests, or whenever they become too weak to fight, peace is permitted. Otherwise, war is preferred.

When is it permissible to leave non-Muslim enemies [Ahl al-Harb] alone?

If the Muslims have [enough] power it is not proper for them to leave the non-Muslim enemies alone, because there is no interest in that, as it entails giving up Jihad in essence and in form, or delaying it, because “leaving alone” means requesting quarter and the abandonment of fighting. God has said [in the Qur’an]: “Do not falter or sue for peace when you have gained the upper hand.”

If they [i.e., the Muslims] do not have [enough] power, then, there is no objection to it, because it is better for the Muslims [than war]. God has said: “If they incline to peace, make peace with them”, namely, if they incline to making peace, incline to that [too] and make peace with them. What should be considered here is the interest of Islam and the Muslims, and it [i.e., making peace] is permissible when it is in [the Muslim’s] interest and not [permissible] when it is not [in such interest], because they have to protect themselves by disengagement... If disengagement is in the Muslims’ interest, it is Jihad in essence, as defense against evil is intended [here]...

If he [i.e., the Muslim commander] left them [the infidels] alone and then thought it more advisable to fight [them], he [should] send a notification of renunciation to their king and then fight them... Because [the Muslims’] interest is what should be considered, as we have explained – if that interest changes, then, sending a notification of renunciation [to the enemy’s king] is Jihad and not doing that means the abandonment of Jihad in essence and in form. Sending a notification of renunciation is inevitable in order to guard against [the possibility that the enemy will accuse the Muslims of] treachery, which is forbidden [by Islam]... There should be a condition of a certain period of time during which the notification of renunciation will reach their camp... And if they have come to the Muslims’ camp, they should be given quarter until they return to their fortress...

It is permissible [for the Muslim commander] to leave them [i.e., the enemies] alone in return for money or something else – if that is in the Muslims’ interest and [if] they are in need of money.

Selections for the Explanation of [the Book of] "Selection", Grade 11 (2002) pp. 333-334

“Therefore do not falter or sue for peace when you have gained the upper hand” (Muhammad, 35)... that is, do not be too weak to fight the infidels and do not invite them to make peace and reconciliation because you are afraid of them and show [your] weakness in front of them, as that is a kind of a disgraceful behavior which is rejected by your religion’s precepts... In other words, do not be weak and do not yield to your enemies while it is you who have the upper hand, i.e., more able to have victory and subjugate your enemies...

... The prohibition not to call for peace and reconciliation with the infidels is when such a peace, or such reconciliation, leads to the humiliation of the Muslims or shows them to be the weak party that accepts the conditions of their enemies. But if the call for peace does not harm the Muslims' interests, then there is no objection to accepting it, in accordance with God's words: "If they incline to peace, make peace with them and put your trust in God."

Commentary on the Surahs of Muhammad, Al-Fath, Al-Hujurat and Qaf, Grade 11, (2002) pp. 82-84

Jihad in God's Cause

Implied Issues

Education for peace...

With that peace [the short-lived peace of Hdaybiyyah between the Prophet and the people of Mecca – 628 CE], Islam's authority increased, the Muslims grew in number and their power increased during the truce period. It became obvious that the peace of Hdaybiyyah was tremendously good for Islam and the Muslims.

Islamic Religious Education, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) pp. 44, 46

Conditional Peace

Peace is conditioned, of course, on the other side's readiness for reconciliation. Otherwise, war should be pursued. As long as the other party's sincerity is in doubt, one should be prepared for war. The other party's sincerity is judged by its readiness to comply with the political demands of the Arabs. In other words, conditional peace, or "just peace", rather than peace for peace's sake, is the type that is sought.

We keep the peace with those who keep the peace with us and we show enmity to those who show enmity to us; we defend our homeland with our souls.

Booklet of Arabic Script, Grade 4, (2002) pp. 37, 74

It is our right to [...make peace...] with those who make peace with us.

Language exercise, Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1, (2002) p. 38

If They Incline to Peace

What do we learn in this lesson?

- When war becomes a necessity

Implied Issues

- Tolerance and education for peace
- National unity and fighting extremism

As we have mentioned regarding the meaning of peace in the previous lesson, war sometimes becomes a necessity in order to preserve peace, avert aggression, defend the homeland and purify the land of oppression and tyranny. Therefore, every nation and every state should have an interest in creating a strong army, which will be armed with most modern weapons and developed military equipment, so that the enemies will fear it and the covetous ones will hesitate to approach the borders of this homeland and [infringe] its rights.

