

# Islam: its Fundamentals and Principles

الإسلام : أصوله ومبادئه

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سورة الاحقاف

*In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful*

## « Preface »

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and forgiveness, and we seek refuge with Him from the evil of our selves and from our misdeeds. None can mislead whomever Allah guides, and none can guide whomever Allah causes to go astray. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, without a partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger. May Allah confer abundant peace and blessings upon him.

Allah sent His Messengers to the worlds so that people may have no argument against Him after He has sent them Messengers. He also revealed Books as guidance, mercy, light, and healing. In the past, Messengers were especially sent to their people and entrusted with the preservation of their book. That was why their writings were forgotten and their laws were altered, because they were sent to a specific nation in a limited period of time.

Thereafter, Allah singled out His Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and made him the last of all Prophets and Messengers. Allah Almighty says: **{Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah honored him with the best Revealed Book which is the glorious Qur'an; and He took it upon Himself to preserve it and did not assign the obligation of its preservation to any of His creation. He says: **{It is We Who have sent down the Reminder, and it is We Who will preserve it.}**<sup>(2)</sup> Allah also made the Shariah (law) revealed to Muhammad everlasting until the coming of the Hour, and He made it clear that the perpetuity of His Law necessitates belief in it, calling to it, and being patient with

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(1) Surat al-Ahzāb (33): 40. This is a text from the glorious Book, The Noble Qur'an, which Allah revealed to Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). In this book, there are many texts from the Qur'an, preceded by the words: Allah Almighty says, or Allah, praised and glorified, says. You can find a brief definition of the Noble Qur'an in this book on p. 95-100 and 114-117.

(2) Surat al-Hijr (15): 9.

it. Hence, the path of Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and the path of his followers after him is that of calling to Allah with clear evidence. Describing this path, Allah, the Exalted, says: **{Say [O Prophet], "This is my way. I call to Allah with clear evidence - I and those who follow me. Glory be to Allah, and I am not one of those who associate partners with Him}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah commanded the Prophet to bear whatever harm he suffered in the cause of Allah with patience: **{So be patient, as the Messengers of Firm Resolve were patient}**<sup>(2)</sup> Allah also says: **{O you who believe, be patient and endure, stand on guard and fear Allah, so that you may be successful}**<sup>(3)</sup> In compliance with this gracious Divine Way, I wrote this book to invite people to the religion of Allah, deriving guidance from the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). I briefly explained herein the story of the creation of the universe, the creation of man and honoring him, sending Messengers to him, and the state of past religions. I afterwards made an introduction to Islam in terms of meaning and pillars. So, whoever is looking for guidance will find its evidences herein, whoever is looking for salvation will find that I have explained the way to it, and whoever desires to follow in the footsteps of the Prophets, Messengers, and reformers will find their path herein. And whoever turns away from their way only befools himself and takes to the straying path.

It is a matter of fact that adherents of each religion call people to it and believe that truth is only in their religion. It is also a fact that adherents of each belief call people to follow their leader and glorify him.

As for the Muslim, he does not call people to follow his ideology, because he does not have an ideology of his own; rather, his religion is the religion of Allah with which He is pleased. Allah Almighty says: **{The true religion with Allah is Islam}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also does not call people to glorify a human being, for all human beings are equal in the Religion of Allah; nothing distinguishes one from another except piety. A Muslim rather calls people to follow the path of their Lord, to believe in

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(1) Surat Yusuf (12): 108.

(2) Surat al-Ahqāf (46): 35.

(3) Surat 'Āl 'Imrān (3): 200.

(4) Surat 'Āl 'Imrān (3):19.

His Messengers, and follow His Law which He revealed to the last of His Messengers, Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and which He commanded him to convey to all mankind.

It is for this reason that I wrote this book in order to call people to the Religion of Allah which He is pleased with and with which He sent His last Messenger, and as a guide to whoever is seeking guidance and happiness. By Allah, no human being would find real happiness except in this religion, and no one can find peace of mind except who believes in Allah as Lord, in Muhammad as Messenger, and in Islam as religion. Thousands of those who embraced Islam, in past and modern times, testified that they did not know real life except after they had embraced Islam, and that they did not taste happiness except under the shade of Islam. Because every human being aspires for happiness, seeks peace of mind, and searches for the truth, I have prepared this work, and I ask Allah to make it purely rendered for His sake, calling to Him, and to let it be well-accepted and make it a righteous deed that will benefit its writer in this world and the next.

I give permission to whoever wishes to translate and publish this book in any language provided that they ensure honesty in translating it to the target language.

I also request from whoever has any observation or correction either on the Arabic text of this Book or any of its translated versions to kindly send it to me at the below-mentioned address.

All praise is due to Allah firstly and lastly, outwardly and inwardly. All praise is due to Him publicly and secretly. All praise is due to Him in the beginning and the end. All praise is due to Him as much as can fill the heavens and the earth and whatever else that Our Lord may wish. May Allah bestow peace and much blessing on our Prophet Muhammad, his companions and all those who follow his path till the day of reckoning.

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## Where is the Way?

When man grows up and becomes a rational adult, many questions come to his mind, like: Where did I come from? Why did I come? What will be my end? Who created me and the universe around me? Who owns this universe and controls it? And other similar questions.

Man cannot know the answers to these questions independently. Even modern science is not capable of providing answers to them, because these issues fall within the domain of religion. That is why there are many narrations and various myths and superstitions about them that only add to man's confusion and anxiety. It is impossible for man to get a satisfying answer to these questions unless he is guided by Allah to the true religion that is capable of providing decisive statements on these and similar issues; for these issues are among the matters of the unseen to which only the true religion can give correct and accurate answers, because it alone is from Allah, and He revealed it to His Prophets and Messengers. Therefore, it is incumbent upon man to seek the true religion, learn it, and believe in it in order to have his confusion and doubts removed and in order to be guided to the Straight Path.

In the following pages, I invite you to follow the Straight Path of Allah, and I present to you some of its proofs and arguments so that you may carefully and patiently reflect on them.

## Existence of Allah, His Lordship (over all creation), His Oneness, and His being the only god worthy of worship: [7]

Disbelievers worship created or man-made deities, like trees and stones and even human beings; that is why the Jews and idolaters asked the Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) about the description of Allah and what He is from. In reply to their question, Allah revealed: **{Say: He is Allah, the One. Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is He begotten. And there is none comparable to Him.}**<sup>(1)</sup> He introduced Himself to His creation, saying: **{Your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and earth in six days, and then rose over [istawa] the Throne.**

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(1) Surat al-Ikhlās (112).

He makes the night and day overlap in rapid succession. He made the sun, the moon, and the stars – all subservient to His command. Behold, His is the creation and the command. Blessed is Allah, Lord of the worlds.} <sup>(1)</sup> He also says: {It is Allah Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, then He rose over the Throne. He subjected the sun and the moon, each running its course for an appointed term. He governs all affairs, and explains the signs in detail, so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord. It is He Who spread out the earth and placed therein firm mountains and rivers, and created therein fruits of every kind in pairs. He causes the night to cover the day...} until He says: {Allah knows what every female bears, and what the wombs may fall short or increase. With Him everything is precisely measured. He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen, the All-Great, the Most Exalted.} <sup>(2)</sup> He, praised and glorified, also says: {Say, “Who is the Lord of the heavens and earth?” Say, “Allah.” Say, “Have you taken besides Him protectors, those who have no power to benefit or harm themselves?” Say, “Can the blind person be equal to the seeing, or can the darkness be equal to the light?” Or do they ascribe to Allah partners who created the like of His creation, so they are confused between two creations? Say, “Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Subjugator.} <sup>(3)</sup>.

Allah Almighty established for mankind His signs as evidence and proof; He says: {Among His signs are the night and the day, the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate to the sun or to the moon, but prostrate to Allah Who created them, if you truly worship Him} {And among His signs is that you see the land withered, but when We send down rain upon it, it stirs and swells. He Who gives it life will surely give life to the dead, for He is Most Capable of all things} <sup>(4)</sup> He also says: {And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and earth, and the diversity of your tongues and colors. Indeed, there are signs in this for those who

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(1) Surat al-A‘rāf (7): 54.

(2) Surat ar-Ra‘d (13): 2, 3, 8, 9.

(3) Surat ar-Ra‘d (13): 16.

(4) Surat Fussilat (41): 37, 39.



have knowledge. And among His signs is your sleep by night and day, and your seeking of His bounty [by day]]<sup>(1)</sup>.

He described Himself with the attributes of beauty and perfection; He says: {Allah: none has the right to be worshiped except Him, the Ever-Living, All-Sustaining. Neither drowsiness overtakes Him nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth. Who is there that can intercede with Him except with His permission?}<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: {The Forgiver of sin and Acceptor of repentance, the Severe in punishment and Infinite in bounty. None has the right to be worshiped except Him. To Him is the final return}<sup>(3)</sup> He, praised and glorified, also says: {He is Allah; none has the right to be worshiped except Him, the Sovereign, the Most Holy, the Most Perfect, the Granter of Security, the Watcher over all, the All-Mighty, the Compeller, the Supreme. Glory be to Allah far above what they associate with Him.}<sup>(4)</sup>

This Wise Omnipotent Lord, who made Himself known to His slaves and established for them His signs and proofs and described Himself with attributes of perfection, His existence and Lordship are proved by the revelation sent down to Prophets, essential human reasoning, and innate human nature; and all the nations are in consensus in this regard. I will present to you some of these proofs in the following pages. As for proofs of His existence and Lordship, they are:

### **One: Creation of this Universe and its Wonderful Design:**

O son of Adam, this magnificent universe surrounds you, with its heavens, stars, and galaxies, and a spread out earth wherein there are neighboring tracts of land out of which different plants grow, bearing all sorts of fruits, and on which you find all creatures in pairs... This universe did not create itself, and it must certainly have a creator, because it couldn't have created itself. Who is it then who created it in this wonderful design and gave it such fine perfection, and made it a sign for the onlookers? Can this Creator be anyone but Allah Almighty beside Whom there is no Lord or deity worthy of worship.

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(1) Surat ar-Room (30): 22-23.

(2) Surat al-Baqarah (2): 255.

(3) Surat Ghāfir (40): 3.

(4) Surat al-Hashr (59): 23.

He says: **{Were they created by none, or were they the creators [of themselves]? Or did they create the heavens and earth? Rather, they are not certain in faith}**<sup>(1)</sup> These two verses pose three basic questions:

- 1- Were they created from nothing?
- 2- Did they create themselves?
- 3- Did they create the heavens and the earth?

If they were not created from nothing, and if they did not create themselves, and if they did not create the heavens and the earth, then it must be affirmed that there exists a creator who created them and created the heavens and the earth. This Creator is Allah, the One, the Subduer.

## Two: Innate Human Nature:

All creatures are naturally inclined to believe in the existence of the Creator; to affirm that He is greater and mightier than all things. This inclination is more rooted in their innate nature than basic mathematics, and it does not need to be proved by any evidence except for whose innate nature was altered and exposed to circumstances that turned it away from what it holds to be indisputably true. Allah says: **{This is the natural disposition with which Allah has created mankind. There is no change in Allah's creation. This is the straight religion}**<sup>(2)</sup> The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Every child is born with a sound natural disposition (Islamic monotheism), and it is his parents who make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian, just as the animal gives birth to its young whole, wherein you find no mutilation." Then Abu Hurayrah (the narrator of this Hadīth) said: "Recite if you wish (Allah's words): **{This is the natural disposition with which Allah has created mankind. There is no change in Allah's creation}**<sup>(3)</sup> The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "Verily, my Lord commanded me to teach you what you do not know of what He has taught me today: 'All money that I endow a slave with is lawful (for him). I created My slaves naturally inclined to worship Me alone and it were the devils

(1) Surat at-Tūr (52): 35-36.

(2) See Majmū' Fatawa Shykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah, Vol. 1, p. 47-49, 73.

(3) Surat ar-Rūm (30): 30.

who came to them, led them away from their religion, made forbidden for them what I made lawful and enjoined them to associate partners with Me in worship of which I did not send any proof.”<sup>(1)(2)</sup>

### Three: Consensus of Nations:

All nations - past and present - are in consensus that this universe has a creator, who is Allah the Lord of the worlds; that He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth; and that He has no partner in His creation and He has no partner in His Sovereignty.

It was not reported from any of the past nations that they believed that their idols took part with Allah in the creation of the heavens and the earth. Rather, they believed that it was Allah Who created them and their idols, that there was no creator or sustainer besides Him, and that He alone owns the power to benefit or harm<sup>(3)</sup> Allah, the Exalted, informs us in the following verses about the idolaters’ affirmation of His Lordship: **{If you ask them who created the heavens and earth and subjected the sun and moon, they will surely say, “Allah.” How are they then deluded? Allah extends provision to whom He wills of His slaves or restricts it. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing of everything. If you ask them who sends down rain from the sky, then revives therewith the land after its death, they will surely say, “Allah”. Say, “All praise is for Allah,” but most of them do not understand.}**<sup>(4)</sup> He, praised and glorified, also says: **{If you ask them, “who created the heavens and earth?”, they will surely say, “The All-Mighty, the All-Knowing created them.”}**<sup>(5)</sup>

### Four: Essential Reason:

Human reason inevitably affirms that this universe must have a great Creator; because sound reason perceives that this universe is a created thing that did not bring itself into existence, hence, it must have a creator.

(1) Narrated by Al-Bukhāri in the Book of Fate, Ch. 3; and by Muslim in the Book of Fate, Hadīth no. 2658. This is the wording narrated by Muslim.

(2) Narrated by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad, Vol. 4, p. 162; and by Muslim in the Book of Paradise and Description of its Bliss and Inhabitants, Hadīth no. 2865. This is the wording narrated by Muslim.

(3) See Majmū‘ Fatawa Ibn Taymiyah, Vol. 14, p. 380-383; and Vol. 7, p. 75.

(4) Surat al-‘Ankaboot (29): 61-63.

(5) Surat az-Zukhruf (43): 9.

