

Peace over Violence: The Story of a Little Victim

I was just a little boy. I went to school on school days, hoping along with other students for the closing bell to ring so I could go home and play. I loved to play, after all, I was nine years old, still full of life and vigor. What could I possibly have to worry about? I had the love and protection of my parents, my brothers and sisters; I laughed and enjoyed the adoration and fussing from my aunties and uncles. I enjoyed life without fear.

But now, I am looking down from heaven in the company of other heavenly bodies. You see, I never got to live past nine years. I was brutally taken from my loving family. I never knew what happened to me on earth. I just opened my eyes and found myself in the company of angels. Now I know.

I see my mother. Tears have crafted a path down her cheeks. Tears have made themselves at home in her heart, and I know it is because I am no longer there. My papa? He appears to be strong outside, but in the private encloses of his study, he cries deep, guttural tears, pain racking every side of his body. I catch sight of my sisters. They keep asking for big brother.

Where is he? They say. Mum can't answer the question. She says to them, "He has traveled to a far place. We will see him someday"

My elder brother is trying to move on with life. My baby brother won't know me at all. He's just one.

What happened to me, you ask?

It was Easter Sunday on 27 March 2016. I belonged to a family of Christians living in Lahore, Pakistan. I woke up early to go to the early birds Easter service which was by 3am at the Children's' Chapel in Youhanabad. It was a lovely time full of hymns, plays and sermons.

Coming out from the service, I went back home to enjoy food cooked by my mother, and to go around with my friends, visiting fellow Christian families, in hopes of been served more food. I had made an agreement with my belly for it to be filled up that day.

Towards the evening, I went to Gulshan-e-Iqbal with four of my friends to play on the rides and talk with other children. There was no way I could have known. I stood between the dodgems and a spaceship ride just enjoying the scenery, when I was lifted suddenly in the air and slammed against the floor. I died instantly. A bomb worn by a suicide bomber had exploded. I and a host of others were killed instantly. My family and others were thrown in chaos. Jamaat-ul-Ahrar claimed responsibility.

A religion of peace and tranquility ought not to have these extremists and fanatics who claim death and destruction of lives and properties is a path to Jannah. I do not know where they got these ideologies from.

Many Muslim faithful were also killed that fateful day. You kill your own brothers and sisters and claim to be a servant of Allah, doing his Will? Allah is all-merciful, all-benevolent. He is not a condoner of such terrible acts. Peace, peace over violence, I plead.

An excerpt of a poem reads:

*She said the sole purpose of any religion should be to enhance the followers' development,
It reiterated the need to help others in any way you possibly can without being hesitant.
It taught you discipline and ultimately the notion that we were all a part of a plan,
But the moment you realized that the plan was inflicting pain unto yourself and man
You should desist from taking part in any of these activities.
If you had a special gift and I also bear the exact same
What gave me the right to take your gift by brutally contributing to your maim?
Or why would I give up both our gifts before our ordained time,
By committing a selfish act such as bombing my own vessel?
How could I allow my sadistic ways to control me causing to side with the devil?
Or even burn or bury a human being alive and after taking part in these monstrous acts
To give optimum praises to a Supreme Being and link it to religious pacts*

My name is Anar Chamkanni. This is my story.

*This 741 words story is based on a real life incident. Victim's name was changed.

Sabeen Arshad

A journalist, peerless writer and poetess with a passion for telling stories