



Passage to Peace, A

Daisaku Ikeda, Nur Yalman

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The seas do not separate us; rather, they bring us closer together.' Daisaku Ikeda's opening words to this consistently wide-ranging dialogue set the scene for what follows. For the overarching theme of the book is that of the insights and meeting of minds that follow interaction between peoples who might be geographically distant but who nevertheless share much in common. Reflecting on his memories of standing on the shores of the Bosphorus, gazing at the almost adjacent coastlines of Europe and Asia, Ikeda explores the symbol of diversity represented by the cosmopolitan city of Istanbul. The city in which his interlocutor, distinguished social anthropologist Nur Yalman, grew up, remains an icon of ethnic plurality. The boundary between Eastern and Western cultures, it is also the point at which many different civilizations have encountered one another and melded. This reflection leads the authors towards a lively exploration of the customs and cultural mores shared by Japan and Turkey: two countries which historically stand at opposite ends of the great trading route that was the Silk Road, but which have longstanding traditions of reciprocity and friendship. At the heart of this book lies these two men's mutual commitment to what they characterise as 'soft peace', or the attempt to resolve conflict through empathic engagement with those who hold alternative views. Touching on such vital themes as inter-religious dialogue, the battle against terrorism and extremism, the necessity of education, and the significance of the environment and those common aspects of humanity which all persons share, *A Passage to Peace* represents an inspiring and consistently hopeful contribution to the modern discourse on ethics, peace studies and religion. 'Empathy is the hallmark of true humanity.' - Nur Yalman 'Mutual trust evolves from reciprocal learning.' - Daisaku Ikeda 'Western society talks in patterns and cliches removed from the actuality of Islam; while the Muslim world speaks of Western culture as materialism devoid of spiritual tradition. In this way, both aggravate misunderstanding and animosity.' - Nur Yalman 'The first courageous step towards peace is unflinching verification of the inhuman past acts of one's own nation.' - Daisaku Ikeda 'Living civilizations and rich and elaborate ways of life that human beings can alter.' - Nur Yalman 'The time has come for a united effort of all humanity, one that transcends all differences of race and nationality, religion and culture.' - Daisaku Ikeda

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