Man knows that he faces crises and afflictions, and when he is unable to ward them off, he turns to heaven with his heart and implores His Lord to relieve his distress, yet on normal days, he may reject believing in his Lord and worship his idol. This is an indisputable fact. Even the animal raises its head up and looks at the sky whenever it is touched by an affliction. The Almighty Allah informs us that man, whenever he is afflicted with harm, hastens to his Lord and asks Him to remove the harm. Allah says: **{When adversity befalls man, he calls upon his Lord, turning to Him in repentance. Then when his Lord bestows His favor upon him, he forgets the adversity for which he was calling upon Him before, and sets up rivals to Allah}**<sup>(1)</sup> He also says about the idolaters: **{It is He Who enables you to travel through the land and sea, until when you are in the ships and they sail with those on board and rejoicing in a favorable wind, then suddenly a stormy wind comes, with waves crashing into them on all sides, and they feel that there is no escape. Then they cry out to Allah with sincere devotion to Him, "If You save us from this, we will surely be among those who are grateful. However, when He saves them, they start transgressing in the land unjustly. O people, your transgression is against your own souls. Take your little enjoyment in this life; then to Us is your return, and We will inform you of what you used to do}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: **{When they are overwhelmed by waves like canopies, they cry out to Allah in sincere devotion to Him alone, but when He delivers them to the land, only some of them take a middle course [in faith]. But none rejects Our signs except every ungrateful treacherous.}**<sup>(3)</sup>

This Lord Who created the universe out of nothingness and created man in the best form and embedded in his nature servitude and surrender to Him, Whom human reason submitted to His Lordship and His exclusive worthiness to be worshiped, and Whom all nations unanimously testified to His Lordship... He must be One in His

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(1) \* For more benefit, see Kitāb At-Tawheed by Imam Muhammad ibn Abdul Wahhāb (may Allah have mercy upon him). [25] Surat az-Zumar (39): 8.

(2) Surat Yunus (10): 22-23.

(3) Surat Luqmān (31): 32.

Lordship and in His worthiness to be worshiped. Just as He has no partner in creating His creatures, He likewise has no partner in His worthiness to be worshiped. The evidence indicating this is abundant, some of which are:

1- There is only one God in this universe Who is the Creator and the Sustainer of all. None brings harm or benefit except Him. Had there been any other god besides Him, that god would have had his own work, creation, and command, and neither of the two would have allowed the other to share his dominion with him<sup>(1)</sup>. One of them must overpower and subdue the other. The overpowered cannot be a god, and the Subduer is the true God with whom none can share the right to be worshiped just as none can share with Him His guardianship and lordship. Allah says: **{Allah has never begotten a son, nor is there any god besides Him. Otherwise, each god would have taken away what he had created, and each would have tried to gain supremacy over the other. Glory be to Allah far above what they ascribe to Him!}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

2- None deserves to be worshiped but Allah, Sovereign of the heavens and the earth; because man seeks to gain the favor of the Lord Who brings him benefit and prevents harm, evil, and afflictions from befalling him. None but the one who owns the heavens and the earth is capable of doing all this. If He had other gods as partners, as the polytheists claim, people would have chosen the ways that lead to worshiping Allah, the True Sovereign; because all those deities worshiped apart from Allah were themselves worshiping Allah and seeking to gain His favor, so it behooves the person who wishes to gain the favor of the One who is capable of benefit and harm to worship the True God Who is worshiped by all those in the heavens and the earth, including those deities that are worshiped other than Allah. Allah Almighty says: **{Say, "If there were other gods besides Him - as they claim - they would have surely sought a way to the Lord of the Throne."}**<sup>(3)</sup> Let those who are searching for the truth read His words: **{Say, "Call upon those whom you claim [to be**

(1) See Sharh Al-'Aqīdah At-Tahāwīyyah, p. 39.

(2) Surat al-Mu'minoon (23): 91.

(3) Surat al-Isrā' (17): 42.

gods] besides Allah. They do not have even an atom's weight of authority in the heavens or on earth, nor do they have any share in either of them, nor is any of them a helper to Allah." No intercession will be of any benefit before Him, except for those whom He gave permission<sup>(1)</sup> These verses sever the heart's attachment to other than Allah through four factors:

● **One:** Those whom the polytheists worship possess not even the weight of an atom with Allah, and he who possesses not a weight of an atom cannot benefit nor harm and, therefore, is not worthy of being worshiped or being taken as Allah's associate in worship. It is Allah alone Who owns them and controls them.

● **Two:** They possess nothing in the heavens and the earth and they do not even have an atom's weight of share in them.

● **Three:** Allah has no helper among His creation. Rather, He is the One who helps them in what is of benefit for them and averts from them what harms them. For, He is in no need of them, and it is they who are in absolute need of Him.

● **Four:** These so-called associates are not capable of interceding with Allah on behalf of their followers, and they will not even be given permission to do so. Allah does not give permission to intercede except to His allies, and His allies also can not intercede except on behalf of the one whom Allah is pleased with his words, deeds, and beliefs<sup>(2)</sup>.

3- The systematic arrangement and precise execution of the affairs of this universe is the strongest indication that its controller is one Lord, one Sovereign, beside Whom there is no other creator and no other Lord. Just as it is impossible for this universe to have two creators, it is also impossible for it to have two deities. Allah says: **{If there had been gods besides Allah in the heavens and earth, both realms would have fallen in disorder}**<sup>(3)</sup> Had there been in the heaven and the earth another god besides Allah, they both would have been ruined; because, had there been another god besides Allah, each of them would necessarily have the ability to be despotic and to

(1) Surat Saba' (34): 22-23.

(2) See Qurratu 'Uyoon Al-Muwahhideen, by Shaykh Abdur-Rahman ibn Hasan (may Allah have mercy upon him); p.100.

(3) Surat al-Anbiya' (21): 22.

dispose freely of the affairs of the universe. Thereupon, contention and dispute would occur, leading to ruin. It is impossible for the body to have two controlling souls; if this were the case, the body would be destroyed. How then can it be imagined that this universe, which is far greater, should have two lords?<sup>(1)(2)</sup>

#### 4- Consensus of the Prophets and Messengers:

All nations unanimously agree that the Prophets and Messengers are the wisest, most intelligent, most ethical, most sincere, most knowledgeable of what Allah wants and most rightly guided of all people, because they received revelation from Allah and conveyed it to people. And all Prophets and Messengers – from the first of them, Adam, to the last of them, Muhammad (peace be upon them all) – have called their peoples to believe in Allah and abstain from worshiping any deity other than Him and that He is the only True Lord. Allah says: **{We never sent before you [O Prophet] any messenger without revealing to him that none has the right to be worshiped except Me, so worship Me}**<sup>(3)</sup> He also says about Noah (peace be upon him) that he told his people: **{that you worship none except Allah. I truly fear for you the punishment of a painful Day}**<sup>(4)</sup> Allah – may He be glorified – says about the last of all Messengers, Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him), that he said to his people: **{Say, “It is only revealed to me that your God is only One God; will you then submit to Him?”}**<sup>(5)</sup>

This God is the One Who wonderfully created the universe from naught; He created man in the best form and perfected his creation and impressed in his nature the affirmation of His Lordship and His exclusive right to be worshiped. He made man incapable of finding peace of mind except through submission to his Creator and following His Path; and He ordained upon his soul not to be at rest until it turns to its Creator and be in continuous contact with Him. He also made it impossible for man to connect with Him except through His Straight

(1) See Fat’h Al-Qadeer, Vol. 3, p. 403.

(2) See Miftāh Dār As-Sa’ādah, Vol. 1, p. 260.

(3) Surat al-Anbiyā’ (21): 25.

(4) Surat Hood (11): 26.

(5) Surat al-Anbiyā’ (21): 108.



Path which the honorable Prophets conveyed. He gave man intelligence which only becomes upright and functions properly when he believes in his Lord.

When one has an upright nature, a peaceful soul, and a believing heart, he achieves happiness, security, and peace in this world and the Hereafter. But when man refuses all that, he will live in the alleys of this world disorganized and divided among its idols, ignorant as to who can benefit him or prevent harm from him. In order that true faith may be established in the heart and ugliness of disbelief may be exposed, Allah makes a parable – for parables bring meanings closer to understanding. He makes a parable of a man whose affair is divided between many gods and a man who worships his Lord alone. He, may He be glorified, says: **{Allah makes a comparison of a slave owned by several quarrelsome masters, and a slave owned by only one master. Are they equal in comparison? All praise be to Allah. But most of them do not know}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah likens the polytheist to a slave who is owned by associates over whom they all contend with each other. He is divided among them and everyone of them directs him and assigns responsibilities to him. He is confused between them and is always unstable. He is unable to satisfy their different contradicting desires that tear his energy and directions apart. He also likens the slave who is monotheist to a slave who is owned by a single master. He knows what his master wants and the assignments he gives him. He is thereby comfortable and settled on a clear path. These two slaves cannot be equal, for one submits to a single master and enjoys the pleasure of uprightness, knowledge, and certainty, while the other one submits to different and disputing masters and is thereby tormented and distressed. He is not stable on one condition and cannot please even one of them, let alone all of them.

After clarifying the proofs on the existence of Allah, His Lordship, and His exclusive right to be worshiped, we should then acquaint ourselves with His creation of the universe and man and know His wisdom behind that.

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(1) Surat az-Zumar (39): 29.



## Creation Of the Universe:

This universe with its heavens, earth, stars, galaxies, seas, trees and all living things were created from non-existence by Allah, the Glorified and Exalted. He says: **{Say, “Do you disbelieve in the One Who created the earth in two Days and you set up rivals to Him? Such is the Lord of the worlds. He placed on it firm mountains standing high above it, and showered His blessings upon it, and measured its sustenance totaling exactly four Days, for all who ask. Then He turned to the heaven when it was all smoke, and said to it and to the earth, ‘Come into being, willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said, ‘We come willingly.’ He then formed them into seven heavens in two Days and assigned to each heaven its mandate. And We adorned the lowest heaven with lamps [stars] which also serves as a protection. That is the design of the All-Mighty, the All-Knowing.”}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

He also says: **{Are the disbelievers not aware that the heavens and earth were joined together and then We split them apart? We created from water every living thing. Will they not then believe? We have set on the earth firm mountains so it does not shake with them, and We have made therein broad pathways so that they may find their way. And We have made the sky a well-protected canopy, yet they turn away from its signs}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

Allah created the universe for many great purposes. There are in every part of it great wisdom and dazzling signs. If you ponder over a single sign thereof, you will see wonders. Behold the wonders of the creation of Allah in the plants in which almost every leaf, stem, and fruit is full of benefit that human intellect cannot fully comprehend and understand its details. Behold the water courses of those tender and weak stems, which eyes can hardly see except by careful observation, how they are able to draw water from the bottom to the top. The water then moves in those courses according to their acceptability and capacities. It then breaks into particles that cannot be perceived by the human eye. Then behold the fruit of a tree and how it

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(1) Surat Fussilat (41): 9-12.

(2) Surat al-Anbiyā’ (21): 30-32. See also the first verses of Surat ar-Ra’d (13).



moves from one stage to another like the movement of the fetus that is concealed from human sight. You see a tree growing from a naked piece of wood with no covering on it, then its Lord and Creator covers it with leaves in the most beautiful manner. He then brings out its fruit tender and weak after He has brought out its leaves in order to preserve it and make it like a clothing for that weak fruit so as to protect it against heat, cold, and blights. He then provides sustenance for these fruits through their stems and water courses so that they can be nourished by that, just as an infant is nourished by the milk of its mother. He then nurtures the fruits and develops them until they become completely ripe. He thereby brought out that delicious fruit out of that bare piece of wood.

When you look at the earth and how it was created, you will see that it is one of the greatest signs of its Creator. Allah made it a resting place and a bed, and subjected it to His slaves. He made therein their sustenance, provision, and sources of livelihood, and He created for them ways and paths so that they can move about to meet their needs. He fixed it firmly with mountains and made them as pillars in order to protect it against shaking. He flattened and extended it, making it a receptacle for the living that brings them together on its surface and a receptacle for the dead that brings them together in its interior after their death. Its surface is an abode for the living and its interior is an abode for the dead. Then look at this revolving orbit with its sun, moon, stars and constellations, and behold how it continuously revolves till the end of time in this order and precision, and what this movement entails of the succession of the night and day, the seasons, and the heat and cold, fulfilling thereby many needs of the different species of animals and plants on the earth.

Then reflect upon the creation of the heaven and gaze at it time after time; you will see that it is one of the greatest signs of Allah in its altitude, expansiveness and stability. There are no pillars below it and there are no hangers above it, but it is rather held in place by the infinite power of Allah Who holds the heaven and the earth lest they fall asunder.

When you look at this universe, the composition of its parts and its arrangement in the best manner – that proves the perfect omnipotence of its Creator and His perfect knowledge, wisdom and grace – you

will find that it is like a constructed house in which every needed tool and utility is provided. The heaven is its roof raised above it; the earth is a paved floor and carpet for its dweller; the sun and moon are two lamps illuminating it; the stars are lanterns that adorn it and light the way for the traveler; the gems and minerals are hidden in it like treasures in store, each made to serve a purpose that suits it; all kinds of plants and animals are prepared for what they are good for. Some animals are good for riding, some for milking, some for food, some to make clothing from, and some for guarding. And He authorized man to control all of this, like a crowned king managing it through his actions and commands.

If you ponder over this universe as a whole or in parts, you will see wonders. If you look deep enough with fairness and freedom from the noose of personal whims and blind imitation, you will know with certainty that this universe is a creation; created by an All-Wise, All-Powerful and All-Knowing Creator, Who measured it in the best manner and arranged it in the best form. You will also know with certainty that it is simply impossible that the Creator should be two; rather, it is only One God beside Whom there is none worthy of worship, and that had there been any other god in the heavens and the earth, their affairs would have been corrupted, their order disrupted, and their welfare interrupted.

If you however insist on attributing the creation to other than its Creator, what do you say of a waterwheel that revolves over a river, whose tools and composition have been perfected and excellently measured that the looker does not see any defect in its substance or its form. This waterwheel irrigates a magnificent garden in which there are different kinds of fruits that get their water from this river; and there is in this garden a caretaker who keeps it trimmed and perfectly takes care of it so that none of its plants wither and none of its fruits decay. This caretaker then portions out its harvest to different parties according to their needs and necessities, giving each group what is suitable for it, and this is done continuously.

Will you then say that all this happens by chance, without a creator or a choice maker or a planner? Will you say that the existence of that waterwheel and garden is just accidental? What will your mind say to

you in response? What conclusion would it reach and what decision would it guide you to?<sup>(1)</sup>.