But if the aggressor backs off from war and asks for peace, then God orders us to agree to this demand and incline to peace...

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts, Grade 7, Part 1 (2002) p. 24

Society of Peace

What do we learn in this lesson?

- The importance of peace in life
- Peace does not contradict preparation for war
- The Arabs' past proves that they are capable of reclaiming their rights

Implied Issues

Education for peace

Peace is a nice word, a delight to the ear and a cause of happiness to the soul. There is nothing better for a man than to live in a durable peace with himself, with his family, with his neighbors and with all things surrounding him, so that he can live a stable life and devote himself to his work. Thus, he will achieve prosperity for himself and for his nation, and live secure in his society...

My greeting to the society of peace
While my hand [still] holds the sword
If they incline to peace, then there is peace
Fluttered over by doves of pigeons
If they incline to war, then there is war
The horror of which makes the boy's head become white-haired...

Explanation

In this text the poet speaks of peace and of the Arabs' necessity to be awake when they seek peace, for seeking peace does not mean resorting to ease and

inattention regarding what surrounds us and what is planned for us. The poet says: I am sending my greetings to the society of peace and at the same time my hand is holding the sword on guard against any treason and in preparation for any possibility. If the enemies incline to peace, then we are a people of peace and doves of pigeons will then rush to express the peace we hope for.

If this is a deceit and they [actually] want betrayal and war, then there will be a fierce war against them and its severe calamities will make the little children white-haired...

Exercises

- What are the conditions of real peace, as you [might] understand from the verses?
- Give example from the text that would express the following: Peace does not mean laxity and negligence.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts, Grade 7, Part 2 (2002) pp. 29-32

In spite [of the fact] that President [Husni] Mubarak declared that peace had become Egypt's strategic choice, he did his best to develop the military industries and to strengthen the powerful army, which had formerly gained victory over Israel in the October War [1973]. He continues to equip it with the latest developments in weaponry in the world of developed weapons, on land, in the air, and at sea, until it has become today one of the strongest armies in the Middle East, the best in terms of training and the most modern in terms of armaments.

History for Public High School, Grade 11, (2002) p. 248

Peace is one of God's sublime names. It is the greeting to those we meet and a precious wish of mankind. Yet it is amazing that you find one who talks of peace while his land is full of weapons of mass destruction, and he kills and destroys and then sits and weeps about the damage inflicted upon his own people. How can a person contradict himself by speaking of peace, while preparing for a destructive war?

What do we learn in this lesson?

Security is [achieved] within real peace...

Implied Issues

Tolerance and education for peace

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts, Grade 6, Part 1 (2002) p. 35

Exercises

2. What is the value of peace in our life?

6. When does war become a necessity?

12. Discuss with your classmates the following questions:

- Israel has nuclear weapons with which it threatens its neighbors
- The spread of weapons of mass destruction, such as missiles and chemical and biological weapons, among many states.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts, Grade 7, Part 1, (2002) pp. 26-27

The world has come to believe that the flags of peace in the Middle East will not flutter unless the Arabs get back every inch of their land and unless the Palestinian people gains its right to honorable life on its land. The first signs of peace have just appeared in the Arab region.

Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1, (2002) p. 6

Peace is the peoples' hope and it will not be realized except by responding to the call of homeland and duty, and in firm cooperation between the peoples of the [Middle East] region.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts – Exercise and Activity Booklet, Grade 7, Part 1, (2002) p. 15

We support a just peace.

Our Beautiful Language: Grammar and Grammatical Exercises, Grade 6, Part 1, (2002) p. 19

The Meaning of Peace

The main theme in this respect is that “war is peace’s partner” and peace is not necessarily the opposite of war.

Unit 2: Peace is Man’s Hope

The lessons of this unit deal with the issue of peace. They explain the broader meaning of peace on the levels of individuals, families, societies, and states; the importance of dialogue; receptivity to others' opinions and tolerance; the need to protect security and peace and to prepare for averting aggression against the homeland; with some reading in several Qur'anic chapters about peace and the poem “O Jerusalem” and the Arabs' role in saving it from the Imperialists. The unit ends with a lesson about human rights, most important of which is the right to a just peace.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts, Grade 7, Part 1, (2002) p. 16

The Meaning of Peace

What do we learn in this lesson?