### The Wisdom behind it:

After this journey of reflection over the creation of the universe, we deem it fit to mention some of the reasons for which Allah created these magnificent beings and astounding signs:

1. To subject them for man: When Allah decreed to create a vicegerent on this earth who would worship Him and inhabit the earth, He created all these things for him, that he might have a proper life and be able to manage the affairs of this life and prepare for the afterlife. Allah says: **{And He has subjected for you all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth; all is from Him}**<sup>(2)</sup> He – praised and glorified- also says: **{It is Allah Who has created the heavens and earth and sent down rain from the sky, producing therewith fruits as provision for you. He has made the ships for your service to sail in the sea by His command, and has made for you the rivers. He has made the sun and the moon for your service, both constant in their courses, and has made for you the night and the day. And He gave you of all that you have asked for. If you try to count the blessings of Allah, you cannot count them. Indeed, mankind is highly unjust and ungrateful.}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

2. To make the heavens and the earth and all that is in the universe proofs of Allah's Lordship and signs of His Oneness; because, the greatest matter in this life is to affirm the Lordship of Allah and His Oneness. And because it is the greatest matter, Allah has established in its support the greatest evidence and grandest signs and proved it with the most convincing proofs. So, Allah created the heavens, the earth and all other beings to make them signs of that. That is why the phrase, **{and among His signs}** is mentioned in abundance in the Qur'an, as in the following verses: **{And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth} {And among His Signs is your sleep by night and day} {And among His Signs**

(1) This section was extracted from different places from Miftāh Dār As-Sa'ādah, p. 251-269.

(2) Surat al-Jāthiyah (45): 13.

(3) Surat Ibrāhīm (14): 32-34.

is that He shows you lightning, causing fear and hope} {And among His Signs is that the sky and earth are maintained by His Command}<sup>(1)</sup>.

3. To make them proof of the existence of Resurrection; since life is actually two lives, a life of this world and a life of the Hereafter; the life of the Hereafter is the real life. Allah says: **{The life of this world is nothing but amusement and play, and the Abode of the Hereafter is indeed the real life, if only they knew}**<sup>(2)</sup> This is because the Hereafter is the abode of recompense and reckoning, and therein there is eternal bliss for those who deserve it and eternal torment for those who deserve it.

Since man cannot reach that abode except after he dies and is resurrected; its existence is denied by those whose relationship with their Lord has been cut, whose innate nature has suffered a relapse, and whose sense of reasoning has been damaged. It is because of this that Allah established proofs and evidences in order that souls might believe and hearts might have conviction; because recreating the soul is much easier than its first creation; rather, the creation of the heavens and the earth is greater than the recreation of man. Allah says: **{It is He Who originates the creation then repeats it, which is easier for Him}**<sup>(3)</sup> He also says: **{The creation of the heavens and earth is far greater than the creation of mankind}**<sup>(4)</sup> He – may His praise be exalted – also says: **{It is Allah Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you can see, then He rose over the Throne. He subjected the sun and the moon, each running its course for an appointed term. He governs all affairs, and explains the signs in detail, so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord}**<sup>(5)</sup>.

### After all this, O man:

If all this universe has been subjected to you and all its signs and proofs have been shown before your eyes, bearing witness that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah Alone Who has no partner; and

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(1) Surat ar-Room (30): 22-25.

(2) Surat al-'Ankaboot (29): 64.

(3) Surat ar-Room (30): 27.

(4) Surat Ghāfir (40): 57.

(5) Surat ar-Ra'd (13): 2.

if you know that your resurrection and life after death are easier than the creation of the heavens and the earth, and that you shall meet your Lord Who will call you to account for your deeds; and if you know that all this universe worships its Lord, as all its creatures glorify their Lord with praises as confirmed by Allah where He says: **{All that is in the heavens and all that is on earth glorifies Allah}**<sup>(1)</sup>, and they all prostrate for His Majesty, as He says: **{Do you not see that to Allah prostrate all those who are in the heavens and all those on earth: the sun, the moon, the stars, the mountains, the trees, the moving creatures, and many humans? But there are many on whom the punishment has become due}**<sup>(2)</sup> Rather, these beings worship their Lord in a way that are suitable for them, as Allah says: **{Do you not see that all those who are in the heavens and earth glorify Allah, as do the birds with wings outspread? Each knows its [way of] praying and glorification}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

If your whole body works in a precise order according to the decree of Allah and His regulation: the heart, the lungs, the liver and all parts of the body submit and surrender to their Lord... Will your decision, when asked to choose between believing in your Lord and disbelieving in Him, will your decision be rebellion and deviation from this blessed procession of the universe around you and even inside your own body?

A rational sane person would deem himself far above from being rebellious and deviant entity in the midst of this vast magnificent universe.

### **Creation of Man and Honoring Him:**

Allah Almighty decreed that He will create a creation worthy of populating this world, and this creation was man. His Divine Wisdom entailed that the matter from which man was created was earth, and He originated his creation from clay, then molded him in this beautiful human image. When He proportioned man perfectly and breathed life into him, he became a human being in the best form, with the ability

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(1) Surat al-Jumu'ah (62): 1.

(2) Surat al-Hajj (22): 18.

(3) Surat an-Noor (24): 41.

to hear, see, move and speak. Then his Lord made him live in Paradise, taught him all that he needed to know, made lawful for him all that was in this Paradise and forbade him from a single tree – as a test for him. Allah wanted to show man’s position and standing, so He commanded His Angels to prostrate before him. All of the Angels prostrated but Satan refused to prostrate arrogantly and obstinately. So Allah became angry with him for his disobedience and expelled him from His Mercy because of his arrogance. Satan asked Allah to extend his life and give him respite till the Day of Resurrection. So, Allah extended his life till the Day of Resurrection. Satan was envious of Adam because of the preference he and his children were given over him. He swore by His Lord to mislead all the children of Adam, that he would come to them from their front and rear, and from their left and right, except the sincere, pious and truthful slaves of Allah among them, for Allah has protected them against the evil plans of Satan. Allah warned Adam of the evil plan of Satan, but Satan tempted Adam and his wife Hawwa (Eve) in order to get them out of Paradise and to uncover for them that which was hidden from them of their private parts. He swore to them by Allah that he was a sincere well-wisher for them and that Allah had not forbidden them from that tree save that they should become angels or become of the immortals.

So Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden tree, and the first punishment that afflicted them for their disobedience of Allah’s command was that their private parts became exposed to them, and Allah reminded them of His warning about the tricks of Satan. Adam then asked for the forgiveness of his Lord, so Allah forgave Him, accepted his repentance, chose him and guided him. He then ordered him to descend from Paradise where he was living to the earth wherein there was his abode and enjoyment for some time. He also told him it was from earth that he was created; on it he would live and die; and from it he would be resurrected.

Adam and his wife, Eve, then descended to the earth and their children procreated, and they all used to worship Allah duly, because their father Adam was a Prophet.

Allah tells us this story in the glorious Qur’an where He says: **{We surely created you, then shaped you, then We said to the angels,**



“Prostrate before Adam,” so they prostrated, except Iblis [Satan], who was not one of those who prostrated. Allah said, “What prevented you from prostrating when I ordered you?” He said, “I am better than him; You created me from fire and created him from clay.” Allah said, “Then get down from here! It is not for you to show arrogance here. Get out, for you are one of the disgraced.” He said, “Grant me respite until the Day they are resurrected.” Allah said, “You are of those who are granted respite.” He said, “Since You have led me astray, I will certainly lie in wait for them on Your straight path. Then I will come against them from their front and from their back, from their right and from their left, and You will not find most of them grateful.” Allah said, “Get out of here, disgraced and expelled! I will certainly fill Hell with you and those who follow you all together.” “O Adam, dwell in Paradise, you and your wife, and eat from wherever you wish, but do not approach this tree, or else you will both be among the wrongdoers.” Then Satan whispered to them in order to expose what was hidden from them of their private parts. He said, “Your Lord has only forbidden to you this tree to prevent you from becoming angels or immortals.” And he swore to them, “I am indeed your sincere adviser.” So he deluded them both with deception. When they tasted the tree, their private parts became visible to them, so they began to put together leaves of the Garden to cover themselves. Their Lord called them, “Did I not forbid you from that tree and tell you that Satan is your sworn enemy?” They said, “Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will surely be among the losers.” Allah said, “Get down as enemies to one another. You will find a dwelling place on earth and provision for an appointed time.” He said, “There you will live, and there you will die, and from there you will be raised again.”}

Consider the greatness of Allah’s work in man. He created him in the best form, clothed him with all traits of honor, such as intellect, knowledge, speech, eloquence, pleasant image, dignified appearance, ability to acquire knowledge through analogical deduction and thinking, and the ability to acquire noble characteristics like righteousness, obedience to Allah and submission to Him. How long is the time



between his state when he is just a sperm drop deposited in the womb and his state when the Angel will enter upon him in the Garden of Eden? **{So blessed is Allah, the Best of Creators.}**<sup>(1)</sup>

This world is a village and man is its inhabitant. Everything is busy because of him and everything is made to work for his interests. All other creatures are made to serve him and provide for his needs. The angels are charged to protect him day and night. Those of them who are charged with provision of rain and plants strive to provide him with his sustenance; orbits are made to surrender to him and revolve in his service; the sun, the moon and stars are all subjected to move in line with his calculation of time and for the betterment of his food arrangement. The aerial world with its winds, clouds, birds and all that it contains is also subjected to him; and so is the lower world with all its seas and rivers, its trees and fruits, its plants and animals and all that is in it. Allah says: **{It is Allah Who has created the heavens and earth and sent down rain from the sky, producing therewith fruits as provision for you. He has made the ships for your service to sail in the sea by His command, and has made for you the rivers. He has made the sun and the moon for your service, both constant in their courses, and has made for you the night and the day. And He gave you of all that you have asked for. If you try to count the blessings of Allah, you cannot count them. Indeed, mankind is highly unjust and ungrateful}**<sup>(2)</sup> To complete His honor on man, He created for him all that he needs in his worldly life and all that he needs that can make him attain the highest ranks in the Hereafter. To that end, He revealed to him His Books and sent to him His Messengers explaining to him the Law of Allah and calling him unto it.

Then Allah created for him from his own self – meaning from Adam – a wife, to find comfort in her company, in response to his natural needs, be it psychological, intellectual, or physical. He found with her comfort, tranquility and stability, and both of them found in their togetherness peace, contentedness, love and mercy. This is

(1) Surat al-Mu'minoon (23): 14.

(2) Miftāh Dār As-Sa'ādah, Vol. 1, pp 327-328. The verses are from Surat Ibrāhīm (14): 32-34.

because the physical, psychological and nervous composition in each of them responds to the desires of the other and brings them together in the process of producing a new generation. Their souls are enriched with these feelings and their relationship is filled with peace for the soul and nerves, comfort for the body and mind, stability for life and subsistence, companionship for souls and consciences, and tranquility for the man and woman on an equal basis.

Allah then chose the believers among mankind and made them his allies. He employed them in His obedience, working for Him according to His Laws in order to be eligible to be close to Him in His Paradise. He chose from among them Prophets, Messengers, allies and martyrs, and blessed them in this world with the best favor that human souls can be blessed with: worshiping Allah, obeying Him, and supplicating him in private. He also distinguished them with great favors – that others are not granted – among which are peace, tranquility, and happiness; and even greater than all this is that they know the truth that was brought by the Messengers and they believe in it. Allah then has in store for them – in the Hereafter – the everlasting bliss and great attainment that befit His generosity and reward their belief in Him and their sincerity to Him.

### **The Status of Women:**

In Islam, the woman is accorded a high position which she was not accorded in any of the past religions or subsequent nations. This is because the honor that Islam conferred on mankind is shared by both man and woman on equal basis. They are equal before the rules of Allah in this world just as they will be equal as regards His reward and recompense in the Hereafter. Allah says: **{We have honored the children of Adam}**<sup>(1)</sup> He also says: **{Men have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind, and women have a share in what parents and relatives leave behind}**<sup>(2)</sup> He, may His praise be exalted, also says: **{Women have rights similar to the rights over them in a reasonable manner}**<sup>(3)</sup> He also says: **{The believers,**

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(1) Surat al-Isrā' (17): 70.

(2) Surat an-Nisā' (4): 7.

(3) Surat al-Baqarah (2): 228.

**both men and women, are allies of one another} <sup>(1)</sup> He also says: {Your Lord has ordained that you worship none but Him, and show kindness to parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, do not say to them a word of annoyance nor scold them, rather speak to them noble words. and lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say, “My Lord, have mercy upon them as they raised me when I was small.”} <sup>(2)</sup> He also says: {Their Lord responded to them: “I will never waste the deeds of any doer among you, male or female} <sup>(3)</sup> He, may His praise be exalted, also says: {Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, while being a believer, We will surely grant him a good life, and We will surely reward them according to the best of their deeds} <sup>(4)</sup> He also says: {Whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, and is a believer, it is they who will enter Paradise, and they will not be wronged even as much as the speck on a date stone} <sup>(5)</sup>.**

This honor that the woman enjoys in Islam has no equal in any other religion, creed, or law. The Roman civilization had it established that the woman should be a slave and a subordinate of man and that she should absolutely have no rights at all. There was even a great council that convened in Rome and discussed the affairs of women. Their resolution was that the woman was a soulless being and as such will not have a share in the life of the Hereafter and that she was impure.

In Athens, the woman was regarded as an item of little worth. She would be sold and bought like any other commodity, and she was considered an abomination of Satan’s handiwork.

According to ancient Indian statutes, the plague, death, hell, snake venom, and fire were all better than a woman. Her right to live would end with the death of her husband – who was regarded as her master. When she saw the corpse of her husband being cremated, she would throw herself into the fire, or else she would be accursed.

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(1) Surat at-Tawbah (9): 71.

(2) Surat al-Isrā’ (17): 23-24.

(3) Surat āl ‘Imrān (3): 195.

(4) Surat an-Nahl (16): 97.

(5) Surat an-Nisā’ (4): 124.

As for Judaism, the following judgment was passed on her in the Old Testament: "So I turned my mind to understand, to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things and to understand the stupidity of wickedness and the madness of folly. I find more bitter than death the woman who is a snare, whose heart is a trap, and whose hands are chains."<sup>(1)</sup>

Such was the condition of women in the ancient times. As for medieval and modern times, the following events explain that:

The Danish writer Wieth Kordsten explained the position of the Catholic Church as regards women in his statement: "During the medieval times, the concern for the European woman was very limited, in conformity with the view of the Catholic creed that regarded the woman as a second-class creature." In France, a conference was held in the year 586 A.D. to discuss the issue of women and whether the woman should be regarded as a human being or not! At the end of the discussion, the discussants concluded that the woman is a human being but created for the service of man. In French law, article 217 states that: "The married woman - even if her marriage is based on separation between her right of ownership and that of her husband - can not give anyone ownership of anything of her property with or without compensation except that her husband be included in the transaction or with his written consent to that."

In England, Henry VIII prohibited English women from reading the Holy Book, and until 1850 AD women were not considered citizens of England. And up till 1882 AD, they had no personal rights<sup>(2)</sup>.

As for the condition of the woman in contemporary Europe, America and other industrial nations, she is regarded as a commonplace creature utilized for commercial purposes, for she is a part of advertising campaigns. This has even reached the point of stripping her naked in order to advertise commodities on her body. Her body and honor have become desecrated based on regulations laid down by men in order to make her a mere object of enjoyment everywhere.

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(1) Ecclesiastes 7: 25-26. It is known that the Old Testament is sanctified and believed in both by the Jews and the Christians.

(2) Silsilat Muqāranat Al-Adyān, by Dr. Ahmad Shalaby, Vol. 3, pp 210, 213.

The contemporary woman is given care and attention as long as she can give out of her wealth, intelligence or her body. But when she becomes old and loses her means of giving, the society, individually and collectively, abandons her and she lives lonely in her house or in the mental sanatorium.

Compare the above – there is no comparison – with what the Noble Qur’an says: **{The believers, both men and women, are allies of one another}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah, the Exalted, also says: **{Women have rights similar to the rights over them in a reasonable manner}**<sup>(2)</sup> And He says: **{Your Lord has ordained that you worship none but Him, and show kindness to parents. If one or both of them reach old age in your care, do not say to them a word of annoyance nor scold them, rather speak to them noble words. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy, and say, “My Lord, have mercy upon them as they raised me when I was small.”}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

As Allah honored the woman, He made it clear to all mankind that He created her to be a mother, wife, daughter, and sister; and He ordained for these roles special legislation that is peculiar to her.

### Why was man created?

Allah, glory be to Him, has wisdoms in creating man which human minds cannot perceive and which their tongues cannot describe. We are going to mention here glimpses of those wisdoms and underlying reasons:

1. To Allah belong the Beautiful Names. Among His Names are: Al-Ghafoor (the Oft-Forgiving), Ar-Raheem (the Most Merciful), Al-‘Afuww (the Oft-Pardoning), Al-Haleem (the Most Forbearing)... Since the effects of these names must appear, the Wisdom of Allah necessitated that Adam and his children must descend to an abode where the effects of the Beautiful Names of Allah could be manifest on them, so that He might forgive whomever He wills, have mercy on whomever He wills, pardons whomever He wills, show forbearance to whomever He wills, and other different ways in which His Names and Attributes can be manifest.

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(1) Surat at-Tawbah (9): 71.

(2) Surat al-Baqarah (2): 228.

(3) Surat al-Isrā’ (17): 23-24.

2. Allah is the only True and Evident King. The King is the One Who commands and forbids, rewards and punishes, disgraces and honors, dignifies and debases. Allah's sovereignty therefore necessitates that He sends Adam and his offspring to an abode in which the rules of sovereignty will be implemented on them and then move them to an abode where they will be recompensed for their deeds.

3. Allah wanted to take from among mankind Prophets, Messengers, allies and martyrs whom He would love and who would love Him. So He allowed His enemies to tempt them as a test. When they preferred Him over all other things and sacrificed their lives and properties in order to gain His pleasure and love, they attained of His love and pleasure what they could not have attained without that. The ranks of prophethood and martyrdom are among the best ranks in the sight of Allah, and man could not have attained them except in this way that Allah decreed; by making Adam and his offspring descend to earth.

4. Allah created Adam and his offspring from a composition that is naturally inclined to both good and evil, and responsive to the causes of lust and temptation and to the causes of reason and knowledge. He created in him reason and lust and set them as urges with the necessary factors so that His Will might be accomplished and that He might show to His slaves His greatness in His Wisdom and Might, and His Mercy, Kindness, and Benevolence in His Authority and Sovereignty. Out of His Wisdom He sent Adam and his offspring to earth so that the test might take place therein and the effects of man's preparedness for these urges and his responsiveness to them become manifest, and Allah may then honor or disgrace him accordingly.

5. Allah created the creation for His worship, which is the ultimate purpose of creating them. He says: **{I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me}**<sup>(1)</sup> It is known that the perfection of worship that is required of man cannot be achieved in the abode of bliss and eternity but in the abode of trial and tribulation. The abode of eternity is that of bliss, not that of tests and commandments.

6. Belief in the Unseen is the useful belief. As for belief in the seen, then everyone will believe on the Day of Resurrection. If people

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(1) Surat adh-Dhāriyāt (51): 56.

were created in the Abode of Bliss (Paradise), they would not have attained the degree of belief in the Unseen that ends in joy and honor by virtue of their belief in the Unseen. It is for this reason that Allah sent them to the abode in which they could have the opportunity to believe in the Unseen.

7. Allah created Adam from a handful of all soils of the earth; and there is good and bad in the earth. Allah knows that there are among the offspring of Adam those who are unsuitable to stay with Him in His abode, therefore, He made Adam descend to an abode where He extracts the good and the bad. Then Allah chose for them two distinct abodes: He made the good ones dwellers of His Abode (Paradise) and made the bad ones dwellers of the abode of misery (Hellfire).

8. Allah wants thereby to show His slaves on whom He has bestowed His favor, the perfection of that favor and its greatness so that they would be more grateful and loving and have greater enjoyment of the bliss which Allah has bestowed on them. He therefore showed them what He did to His enemies and the punishment that He prepared for them. He also made them witness the highest kinds of bliss which He has bestowed on them, so that their joy might increase and their happiness might be perfect and complete. This is an aspect of completing His favors on them. Therefore, to make them achieve all this, He must send them to the earth, put them to test and then make whomever He wills succeed out of mercy and kindness from Him, and disgrace whomever He wills among them out of His wisdom and justice, for He is All-Knowing, All-Wise.

9. Allah wants Adam and his children to go back to Paradise while they are in the best state. So before that, He made them taste the hardship, sorrow and distress of the world so that entering Paradise in the Hereafter will be of great value to them, for it is the opposite of something that shows its beauty<sup>(1)</sup>.

After the origin of man has been made clear, it is now appropriate to explain his need for the true religion.

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(1) See Miftāh Dār As-Sa'ādah, Vol. 1, p. 6-11.



## Man's Need for Religion:

Man's need for religion is greater than his need for other necessities of life, for man must know the things that please Allah as well as those that displease Him. He must do something that can bring him benefit and avert from him harm. So, it is the Divine Law that distinguishes between the deeds that benefit and those that bring harm. It is Allah's justice in His creation and His Light among His servants, and it is not possible for people to live without Divine Law with which they can differentiate between what they should do and what they should not do.

If man actually has a will, he must then know what he wants and whether it is useful for him or harmful. Does he want what will reform him or what will corrupt him? Some people know this through their inherent natural disposition, some know it through application of their sense of reasoning, and some do not know it except through explanation by the Messengers and their guidance to them<sup>(1)</sup>.

No matter how much the atheistic and materialistic ideologies become widespread and beautified, and no matter how many ideas and theories thrive, they can never replace the need of individuals and societies for true religion, and they can never fulfill man's spiritual and physical needs. Rather, the deeper man goes into them, the more he is convinced that they cannot give him security nor satiate his thirst, and that there is no escape except to the true religion. Ernest Renan said: "All things that we hold dear can dwindle, and freedom of using one's intelligence, knowledge and expertise can become worthless. But religion can not be effaced, rather it will remain a living proof on the futility of material ideology that wants to restrict man into despicable narrows of the earthly life."<sup>(2)</sup>

Muhammad Fareed Wajdi said: "It is impossible for religious thinking to vanish, for it is the highest and noblest of the human mind's inclinations, not to mention that it is an inclination that elevates man. This inclination shall increase, rather than dwindling.

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(1) See At-Tadmuriyyah by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, p. 213-214; and Miftāh Dār As-Sa'ādah, Vol. 2, p. 383.

(2) See Ad-Deen, by Muhammad Abdullah Dirāz, p. 87.



The religious nature of man will always pursue him as long as he has a mind that discerns what is beautiful and what is ugly, and this nature shall continue to increase in him in accordance with the sublimity of his mental faculties and progress in his knowledge.”<sup>(1)</sup>.

So if man keeps away from his Lord, it is through the sublimity of his mental faculties and wideness of his knowledge that he will recognize his great ignorance about his Lord and what is due to Him, and his ignorance of his own self, what is good for him and what is harmful to him, and what gives him happiness and what causes him misery. He will also recognize his ignorance of scientific details like astronomy, computer sciences, nuclear sciences, and so forth. It is then that the world would retreat from the stage of delusion and arrogance to that of humility and submission, and believe that there is behind these sciences a Knowledgeable Wise One, and that there is behind nature an Able Creator. This truth forces the impartial seeker to believe in the unseen, to surrender to the upright religion, and to respond to the call of natural instinct. But when man withdraws from this path, his nature relapses and he falls to the level of dumb animals.

We conclude from all the above that the true religiosity – that relies on belief in the Oneness of Allah and worshipping Him according to His injunctions – is a necessary element of life, so that man actualizes through it his servitude to Allah, Lord of the worlds, and attain through it happiness and safety from destruction, hardship, and misery. It is also necessary for perfecting the theoretical aptitude in man. It is only through it that the intellectual hunger can be satiated and its highest goals attained.

Equally, religion is a necessary element for purification of the soul and refinement of emotional power, for noble sentiments find in religion an abundant space and a spring whose water does not dry up where noble sentiments find their goals attained.

It is a necessary element for the perfection of will power because of the support it gives it through great motives and major means of resisting elements of despair.

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(1) Ibid. p. 88.

In view of this, if there are some who say that man is civil by nature, we must also say that “Man is religious by nature”<sup>(1)</sup>, for man has two powers: scientific speculative power and willpower. His complete happiness depends on perfecting both his scientific and willpower, and the perfection of his scientific power cannot be achieved except by knowing the following:

1. Knowing the True God Who is the Creator and the Sustainer; Who created man from naught and bestowed on him favors.
2. Knowing the Names and Attributes of Allah and all that is due to Him; and the effects of these Names on His slaves.
3. Knowing the way that leads to Him, may He be glorified.
4. Knowing the hindrances and harms that prevent man from knowing the way and the great bliss that it leads to.
5. Having a real cognizance of your own self and its needs, recognizing what is good for it and what is harmful to it, and knowing its good qualities and its defects.

It is by knowing these five things that man can perfect his scientific power. And perfection of his scientific power and willpower can not occur except by respecting the rights of Allah upon His slaves and carrying out these rights sincerely and truthfully, according to the Sunnah of the Prophet, and as a testimony to His favor on him. There is no way to perfection of these two powers except by His help. He therefore needs to be guided to the Straight Path to which Allah guided His allies<sup>(2)</sup>.

Now that we know that the true religion is the divine support for the different powers of the soul, we should also know that religion is the protective shield for the society. This is because human life cannot be established except through mutual cooperation between humans, and this cooperation cannot take place except through a system that regulates their relationships, defines their obligations, and guarantees their rights. This system is inevitably in need of a curbing restraining authority that prevents the soul from violating the system, encourages

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(1) Ibid. p. 84, 98.

(2) See Al-Fawā'id, p. 18,19.

it to preserve it, guarantees its relevance and prevents men from desecrating it. What is then this authority? I say: There is not on the face of the earth any authority that matches the power of religiosity or even close to it in guaranteeing respect for order, societal cohesion, stability of its system, and harmony of the means of comfort and tranquility therein.

The underlying reason for this is that man is distinguished from other living things that all his voluntary movements and actions are controlled by an entity that is neither audible nor visible. That entity is faith, which refines the soul and purifies the senses. Man is ever controlled by a true or false faith. If his faith is correct, everything in him will be correct, but if his faith is corrupt, everything in him will be corrupt.

**Faith is a spontaneous watcher over man; and they are – as noticed in all men in general – of two types:**

- Belief in the value of moral excellence, human dignity and all other abstract concepts that people with refined souls feel shy to violate even if they were exempt from external consequences and material recompense.

- Belief in Allah – may He be Glorified and Exalted – and that He is Ever-Watchful of the secrets and knows all that is hidden; from Whose commandments and prohibitions the Islamic Law derives its authority and before Whom the senses profusely feel mortified out of love for Him or fear of Him or both. There is no doubt that this type of faith is the stronger of the two in exerting authority over the human self. It is also the stronger in resisting the torrent of whims and inconsistency of sentiments and quicker in leaving impacts on the hearts of laymen and leaders alike.

It is because of this that religion is the best guarantor for the establishment of relationships among people on the basis of justice and impartiality which is a necessity in any society. There is no wonder then that religion occupies in the human society the position of the heart in human body<sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See Ad-Deen, p. 98, 102.

If this is the position of religion generally – and what we see in today’s world is multiplicity of religions and creeds, where each group rejoices in its belief and holds tenaciously to it – what then is the true religion that can achieve for the human self what it yearns for? And what are the general criteria of the true religion?

### **General Criteria of the True Religion:**

Every adherent of a creed believes that his creed is the true one, and all followers of a religion believe that their religion is the ideal one and the most upright path. When you ask the followers of adulterated religions or followers of man-made creeds about the proof for their belief, they argue that they found their fathers on a faith and are just following their paths. They then relate narrations and stories whose chains of transmitters are not sound and whose texts are not free from faults and defects. They only depend on inherited books whose authors, transcribers, and even their original languages and their sources are unknown. They are only mixed-up stories that were put together and dignified, so they were inherited by one generation after another without any scholastic verification of their chains of transmitters and precise checking of their texts.

Such unknown books and narrations and such blind imitation cannot be taken as evidence in matters of religions and beliefs. So, could all these adulterated religions and man-made creeds be true or false?