1. The correct meaning of peace
2. The value of tolerance and peace
3. A noble Prophetic Saying [Hadith] about peace
4. Levels of the meaning of peace and their relation to society
5. The meaning of education for peace

Implied Issues

- Human rights
- Education for Peace
- Globalization and integration among peoples of the world
- National unity

...People often connect between the meaning of peace and the meaning of war and look at peace as if it were the opposite of war. This is not correct. War may be a necessity for the achievement of peace and warding off aggression, as was the case with the October War of 1973 ...

But the broader meaning of peace means positive peace, peace as a vital conduct of life emanating from society's values and orientations. This concept means that the individuals are educated from childhood to practice peace for the solution of simple conflicts in their daily life and that the individual discards the orientation of violence and does not resort to it in order to deal with human beings, or the material environment around him. Thus, tolerance and peace will be the individual's natural behavior while confronting his problems, solving his conflicts and interacting with others in the framework of a society that relies on the exchange of benefits and ideas...

This is the primary level of understanding peace. There is a higher level which appears in the active participation in measures [taken] for the protection of peace, for raising the value of dialogue, opposing the idea of violence by dialogue, and for the participation in activities [aimed at] the protection of the environment and in efforts toward economic and social development in order to make our conditions better.

But, whose responsibility is it to educate for peace? It is a collective responsibility, to be shared by all the educational institutions, beginning with the family... Also, no one denies the role of the other influencing factors, such as friends, or the media... and also houses of worship...

Exercises

2. What is the true meaning of peace?
11. Write a line about each of the following meanings of peace:
(Positive peace – Just peace – Comprehensive peace – Everlasting peace).
12. Write in the cursive script once, and once in the regular script:

“There is no meaning to a society without love, and no love exists without peace”.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and texts, Grade 7, Part 1 (2002) pp. 17-20

“People often connect between the meaning of peace and the meaning of war and look at peace as if it were the opposite of war. This is not correct.

1. What is the meaning of peace among the people?
2. ‘Peace is realized by following the principle of power.’ Explain that. War resembles a two-sided coin, one of which is ugly and the other one is full of light. Explain that.

[Answers:]

1. The meaning of peace among the people is that it is the opposite of war, and this concept is incorrect, for war may become a necessity in order to achieve peace, as happened in the war of 1973.
2. Peace is realized by following the principle of power because sometimes the aggressor is tempted by his power and considers the call for peace a kind of weakness. [Hence] he does not pay attention to it and thinks that he can dictate his conditions based on his power. But if he finds before him a force that is capable of threatening him and keeping him at bay, then he thinks of the logic of peace, as he is afraid that if he attacks he will be similarly attacked.

War is legitimate if it is a response to aggression. War is ugly when it is an aggression...and is full of light and legitimate if it is [waged] to repulse aggression.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and texts – Exercise and Activity Booklet, Grade 7, Part 1, (2002) pp. 9, 10-answers side, respectively

Go to the school library and prepare studies you will publish in the school magazine about the following subjects:

- War is peace’s partner.
- Peace achieves prosperity for the nations.
- Islam is the religion of peace.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts – Exercise and Activity Booklet, Grade 7, Part 1, (2002) p. 13

War in the Name of Peace

The following quotations call for, or talk of, war or military treaties in the context of peace.

O my brother man, the voice of peace calls upon you to stop producing weapons of destruction. It is enough that people have greatly suffered from

the woes of wars. O people who are sincere in their call for peace, let us draw the claws of evil, that is, nuclear and chemical and other weapons, out of the hands of the wicked aggressors. Let us shatter their existence and break their oppression....

Exercises

The call for peace does not mean surrendering to the aggressors and oppressors who store weapons. Discuss that.

Our Beautiful Language: Reading and Texts, Grade 6, Part 1, (2002) pp. 37-38

The Raid against [the Jews in] Khaybar

What do we learn in this lesson?

Implied Issues

- Education for peace

Islamic Religious Education, Grade 6, Part 2 (2002) p. 47

Goals of Unit 4

- That they [the students] assess the value of military treaties for the establishment of peace.

Social Studies: My Homeland Egypt – Place and Time, Grade 6, Part 1, (2002) p. 53