It is impossible that all these religions are true, for truth is only one and cannot be numerous. It is also impossible that all these adulterated religions and man-made beliefs are all from Allah and therefore true. If they are numerous while truth is only one, then which of them is the true religion? Therefore there should be criteria for distinguishing the true religion from the false one. If we find that these criteria are fulfilled in a religion, we know that it is the truth; and when all or one of these criteria is lacking in a religion, we know that it is false.

**The criteria by which we distinguish the true religion from the false religion are:**

● **One:** The religion must be from Allah, revealed through an angel to one of the Messengers of Allah in order to convey it to mankind; because the true religion is the religion of Allah, and it is Allah Almighty

Who will recompense His slaves and take them to reckoning on the Day of Resurrection concerning the religion that He revealed to them. He says: **{We have sent revelation to you [O Prophet] just as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him. We also sent revelation to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and his descendants, and to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and We gave David the Psalms}**<sup>(1)</sup> He, may He be glorified, also says: **{We never sent before you [O Prophet] any messenger without revealing to him that none has the right to be worshiped except Me, so worship Me}**<sup>(2)</sup> Based on the above, any religion that is brought by a human being and attributed it to himself and not to Allah is definitely a false religion.

● **Two:** The religion should call to the worship of Allah alone and prohibit Shirk (polytheism of any form) and all the means that can lead to it. This is because the call to the oneness of Allah is the foundation of the message of all Prophets and Messengers. Every Prophet said to his people: **{worship Allah; you have no god other than Him}**<sup>(3)</sup> Accordingly, any religion that involves polytheism and associates with Allah partners, such as a prophet or a king or a pious person, it is a false religion even if its followers attribute themselves to one of the prophets of Allah.

● **Three:** It should be in conformity with the principles unto which all the Messengers called their people, which are to worship Allah alone and to follow His path, and to forbid polytheism, undutifulness to parents, killing of a soul unjustly, and all other immoralities, be they hidden or apparent. Allah says: **{We never sent before you [O Prophet] any messenger without revealing to him that none has the right to be worshiped except Me, so worship Me}**<sup>(4)</sup> He - may His praise be exalted - also says: **{Say [O Prophet], "Come, I will recite to you what your Lord has forbidden to you: do not associate any partners with Him, and honor your parents. Do not kill your children for fear of poverty, for We provide for you and for them. Do not approach shameful acts, whether openly or in secret. Do not kill the soul sanctified by Allah, except lawfully.**

(1) Surat an-Nisā' (4): 163.

(2) Surat al-Anbiyā' (21): 25.

(3) Surat al-A'rāf (7): 73.

(4) Surat al-Anbiyā' (21): 25.



**This is what He commands you, so that you may understand}**<sup>(1)</sup>  
 He also says: **{Ask those of Our messengers whom We sent before you: Did We appoint gods to be worshiped besides the Most Compassionate?}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

● **Four:** It should not be self-contradicting by commanding a matter and contradicting it by another. It should also not forbid something and then allow what is similar to it without any reason, or prohibit something for some group and permit it for others. Allah says: **{Do they not then ponder on the Qur'an? If it had been from anyone other than Allah, they would have surely found in it many discrepancies}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

● **Five:** The religion should include what preserves for people their religion, honor, properties, lives and offspring through its commandments, prohibitions, deterrents and morals that ordain to protect these five fundamental values.

● **Six:** It should serve as mercy for mankind and save them from their own injustices and the injustices they commit against one another through usurping others' rights, monopolizing wealth, or through misleading the weak at the hands of the strong. Allah says about the mercy in the Torah that He revealed to Moses (peace be upon him): **{When Moses' fury calmed down, he picked up the Tablets; in their inscription there was guidance and mercy for those who fear their Lord}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also says informing us about the mission of Jesus (peace be upon him): **{We make him a sign for people and a mercy from Us}**<sup>(5)</sup> And He says about Prophet Sālih (peace be upon him): **{He said, "O my people, what do you think, if I should have a clear proof from my Lord, and He has bestowed mercy upon me from Himself}**<sup>(6)</sup> And He says about the Qur'an: **{We send down the Qur'an as a healing and mercy for the believers}**<sup>(7)</sup>.

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(1) Surat al-An'ām (6): 151.

(2) Surat az-Zukhruf (43): 45.

(3) Surat an-Nisā' (4): 82.

(4) Surat al-A'rāf (7): 154.

(5) Surat Maryam (19): 21.

(6) Surat Hūd (11): 63.

(7) Surat al-Isrā' (17): 82.

● **Seven:** It should include guidance to the Law of Allah, and teach man the intention of Allah by that Law. It should also be able to tell man his origin and his final destination. Allah says about the Torah: **{We sent down the Torah which contains guidance and light}**<sup>(1)</sup> He says about the Gospel: **{and We gave him the Gospel that contained guidance and light}**<sup>(2)</sup> He says about the Qur'an: **{It is He Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth}**<sup>(3)</sup> The true religion is the one that includes guidance to the Law of Allah, gives peace and tranquility to the mind, protects it from all insinuations, answers all its questions and clears every confusion.

● **Eight:** It should call to noble traits and deeds like truthfulness, justice, honesty, modesty, chastity, and generosity. It should also prohibit bad traits and deeds like undutifulness to parents, killing innocent souls, all kinds of immoralities, lying, injustice, aggression, stinginess, and wickedness.

● **Nine:** It should be able to provide happiness for those who believe in it. Allah says: **{Tā Ha. We have not sent down the Qur'an to you [O Prophet] to cause you distress}**<sup>(4)</sup> It should also be in harmony with sound human nature: **{This is the natural disposition with which Allah has created mankind}**<sup>(5)</sup> It must be in harmony with sound reason, because the true religion is legislated by Allah and the sound reason is created by Allah, and it is therefore impossible that the Law of Allah and the creation of Allah should contradict each other.

● **Ten:** It should lead to the truth, warn against falsehood, show the way of guidance, keep people away from error, and call them to a Straight Path wherein there is no crookedness. Allah says about the jinn that when they heard the Qur'an being recited, some of them said to the others: **{They said, "O our people, we have heard a scripture that has been sent down after Moses, confirming what came before it; it guides to the truth and to a straight path}**<sup>(6)</sup> It should

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(1) Surat al-Mā'idah (5): 44.

(2) Surat al-Mā'idah (5): 46.

(3) Surat at-Tawbah (9): 33.

(4) Surat Tā Ha (20): 1-2.

(5) Surat ar-Rūm (30): 30.

(6) Surat al-Ahqāf (46): 30.



not call to what causes people misery, as Allah says about the Qur'an: **{Tā Ha. We have not sent down the Qur'an to you [O Prophet] to cause you distress}**<sup>(1)</sup> It should not enjoin on people what can cause them destruction. Allah says: **{And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is Most Merciful to you}**<sup>(2)</sup> It should not distinguish between its adherents on the basis of race, color or clan. Allah says: **{O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes so that you may recognize one another. Indeed, the most noble of you before Allah is the most righteous among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware}**<sup>(3)</sup> Therefore, the recognized criterion for giving people precedence in the true religion is piety.

After mentioning the criteria for distinguishing between the true religion and the false ones and citing evidence from the Qur'an that these criteria are general in the case of all the truthful Messengers that were sent by Allah, it is then appropriate to mention the types of religion.

## Types of Religions

**Mankind are divided, as far as their religions are concerned, into two categories:**

A category that have a revealed Book like the Jews, Christians, and Muslims. As for the Jews and Christians, the Books that were revealed to their Prophets have been lost as a result of their failure to act upon the teachings in their Books, their taking of humans as lords beside Allah, and the long time that had passed between them and their acquaintance with these Books. So their priests wrote books which they claimed to be from Allah while they were not from Allah but only wrong assumptions of the falsifiers and distortion of the fanatics.

As for the Book of the Muslims (the Noble Qur'an), it is the last Divine Book revealed and the most firm among them. Allah Himself guaranteed its preservation and did not assign that to mankind. He says: **{It is We Who have sent down the Reminder, and it is We**

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(1) Surat Tā Ha (20): 1-2.

(2) Surat an-Nisā' (4): 29.

(3) Surat al-Hujurāt (49): 13.



**Who will preserve it}**<sup>(1)</sup> The Qur'an is preserved in the hearts and on paper, for it is the last Book which Allah has guaranteed for the guidance of mankind. He has made it an argument against them till the Last Hour and has decreed its perpetuity. He prepares for it in every age and time those who observe its limits and words, act by its laws and believe in it. Further explanation about this great Book will be given in a later section<sup>(2)</sup>.

Another category are those who have no revealed Book from Allah, though they possess an inherited book attributed to the founder of their religion, like the Hindus, Magians, Buddhists, Confucians and the Arabs before the advent of Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him).

There is not a nation that does not have some knowledge and carry out some activities by which their worldly interests are achieved. This is the general knowledge which Allah endowed every human being with, and even every animal; for the animal is also guided how to attain what benefits it like food and drink and to avert what harms it; and Allah has created in it the love for the former and aversion for the latter. He says: **{Glorify the name of your Lord, the Most High, Who created and fashioned in due proportion, and Who determined [the creation] then guided them}**<sup>(3)</sup> He also says, informing us of what Moses told Pharaoh: **{Our Lord is the One Who gave everything its form then guided it}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also informs us that Abraham (peace be upon him) said about His Lord: **{Who created me, so He guides me}**<sup>(5)</sup> It is known to every sane person – who has the least ability to think and reflect – that adherents of religions are better in useful sciences and righteous deeds than those with no religion. Therefore there is no good found with non-Muslims among adherents of other religions except that Muslims possess what is better and more perfect. Also, adherents of religions possess what others do not possess, for sciences and deeds are of **two types**:

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(1) Surat al-Hijr (15): 9.

(2) See p. 95-100 and 114-117 of this book.

(3) Surat al-A'la (87): 1-3.

(4) Surat Tā Ha (20): 50.

(5) Surat ash-Shu'arā' (26): 78. Also, see Al-Jawāb As-Saheeh Feeman Baddal Deen Al-Maseeh, Vol. 4, p. 97.

● **First:** That which is achieved through intelligence and reason like mathematics, medical sciences, and manufacturing. These fields exist in both adherents of religions and atheists, rather the adherents of religions are even more perfect in this regard. As for those things that cannot be known through mere reason, like theology and religious sciences, these are prerogatives of the followers of religions. There are among this kind of knowledge what can be proved by logical evidence, and the Messengers guided men unto how logical evidence prove that; so they are both logical and Shariah-approved.

● **Second:** What cannot be known except through the information given by the Messengers. This kind of knowledge and deeds cannot be achieved through human reason, like knowledge about Allah, His Names and Attributes, the bliss that is in the Hereafter for whoever obeys Allah and the punishment for those who disobey Him, the explanation of His injunctions and information about the past Prophets and their peoples and so on<sup>(1)</sup>.

### Condition of the Existing Religions:

Great religions and their ancient scriptures and old laws have become a prey to tamperers and fraudulent people, an area of expertise for falsifiers and hypocrites, and a target of bloody incidences and great calamities, so much so that they have lost their spirit and form. If their first adherents and prophets were to be resurrected now, they would surely deny them and ignore them.

Judaism<sup>(2)</sup> has become a set of rituals and traditions with no spirit or life. Apart from this, it is an ethnic religion peculiar to a particular race and does not carry a universal message to all people nor mercy to mankind.

This religion has been afflicted in its fundamental creed, which distinguished it from other religions and nations, and was the secret of its honor; that creed was monotheism (worshiping one god), which Prophets Abraham and Jacob commanded their children to follow. The Jews adopted many concepts from the beliefs of the corrupt

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(1) See Majmoo' Fatawa Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, Vol. 4, p. 210-211.

(2) For further reading, see Ifhām al-Yahood, by As-Samaw'al bin Yahya Al-Maghribi. He was a Jew who reverted to Islam.

nations they neighbored or under whose authority they fell. They also adopted many of the pagan customs and traditions of those nations. This was admitted by unbiased Jewish historians. In the Jewish Encyclopedia, we read what means:

"The prophets' wrath over idol-worshiping indicates that the worship of idols and false deities had crept into the hearts of the Israelites and that they had embraced polytheistic and superstitious beliefs. The Talmud also testifies that paganism had a particular attraction for the Jews."<sup>(1)</sup>

The Babel Talmud<sup>(2)</sup> – which the Jews extremely hallow and may even prefer to the Torah, and which was widely circulated among the Jews of the Sixth Century AD, and what it was filled with of strange manifestations of simple-mindedness, absurdity, insolence towards Allah, tampering with facts, and toying with religion and human intellect – indicates the extent to which the Jewish community of that century had fallen intellectually and religiously<sup>(3)</sup>.

As for Christianity<sup>(4)</sup>, it was also afflicted since its earliest days with distortions of extremists, alterations of the ignorant and paganism of the Romans who claimed to be Christians<sup>(5)</sup>. All of that became a heap under which were buried the great teachings of Christ, and the light of Monotheism and sincere worship of Allah were hidden behind these dense clouds.

A Christian writer speaks on the extent to which the trinity had taken root in the Christian society since the end of the Fourth Century after Christ, saying:

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(1) See Jewish Encyclopedia, Vol. XLL, p. 568-569.

(2) The word 'Talmud' means the book teaching the religion and etiquettes of the Jews. It is a compilation of marginal notes and commentaries on their book 'Mishnah' (the law), written by Jewish scholars in different ages.

(3) For more details, read *Le Juif Selon Le Talmud*, by Prof. August Rohling, and its translation from French to Arabic in *Al-Kanz Al-Marsood fee Qawā'id At-Talmood*, by Dr. Yoosuf Hanna Nasrullāh.

(4) For details, read "Al-Jawāb as-Saheeh liman Baddala Deen al-Maseeh", by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah; "Izhār al-Haqq" by Rahmatullah bin Khaleel Al-Hindi; and "Tuhfat al-Areeb fee ar-Radd 'ala 'Ubbād as-Saleeb", by Abdullah At-Turjumān who was a Christian who reverted to Islam.

(5) See "History of the Conflict between Religion and Science", by the renowned European author John Draper, p. 40-41.



"The belief that the one God consists of three godheads had penetrated into the inner life of the Christian world and its thoughts since the last quarter of the fourth century, and it became an official and recognized creed in all parts of Christendom ever since. The development of the creed of Trinity and its secret were not revealed until the second half of the nineteenth century A.D."<sup>(1)</sup>.

A contemporary Christian historian discusses in the book entitled, "History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Science", the appearance of paganism in the Christian society in different forms and shapes and the Christians' skillful efforts in adopting pagan rites, customs and heroes from nations and religions that were ancient in idolatry under the pretext of imitation, admiration or ignorance. He said, "Paganism has ended but has not been completely eradicated. Rather, it has penetrated the hearts and everything in it has been tolerantly allowed to continue in the name of Christianity and under its cover. Those who abandoned their gods and heroes took one of their martyrs and gave him the title of their former gods then made a statue in his name. This is how polytheism and idol worshiping were transferred unto these local martyrs. By the end of that century, the worship of martyrs and saints had spread all over the Christendom and a new creed was formed that teaches that saints had divine attributes. These saints were thus regarded as an intermediary creation between God and man, and pagan festivals were given new names until the ancient pagan Sun festival was turned to Christmas in the year 400 A.D."<sup>(2)</sup>.

As regards the Magians, they were known since old times to be worshipers of natural elements, the greatest of which is fire. They adhered to its worship and built for it temples and synagogues. Fire houses became widespread throughout their lands and all other religions and faiths disappeared except fire worship and hallowing of

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(1) Summarized from The New Catholic Encyclopedia, Article on The Holy Trinity, Vol. 14, p. 295.

(2) Rev. James Houston Baxter, "The History of Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge", Glasgow 1929, p. 407.

the sun. Religion, according to them, became mere rites and rituals that they performed in special places<sup>(1)</sup>.

The Danish author of "Iran Under the Sassanids", Arthur Christensen, describes their religious leaders and their functions, saying:

"These functionaries must worship fire four times in a day. In addition to this, they also worshiped moon, fire and water. They had an order that they should not let the fire die out or let the fire and water meet each other or let the metal rust, because they also hallow the metal."<sup>(2)</sup>

The Magians practiced dualism in every age and it became their motto. They believed in two gods; a god of light or of good which they called "Ahur mazda" or "Yazdan" and a god of darkness or evil which they called "Ahriman". The conflict between the two is still ongoing and the war between them is continuously raging.

As regards Buddhism, the religion that is widespread in India and Central Asia, it is a pagan religion whose followers carry with them idols wherever they go. They build temples for these idols and erect statues of "Buddha" wherever they go and settle<sup>(3)</sup>.

As for Brahmanism, the religion of India, it is known to have many idols and deities. Their paganism had reached its peak in the sixth century AD, with the number of their deities reaching 330 million in that century<sup>(4)</sup>. Everything wonderful, magnificent, or useful became a deity to be worshiped. During that age, the craft of idol making became quite prolific and sophisticated.

The Hindi writer C. V. Vaidya wrote in his book, "The History of Medieval Hindu India", while discussing the era of King Harsha (606-648 AD) which is the era that followed the emergence of Islam in Arabia:

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(1) Read "Iran Under the Sassanids", by Prof. Arthur Christensen, Professor of Eastern Languages at Copenhagen University, Denmark, and expert on the history of Iran. See also "History of Iran" by the Magian, Shaheen Makareus.

(2) Iran Under the Sassanids, p. 155.

(3) See "Ancient India", by Aishura Toba, Professor of Hindu Civilization at the University of Hyderabad; and "The Discovery of India" by Jawaharlal Nehru, former Prime Minister of India, p. 201-202.

(4) See "Ancient India" by R. Dit, Vol. 3, p. 287; and "Popular Hinduism: The Religion of the Masses", by L.S. S. O'Malley, p. 6-7.



“Hinduism and Buddhism were equally pagan religions, or perhaps Buddhism surpassed Hinduism in paganism. The origin of Buddhism was denial of the existence of God, but it gradually adopted Buddha (its founder) as the supreme god. It later added other deities like Bodhisattva. Paganism reached its peak in India so much so that the name Buddha became synonymous with idol or worshiped statue in some eastern languages.

It is without doubt that paganism was widespread in the entire contemporaneous world. The whole world from the Atlantic sea to the Pacific ocean was greatly immersed in paganism. It was as if Christianity and the Semitic religions, and Buddhism were all competing in glorifying and hallowing idols, like race horses running in the same field<sup>(1)</sup>.

Another Hindu said in his book, “The Prevailing Hinduism”, that the process of creating idols did not end yet; rather, minor idols continued to join this 'deity complex' in great numbers throughout different historical periods until they reached an innumerable amount<sup>(2)</sup>.

This was the condition of religions. As for urbanized countries where great governments were established and many sciences flourished, and which were the bedrock of modern civilization, industry, and arts, they were countries where religions became disfigured and lost their authenticity and power. Reformers and teachers were lacking, atheism was publicly proclaimed, corruption of all kind proliferated, all standards of conduct were altered, and man regarded his own life as valueless. Hence, suicide increased, family ties were cut, social relations loosened, the clinics of psychiatrists filled up with patients, and the market for charlatans flourished. In such atmosphere, man tried every pleasure and followed every invented ideology or theory, seeking to satiate his soul, make himself happy, and give himself peace of mind. But all these pleasures, and all these ideologies and theories failed to achieve these goals for him. He continues in this psychological misery and spiritual torment until he connects with his

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(1) C.V. Vaidya: History of Medieval Hindu India, Vol. I (Poone 1921).

(2) See “As-Seerah An-Nabawiyah” by Abu Al-Hasan An-Nadawi, p. 19-28.

Creator and worships Him according to the way He is pleased with and with which He sent His Messengers. Allah says, while describing the condition of the one who turns away from his Lord and seeks guidance from other than Him: **{But whoever turns away from My Reminder will have a miserable life, and on the Day of Resurrection We will raise him blind}**<sup>(1)</sup> He, may He be glorified, also informs us about the life of the true believers and their happiness in this worldly life, as He says: **{Those who believe and do not mix their faith with falsehood are the ones who will be secure, and it is they who are rightly guided}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: **{As for those who are destined for bliss, they will be in Paradise abiding therein as long as the heavens and earth exist, except what your Lord wills - an unceasing gift}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

If we apply the aforementioned criteria of true religion to these religions – apart from Islam – we will see that they have fallen short of most of these criteria, as it is clear from this brief exposition.

The greatest element which all these religions lack is monotheism, for their followers associated other deities with Allah in worship. Moreover, these distorted religions do not provide people with a law that is applicable in all places and at all times and that can protect their lives, faith, honor, offspring, and properties. These religions do not guide people to the Law of Allah which He ordained to be followed, neither do they give their followers peace of mind and happiness, as a result of their inherent contradictions.

As regards Islam, you will come to know in the following chapters that it is the true religion of Allah which He is pleased with and which He has chosen for mankind.

At the end of this section, it is appropriate that we define the essence of prophethood, its signs, and the need of mankind for it; and explain the foundations of the mission of the Messengers and the reality of the last and everlasting message of Islam.

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(1) Surat Tā Ha (20): 124.

(2) Surat Al-An‘ām (6): 82.

(3) Surat Hood (11): 108.



## The Essence of Prophethood:

The greatest knowledge that man must acquire in this life is knowledge of his Lord, Who created him from nothing and showered him with blessings. And the greatest purpose for which Allah created the creation is to worship Him alone.

But how can man know his Lord as it is due? What are his duties and obligations towards his Lord? How should he worship his Lord? Man can find those who will assist him during the vicissitudes of life, provide for his needs like treatment from an ailment, giving some medicine, assisting to build a house and so on and so forth; but he will not find among common people someone who can make him know his Lord and explain to him how to worship his Lord. This is because the human mind cannot independently know what Allah intends. The human mind cannot even perceive the intention of a fellow human being before the latter announces his intention. How then can he know what Allah intends? Moreover, this mission is restricted to the Messengers and Prophets whom Allah has chosen to convey the Message and to those who come after them of leaders to guidance, who are the heirs to the Prophets, carrying their teachings, following in their footsteps, and conveying their message. For men cannot receive revelation from Allah directly as they are unable to bear it. Allah says: **{It is not for a human being that Allah should speak to him except through revelation or from behind a veil, or by sending an angel-messenger to reveal what He wills by His permission. Indeed, He is Most High, All-Wise}**<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, there should be an intermediary and envoy to convey the law of Allah to His slaves. Those intermediaries and envoys are the Messengers and Prophets. The angel carries the message of Allah to the Prophet and the Prophet conveys it to the people. The Angels do not carry the message to people directly, for the world of angels is naturally different from that of humans. Allah says: **{Allah chooses messengers from the angels and from mankind}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

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(1) Surat Ash-Shoora (42): 51.

(2) Surat Al-Hajj (22): 75.

The Wisdom of Allah necessitated that the Messenger should be of the same kind of those whom he is sent to, so that they would understand him through communicating with him. If the messenger had been sent to mankind from among the angels, they would not have been able to face him or learn anything from him<sup>(1)</sup>. Allah, the Exalted, says: **{They say: Why has no angel been sent down to him? If We did send down an angel, the matter would have been decided and then they would not have been given any respite. And if We had made him an angel, We would have surely made him [appear as] a man, and We would have caused them confusion just as they are confused}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: **{We did not send any messengers before you [O Prophet] except that they ate food and walked in the markets...}** until He says: **{Those who do not expect to meet Us say, "Why are angels not sent down to us or why do we not see our Lord?" They have been too proud of themselves, and have transgressed immensely}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

Allah, the Exalted, says: **{We did not send before you except men to whom We sent revelation}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also says: **{We did not send any messenger but in the language of his people to make things clear for them}**<sup>(5)</sup> These Messengers and Prophets possessed perfect reason, sound nature, truthfulness in words and deeds, honesty in conveying what they were entrusted with, immunity from all that could tarnish human conduct, and physical appearances free from all things that are repugnant to sights and repulsive to sound human taste<sup>(6)</sup>. Allah purified them in their persons and manners. They are the most perfect in manners, purest in souls and most generous. Allah combined in them all good manners and refined traits, just as He combined in them forbearance, knowledge, magnanimity, generosity, courage, and justice. By these qualities, they were distinguished among their peoples. The people of Prophet Sālih told him, as Allah informs us in the Qur'an:

(1) Ibn Katheer, Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azheem, V.ol. 3, p. 64.

(2) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 8-9

(3) Surat Al-Furqān (25): 20-21.

(4) Surat An-Nahl (16): 43.

(5) Surat Ibrāhīm (13): 4.

(6) See: Lawāmi' Al-Anwār Al-Bahiyyah, Vol. 2, p. 265-305; and Al-Islam, by Ahmad Shalaby, p. 114.



**{They said, “O Sālih, we truly had hopes in you before this. Do you forbid us to worship what our fathers used to worship? We are in disturbing doubt about what you are calling us to}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah also informs us of what the people of Prophet Shu‘ayb (Jethro) told him: **{They said, “O Shu‘ayb, does your prayer command you that we should forsake what our forefathers worshiped, or that we should give up dealing with our wealth as we please? Indeed, you are such a forbearing and right-minded man!}**<sup>(2)</sup> Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) was known among his people with the title “Al-Ameen” (the trustworthy) before he received revelation, and His Lord describes him saying: **{Indeed, you are of a great moral character}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

The Messengers and Prophets are, therefore, the best people among Allah’s creation. He selected them and chose them to carry the Message and convey it to mankind; He says: **{Allah knows best where to place His message}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also says: **{Allah chose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of ‘Imrān above all people}**<sup>(5)</sup>.

These Messengers and Prophets – despite the sublime qualities with which Allah described them and the excellent conduct for which they were known – were nevertheless humans who suffered what all other humans suffer; they suffered hunger and sickness; they slept, ate, married and died. Allah says, addressing Prophet Muhammad: **{You [O Prophet] will surely die, and they too will die}**<sup>(6)</sup> He also says: **{We have sent messengers before you and gave them wives and offspring}**<sup>(7)</sup> Some of them were even persecuted, killed, or expelled from their homes. Allah says, addressing Prophet Muhammad: **{And [remember] when the disbelievers plotted against you, to take you as captive, kill you or expel you. They plan, and Allah**

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(1) Surat Hūd (11): 62.

(2) Surat Hūd (11): 87.

(3) Surat Al-Qalam (68): 4.

(4) Surat Al-An‘ām (6): 124.

(5) Surat ‘Āl ‘Imrān (3): 33.

(6) Surat Az-Zumar (39): 30.

(7) Surat Ar-Ra‘d (13): 38.

**also plans, but Allah is the Best of those who plan}**<sup>(1)</sup> But to them will be the good consequence, victory and empowerment in this worldly life and the Hereafter. Allah says: **{Allah surely helps those who stand up for His cause}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: **{Allah has decreed, "I and My messengers will surely prevail." Indeed, Allah is All-Powerful, All-Mighty}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

### Signs of Prophethood:

Since Prophethood is a means by which the noblest of all knowledge can be acquired and the most honorable deeds can be carried out, it is out of Allah's mercy that He gave signs to these Prophets by which they could be known and through which they could be identified – though in every case where someone claimed prophethood, there were manifest proofs and conditions that indicated his truthfulness if he were truthful or otherwise if he were a liar. These signs are many, the most important of which are:

1. The Messenger should call to the worship of Allah alone and to the abandonment of worshipping others besides Him, for this is the purpose for which Allah created the creation.

2. The Messenger should call people to believe in him and to put his message into practice. Allah commanded His Prophet Muhammad to say: **{O people, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

3. Allah supports him with various kinds of proofs of prophethood. Among these proofs are the extraordinary signs that the Prophet brings forth which his people could not deny or produce its like. An example is the sign of Moses (peace be upon him) when his staff turned into a snake; and the sign of Jesus (peace be upon him) when he healed the blind and the leper by the permission of Allah; and the sign of Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) which is the Great Qur'an, in spite of the fact that he was illiterate who could neither read nor write among many other signs of the Prophets.

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(1) Surat Al-Anfāl (8): 30.

(2) Surat Al-Hajj (22): 40.

(3) Surat Al-Mujādalah (58): 21.

(4) Surat Al-A'rāf (7): 158.

Among these proofs as well is the clear and evident truth which the Prophets and Messengers brought and which their opponents could not disprove or deny. Rather, their opponents knew that what the Prophets had brought was the truth that could not be resisted.

Among other proofs are the perfect conditions, beautiful traits, and magnanimous morals with which Allah distinguished His Prophets.

Another proof is that Allah grants His Prophet victory over his enemies and causes his message to prevail.

4. His message should agree in its fundamentals with the fundamentals to which all Messengers and Prophets called<sup>(1)</sup>.

5. He should not call people to the worship of himself or to direct any act of worship to him. He should also not call to the glorification of his tribe or clan. Allah commanded His Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) to say to the people: **{Say [O Prophet], "I do not tell you that I have the treasuries of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an angel. I only follow what is revealed to me."}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

6. He should not ask from people any of the transient gains of this world in return for his mission. Allah says, informing us about His Prophets Noah, Hūd, Sālih, Lūt and Shu‘ayb (Jethro), that they said to their people: **{I seek of you no reward for this; my reward is only with the Lord of the worlds}**<sup>(3)</sup> Prophet Muhammad also said to his people: **{Say [O Prophet], "I do not ask you for any reward for it, nor do I pretend to be what I am not}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

These Prophets and Messengers – whom I have told you something of their qualities and signs of their prophethood – are many. Allah Almighty says: **{Indeed, We sent to every community a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and shun false gods."}**<sup>(5)</sup> These Messengers brought happiness to mankind, and history is replete with their stories. The teachings of their religion were repeatedly transmitted, along with

(1) See: Majmoo‘ Fatāwa Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, Vol. 4, p. 212-213.

(2) Surat Al-An‘ām (6): 50.

(3) Surat Ash-Shu‘arā’ (26): 109, 127, 145, 164, 180.

(4) Surat Sād (38): 86.

(5) Surat An-Nahl (16): 36.

the proofs that they are the truth and justice. Likewise, repeatedly narrated was the victory with which Allah honored them and the destruction of their enemies, like the destruction of the people of Noah with the flood, the drowning of Pharaoh, the punishment for the people of Lot, and the victory of Muhammad over his enemies and the spread of his religion. Whoever knows this will certainly know that they brought for mankind good and guidance; that they directed them to all that could benefit them and warned them against all that could harm them. The first of them is Adam (peace be upon him) and the last is Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him).

### **Mankind's Need for the Messengers:**

The Prophets are Allah's Messengers to His slaves; they convey His commandments to them, they give them glad tidings of the bliss which Allah has prepared for them if they obey His Commandments, warn them of the everlasting punishment if they disobey Him, and tell them the stories of the past nations and what befell them of punishment and torment in this world because they disobeyed the commandments of their Lord.

These Divine Commandments and prohibitions cannot be known independently by human reasoning, that is why Allah ordained and prescribed commandments and prohibitions to honor mankind and to preserve their interests. This is because people might yield to the urges of their lusts so they violate sanctities, assault others, and usurp their rights. It was therefore out of the utmost wisdom that Allah should send Messengers among mankind, every now and then, who would remind them of the commandments of Allah, warn them against disobedience, recite to them admonitions and tell them the stories of past generations. When wondrous stories are heard and strange concepts awaken the thoughts, the minds embrace that, so their knowledge increases and their perception is corrected. The more man listens the more he thinks; the more he thinks the more he reflects; the more he reflects the more he understands, and the more he understands the more he acts. So, sending Messengers was inevitable, and there was no alternative for them if the truth was to be established<sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) A'ġām An-Nubuwwah, by 'Ali bin Muhammad Al-Māwardi, p. 33.

Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) said<sup>(1)</sup>: “The Divine Message is necessary for reformation of man in his worldly life and the afterlife. Just as he cannot attain wellbeing in the Hereafter except by following the message, he cannot attain wellbeing in this worldly life except by following the Message. Man is in need of following the Law of Allah because he lives between two movements: a movement by which he seeks what benefits him and another by which he wards off what harms him. The Law of Allah is the light that shows him what benefits and what harms him. It is the Light of Allah on the earth, His justice between His slaves, and His fortress which provides safety for whoever enters it.”

What is meant by the Law of Allah is not physical distinction between the useful and the harmful, for even the animals can do that. The donkey or camel can differentiate between barley and sand. Rather, what is meant by that is to be able to distinguish between deeds that harm their doer in his worldly life and his afterlife and deeds that benefit him in his worldly life and his afterlife. The latter include faith, belief in the Oneness of Allah, justice, righteousness, kindness, honesty, chastity, courage, knowledge, patience, enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, upholding kinship ties, dutifulness to parents, kindness to neighbors, fulfilling obligations, doing deeds with a sincere intention to please Allah, relying on Him, seeking help from Him, being pleased with His divine decrees, submission to His judgment, believing in Him and His Messengers in all that they informed, and all else that is beneficial to man in his worldly life and his afterlife. In the opposite of the above lies his misery and harm in his worldly life and his afterlife.

Had it not been for the Divine Message, man’s intellect would not have been guided to the details of what benefits or harms him in this worldly life. Therefore, among the greatest favors of Allah upon His slaves is that He sent His Messengers to them, revealed to them His Books, and showed them the Straight Path. Had it not been for this, humans would have been like cattle or even worse. Whoever accepts the Message of Allah and stays firm on it is among the best of all

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(1) He is Ahmad ibn Abdul Haleem bin Abdul Salām, known as Ibn Taymiyyah. He was born in the year 661 A.H. and died in the year 728 A.H. He was one of the prominent scholars of Islam and the author of many valuable books.



creation. Whoever rejects it and deviates from it is among the worst of the creation and worse in condition than the dog and pig and the most contemptible creatures. There is no way the inhabitants of the earth can survive except by the effects of the Message that is existent among them, for when the impacts of the Messengers disappear from the earth and the signs of their guidance are wiped off, Allah will dismantle the heaven and the earth and bring forth the Resurrection.

The need of the people of earth for the Messenger is not like their need for the sun, moon, wind, and rain, and it is not like man's need for his life, or the eye's need for light, or the body's need for food and drink. Rather, the need for the Messenger is greater than all that and all other things one could think of. The Messengers are the intermediary between Allah and His creation with regard to His commandments and prohibitions; they are the envoys between Him and His slaves. The last of them, their leader and the dearest of them to Allah is Muhammad (may Allah's mercy and blessings be upon him and upon all of them). Allah sent him as mercy for mankind and for all creatures. He made him a proof for the followers of the right path and an argument against all people. He commanded His slaves to follow him, love him, respect and honor him, and to fulfill the rights that are due to him. Allah took covenants and pledges from all Prophets and Messengers that they would believe in and follow him (if they were to meet him or hear of him), and He also ordered them to take the same covenant from their believing followers. Allah sent him at the threshold of the Hour. With him, He guided many from error, rescued many from ignorance, and opened through his Message blind eyes, deaf ears and sealed hearts. He illuminated the earth with his message, after it had been in darkness, and he united with it the divided hearts. He straightened by him the crooked faith and explained through him the bright path. Allah expanded for him his heart, removed from him his burden, raised high his mention and subjected those who were against him to humiliation and disgrace. He sent him after a break in the succession of the sent Messengers and a disappearance of the impacts of the previously revealed Books; when words had been distorted and legislations had been altered; when every nation relied on the injustice in their opinions, made decisions regarding Allah and between His slaves with their own corrupt sayings and desires. It was

then that Allah guided mankind through Muhammad and showed them the right way. He brought people out of darkneses into light through him, as He made distinct through him the people who deserve success and the sinners. Whoever follows his guidance will be rightly guided, and whoever deviates from His Path will go astray and be of those who transgress. May Allah bestow peace and blessings upon him and upon all the Messengers and Prophets<sup>(1)</sup>.

**We can summarize man's need for the Message in the following points:**

1. Man is a created being who is in need of nurturing and upbringing. It is necessary for him to know his Creator and to know what He wants from him and why He created him. Man cannot however know that on his own except by knowing the Prophets and the Messengers and knowing the guidance and light which they came with.

2. Man is composed of body and soul. The nutrition for the body is whatever is available of food and drink, but the nutrition for the soul was prescribed by the One Who created it; that nutrition is the true religion and good deeds. It is the Prophets and Messengers who brought the true religion for man and guided him to the good deeds.

3. Man is religious by nature and he must have a religion to embrace. This religion must be true, and there is no way to know the true religion except through belief in the Prophets and Messengers and belief in all that they brought.

4. Man is in need of knowing the way that leads him to the pleasure of Allah in this world and to His Paradise and bliss in the Hereafter. No one can guide to this way except the Prophets and Messengers alone.

5. Man in himself is weak and many enemies lay in wait for him: Satan wants to mislead him, evil companions make bad things fair-seeming to him, and his base self incites him to do evil. Hence, he needs what can protect him against the schemes of his enemies, and it is the Prophets and Messengers who guided man to that and clearly explained it to him.

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(1) Qā'idah fee Wujoob Al-I'tisām bir-Risālah, by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him), Vol. 19, p. 99-102 of Majmoo' Al-Fatāwa; and see Lawāmi' Al-Anwār Al-Bahiyyah, by As-Safāreeni, Vol. 2, p. 261-263.

6. Man is civil by nature; his gathering with people and his relations with them therefore need a law by which justice and equality can be established among people – the absence of which can make human life like that of the jungle. Also, this law must be able to protect the right of every one without excessiveness or negligence, and none could bring such perfect law except the Messengers and Prophets.

7. Man needs to know what can give him tranquility and peace of mind and guide him to the means of real happiness. This is what the Prophets and Messengers guided to.

Now that the need of the creation for Prophets and Messengers was made clear, it is appropriate to discuss the final return and explain the proofs and evidence that support that.

### **The Final Return:**

Every human being knows with certainty that death is inevitable. But what is his fate after death? Will he be happy or miserable?

Many peoples and nations of the world believe that they will be resurrected after death and called to account for all their deeds; that they will earn good reward if they did good and punishment if they did evil. 1 This issue – resurrection and accountability – are confirmed by sound reason and supported by Divine Laws. It is based on three fundamentals:

- 1. Affirmation of the perfect knowledge of the Lord, may He be glorified.
- 2. Affirmation of His perfect Omnipotence.
- 3. Affirmation of His perfect Wisdom<sup>(2)</sup>.

**There are many textual and logical proofs that affirm the final return, some of which are:**

1. Drawing the proof of Allah's ability to resurrect the dead from the creation of the heavens and the earth. Allah says: **{Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and earth, and was not wearied by creating them, is able to bring the dead to life? Yes**

(1) See: Al-Jawāb As-Saheeh, Vol. 4, p. 96.

(2) See: Al-Fawā'id, by Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 6-7.

**indeed! He is Most Capable of all things}**<sup>(1)</sup> He also says: **{Is not the One Who created the heavens and earth able to create the like of these [people]? Yes indeed, for He is the Creator of all, the All-Knowing}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

2. Drawing the proof of Allah's ability to reproduce the creation once again from His ability to originate the creation without a previous example. He Who is able to bring a thing into existence must be able to reproduce it with greater reason. Allah, the Exalted, says: **{It is He Who originates the creation then repeats it, which is easier for Him. To Him belong the most sublime attributes}**<sup>(3)</sup> He - may His praise be exalted - also says: **{He produces arguments against Us while forgetting his own creation. He says, "Who can give life to the bones after they have crumbled to dust?" Say, "The One Who created them in the first place will give life to them, for He has full knowledge of every created being}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

3. He created man in the best shape and in this perfect and complete form. He endowed him with limbs, powers, and characteristics; with flesh, bones, veins, and nerves; with outlets, tools, sciences, volitions, and processes. There is in all this the greatest evidence of His ability to resurrect the dead.

4. Drawing proof of His ability to resurrect the dead in the Hereafter from His raising of the dead in this worldly life. Stories of this were narrated in the Divine Books which Allah revealed to His Messengers. Examples are the raising of the dead by the permission of Allah at the hands of Abraham and Jesus (peace be upon them), among many other stories.

5. Drawing proof of His ability to resurrect the dead from His ability to bring about things that are similar to the scenes of the Day of Congregation and Resurrection like:

a. Allah creates man from a drop of sperm that was scattered all over the body – that is why all parts of the body enjoy the intercourse. Allah collects this drop from all parts of the body then directs it to

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(1) Surat Al-Ahqāf (46): 33.

(2) Surat Yā Seen (36): 81.

(3) Surat Ar-Room (30): 27.

(4) Surat Yā Seen (36): 78-79.

settle in the womb, and He creates man from it. If these parts were scattered and He gathered them and created from them that person, then if they become scattered once again after death, what can prevent Him from bringing them together once again? Allah says: **{Have you thought about the semen that you emit? Is it you who create it, or is it We Who are the Creator?}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

b. When plant seeds of any shape or size fall into moist soil and become covered with dust and water, the logical consequence is that they would decay; for, either water or soil is enough to make the seed rot, and the combination of the two makes it rot with greater reason. But the fact is that the seed will not decay but remains preserved. When the humidity increases, the seed breaks open and from it comes out a plant. Does that not point to a perfect power and comprehensive wisdom? Will this All-Wise and All-Able God be incapable of collecting parts of man and reconstituting his organs? Allah says: **{Have you thought about what you sow? Is it you who cause it grow, or is it We Who make it grow?}**<sup>(2)</sup> A similar verse in meaning is Allah's saying: **{You see the land lifeless, then as soon as We send down rain on it, it stirs and swells to life and brings forth every type of pleasant plant}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

6. The All-Capable, All-Knowledgeable, and All-Wise Creator is deemed far above producing the creation for fun and leaving them in vain. He says: **{We have not created the heavens and earth and all that is between them in vain. That is the assumption of those who disbelieve. So woe to the disbelievers from the Fire!}**<sup>(4)</sup> Rather, Allah created the creation for a great wisdom and lofty purpose. He says: **{I have not created the jinn and mankind except to worship Me}**<sup>(5)</sup> It is not befitting for this All-Wise God to regard as equal those who obey Him and those who disobey Him. He says: **{Should We make those who believe and do righteous deeds equal to those who spread corruption on earth? Or should We make the**

(1) Surat Al-Wāqī'ah (56): 58-59.

(2) Surat Al-Wāqī'ah (56): 63-64.

(3) Surat Al-Hajj (22): 5.

(4) Surat Sād (38): 27.

(5) Surat Adh-Dhāriyāt (51): 56.

**righteous equal to the wicked?}**<sup>(1)</sup> Therefore, it is of His Perfect Wisdom and Great Power to raise up the creation on the Day of Resurrection in order to recompense every human being for his deed; rewarding the good-doer and punishing the evil doer. Allah says: **{To Him is your return all together. Allah's promise will surely come true. He originates the creation then brings it back, so that He may justly reward those who believe and do righteous deeds. But for those who disbelieve there will be a drink of scalding water and a painful punishment because of their disbelief}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

**Belief in the Last Day - the Day of Resurrection - has great impacts on the individual and the society. Among its impacts are:**

1. It makes man endeavor to obey Allah, seeking for the reward of that Day, and keeps him from disobeying Allah out of fear of the punishment of that Day.

2. Belief in the Last Day consoles the believer for what he misses of the bliss and pleasure of this world with the bliss and reward of the Hereafter which he hopes for.

3. It is through the belief in the Last Day that man knows his fate after death and knows that he will get good reward for his deed if it is good and get punishment for it if it is evil. He knows that he will be made to stand for reckoning; he will get retribution against those who wronged him in this world, and the rights of those whom he wronged or transgressed will be taken from him.

4. Belief in the Last Day deters man from doing injustice to others and violating their rights. If people believe in the Last Day, they will be safe from wronging one another and their rights will be protected.

5. Belief in the Last Day makes man look at this worldly abode as just one of the stages of life and that it is not the only life.

To conclude this section, let us quote Wayne Bet, the American Christian who used to work in a church then embraced Islam and found the fruit of belief in the Last Day. He says: "Now I know the answers to four questions that had very much occupied my life. They

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(1) Surat Sād (38): 28.

(2) Surat Yunus (10): 4. Also see Al-Fawā'id by Ibn al-Qayyim, p. 6-9; and At-Tafseer Al-Kabeer by Ar-Rāzi, Vol. 2, p. 113-116.

are: Who am I? What do I want? Why did I come to this world? And what is my destination?”<sup>(1)</sup>.

## Fundamentals of the Messengers' Mission

All Prophets and Messengers were unanimous in their call to the general fundamentals<sup>(2)</sup>, like belief in Allah, His angles, His Books, His Messengers; belief in the Last Day, and in the destiny, the good and the bad thereof; and like the command to worship Allah alone without ascribing any partner to Him, to follow His path and not to follow dissenting paths; and prohibiting the four kinds of sins, which are: immorality, the apparent and the hidden thereof; sins; oppression without legal right; associating partners with Allah in worship and worshipping idols. They also agreed on deeming Allah far above having a wife, child, associate or equal, and the prohibition of saying about Him what is not true; and they agreed on the prohibition of infanticide, killing a soul without right, eating usury, and usurping the orphan's wealth. They were unanimous in enjoining the fulfillment of covenants, giving full scale and weight, dutifulness to parents, judging with justice between people, truthfulness in words and deeds, and the prohibition of squandering, arrogance, and consuming people's wealth unjustly.

Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) said:<sup>(3)</sup> “All Divine Laws are unanimous in their fundamentals, and their goodness is firmly rooted in the human intellect. Had the laws been otherwise, they would have deviated from justice, benefit, and mercy. Rather, it is impossible that they should be otherwise. **{Were the Truth to follow their desires, the heavens and earth, and all those who are therein would have been ruined}**<sup>(4)</sup> How can a wise man deem it permissible that the Law of Allah Who is the Best of judges should come with the opposite of what it came with?”<sup>(5)</sup>.

(1) Ad-Da'awah Saudi Magazine, issue no. 1722, 19/9/1420 AH, p. 37.

(2) These general fundamentals are indicated in Surat Al-Baqarah (2): 285, 286; Surat Al-An'am (6): 151, 153; Surat Al-A'raf (7): 33; Surat Al-Isra' (17): 23, 37.

(3) His name is Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr bin Ayyoob Az-Zar'i. He was born in 691 A.H. and died in 751 A.H. He was one of the great Islamic scholars and authored great books.

(4) Surat Al-Mu'minoon (23): 71.

(5) Miftāhu Dār As-Sa'ādah, Vol. 2, p. 383. See also: Al-Jawāb As-Saheeh, Vol. 4 p. 322; and Lawāmi' Al-Anwār by As-Safāreeni, Vol. 2, p. 263.



This is why all the Prophets had one religion, as confirmed by Allah as He says: **{O messengers, eat from the lawful things and act righteously, for I am All-Knowing of what you do. Indeed, this religion of yours is one religion, and I am your Lord, so fear Me.}**<sup>(1)</sup> He also says: **{He has prescribed for you [believers] the same religion which He enjoined upon Noah, and that which We have revealed to you [O Prophet] and that which We enjoined upon Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: “You should uphold the religion and make no divisions therein.”}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

The purpose of the religion is to make mankind attain what they are created for: to worship their Lord alone without associating any partner with Him<sup>(3)</sup>. He ordained for them obligations which they must fulfill and guaranteed for them rights. He also provided them with the means that enable them to attain that end, so that they can achieve the pleasure of their Lord and happiness in this world and the Hereafter according to a Divine Way that does not tear man apart or afflict his person with morbid schizophrenia that leads to a clash between his nature and soul and the world around him.

All Messengers called to the Divine Religion that presents man with the creedal foundation in which he should believe, and the law which he should follow in his life. That is why the Torah was a creed as well as a law, and its followers were required to refer to it for judgment between them. Allah says: **{We sent down the Torah which contains guidance and light; the prophets who submitted themselves to Allah were judging by it for the Jews, and so did the rabbis and scholars}**<sup>(4)</sup> Then came Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) who brought with him the Gospel in which there was guidance and light and confirmation of the Torah that preceded it. Allah says: **{And in their footsteps We sent Jesus, son of Mary, confirming the Torah that came before him, and We gave him the Gospel that contained guidance and light}**<sup>(5)</sup> Then came Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) with the final Divine

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(1) Surat Al- Mu’minoon (23): 51-52.

(2) Surat Ash-Shoora (42): 13.

(3) Majmoo’ Fatawa Ibn Taymiyyah, Vol. 2, p. 6.

(4) Surat Al-Mā’idah (5): 44.

(5) Surat Al-Mā’idah (5): 46.

Law and the complete religion as a witness over the laws that had come before it and abrogated them. Allah gave him the Qur'an as a confirmation of the Divine Books that had come before it. Allah says: **{We have revealed to you [O Prophet] the Book in truth, confirming the scriptures that came before it and as a criterion over them. So judge between them according to what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their desires in disregard of the truth that has come to you}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah also explains that Muhammad and the believers who were with him believe in Him just as all the Prophets and Messengers who came before them did. He says: **{The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, as do the believers. All of them believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say, "We hear and obey. Grant us Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

### The Everlasting Message<sup>(3)</sup>:

The above presentation of the conditions of Judaism, Christianity, Mazdaism, Zoroastrianism, and paganism shows the situation of mankind<sup>(4)</sup> in the 6th century A.D. When religion becomes corrupt, all political, social and economic conditions became corrupt as well. As a result, bloody wars were raged everywhere, despotism emerged, and mankind lived in stark darkness that led to the darkness of the hearts as a result of disbelief and ignorance. Morals degenerated, honors and rights were violated, and mischief became the order of the day on land and sea. The situation was so terrible that if any wise man were to ponder over it, he would realize that mankind – in that era – were dying and on their way to perish had Allah not rescued them with a great reformer carrying the torch of Prophethood and the light of guidance to illuminate the way for mankind and guide them to the Straight Path.

At that time, Allah permitted that the everlasting light of Prophethood should emanate from Makkah wherein was the Great House. The

(1) Surat Al-Mā'idah (5): 48.

(2) Surat Al-Baqarah (2): 285.

(3) For detailed reading, see: Ar-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom, by Al-Mubārakpuri.

(4) See the section titled: 'Condition of the Existing Religions' in this book, p. 52.

Makkan environment was similar to all other human environments in terms of polytheism, ignorance, injustice, and despotism; except that it was distinguished from them with many qualities, some of which were:

1. It was a pure environment that had not been affected by the blemishes of Greek, Roman or Indian philosophies. Its natives had deep-rooted eloquence, lively minds, and exceptional dispositions.

2. It is situated in the heart of the world. It is in a central place between Europe, Asia and Africa; an important factor that makes it easy for the everlasting message to spread quickly and reach these continents in a short period of time.

3. It was a secure place. Allah protected it when Abraha (the Abyssinian King) wanted to invade it. The neighboring Roman and Persian were unable to conquer it. Even its trade in the north and south was secure. This was a herald to the advent of this Noble Prophet. Allah reminded the inhabitants of Makkah of this great favor, saying: **{Have We not established for them a safe sanctuary [in Makkah] to which fruits of all kinds are brought}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

4. It was a desert environment that had preserved many commendable traits, like generosity, good neighborliness, earnest concern for honor, among other qualities that qualified her for being the best and suitable place for the eternal Message.

From this great place, and from the tribe of Quraysh which was renowned for eloquence, purity of language, and the most noble traits, and which held a position of honor and leadership... Allah chose His Prophet Muhammad to be the last of all Prophets and Messengers. He was born in Makkah in the 6th century A.D. approximately in the year 570. He grew up as an orphan, for his father died while he was still in the womb. His mother and paternal grandfather later died while he was six years old. His paternal uncle, Abu Tālib, took care of him and he grew up as an orphan. Signs of extraordinary brilliance manifested on him; and his habits, manners and traits were different from those of his people. He never lied in his speech and never hurt anyone. He became known for his truthfulness, chastity and sincerity so much so that many of his people would entrust him with their valuable properties

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(1) Surat Al-Qasas (28): 57.

and he would preserve them as he would preserve his own life and wealth. This made them confer on him the title “Al-Ameen” (the trustworthy). He was modest and shy, and was never seen naked since his early life. He was innocent and pious, and felt hurt when he saw his people worshipping idols, drinking alcohol and shedding innocent blood. He would associate with them only in those deeds of theirs which he approved of and kept away from them when they indulged in their shameless acts and sins. He would help the orphans and the widows and feed the hungry. When he was close to forty years of age, he became seriously distressed with the corruption surrounding him and started going for seclusion to worship his Lord and ask Him for guidance to the Straight Path. While he was in this condition, an angel descended upon him with revelation from his Lord, commanding him to convey this religion to mankind; to call them to the worship of their Lord and to shun the worship of others besides him. Then the revelation of ordainments and rulings continued day after day and year after year until Allah perfected this religion for mankind and completed His favor on them with its perfection. When his duty was fulfilled, Allah caused him to die. He lived for sixty-three years; forty before prophethood and twenty-three as a Prophet and Messenger.

Whoever ponders over the conditions of the Prophets and studies their history will know with certainty that there was no way in which the Prophethood of any Prophet was established except that the Prophethood of Muhammad was established in that way with greater reason.

If you study how the Prophethood of Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them) was transmitted, you will find out that it was transmitted through succession (successive oral and written reports). But the succession through which the Prophethood of Muhammad was transmitted was greater, stronger and more recent.

Likewise, the succession through which their signs and miracles are transmitted were similar, but that with which the miracles of Muhammad were transmitted is greater, for his miracles are many and the greatest of them is the Glorious Qur’an which continues to be transmitted successively, both orally and in writing<sup>(1)</sup>.

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(1) See the special section about the Qur’an in this book, p. 95-100 and 114-117.

Whoever makes a comparison between what Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them) brought and what Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) brought of sound creed, precise ordainments, and useful knowledge, will know with certainty that they all emanated from a single lantern: the lantern of Prophethood.

Whoever compares between the conditions of the followers of the Prophets and followers of Muhammad will know with certainty that the followers of Muhammad were the best of people for other people; rather, they were the most of the Prophets' followers in impact on those who came after them. They spread belief in Tawheed (the Oneness of Allah without any partner), propagated justice, and were merciful to the weak and destitute<sup>(1)</sup>.

If you want additional proof of Muhammad's Prophethood, I will quote to you the proofs and signs that were found by 'Ali ibn Rabban at-Tabari when he was a Christian then later embraced Islam because of those signs. They are:

1. He called to the worship of Allah alone and shunning the worship of others beside Him. In this, he agreed with all other Prophets.

2. He showed clear signs which only Prophets of Allah can show.

3. He predicted future events and they happened as he had predicted.

4. He predicted the occurrence of many events of the world and its countries and these events occurred as he had predicted.

5. The Book that Muhammad was sent with – the Qur'an – is a sign of Prophethood, for it is the most eloquent Book, sent down unto an unlettered man who could neither read nor write, but yet challenged the orators to produce the like thereof or the like of one chapter of it; and because Allah guaranteed its preservation, He preserved the sound creed with it, included in it the most perfect law, and established therewith the best community.

6. He is the seal of all Prophets, and had he not been sent, the prophecies of the past Prophets who gave glad tidings of his advent would have turned false.

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(1) See Majmoo' al-Fatāwa, Vol. 4, p. 201-211; and Ifhām al-Yahood by Samaw'al Al-Magribi, p. 58-59.

7. The Prophets (peace be upon them) prophesied about him long before his advent. They described his mission, his country, and the submission of nations and kings to him and to his nation. They also mentioned the spread of his religion.

8. His victory over the nations that waged war against him is a sign of his Prophethood; for it would be impossible for a man who falsely claims to be a Messenger of Allah and yet be strengthened by Allah with victory, authority, prevalence over enemies, spread of his message and abundance of his followers; for all this cannot happen except at the hands of a truthful Prophet.

9. His worship, his decency, truthfulness, commendable character, manners and ordinances. All this cannot be found together except in a Prophet.

After mentioning these proofs, this revert said: “These are illuminating traits and sufficient proofs. Whoever is endowed with them must be a Prophet; he is proved rightful and belief in him is obligatory. Whoever rejects these proofs and denies them has incurred loss in his endeavors and lost his worldly life and his afterlife.”<sup>(1)</sup>

At the end of this section, I will narrate to you two testimonies: that of the Roman King contemporaneous to Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), and that of the contemporary English Evangelist John Saint.

The Testimony of Heraclius: Al-Bukhāri (may Allah have mercy upon him) narrated the story of Abu Sufyān when the Roman King summoned him. He (Al-Bukhāri) said: Abu Sufyān ibn Harb recounted to Abdullah ibn ‘Abbas that Heraclius summoned him while he was in a Qurayshi caravan of traders conducting trade in Syria, at a time when the Messenger of Allah (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) was in a truce with Abu Sufyān and the pagans of Quraysh<sup>(2)</sup>. They came to Heraclius while they were at Ilya<sup>(3)</sup>.

(1) Ad-Deen wa ad-Dawlah fee Ithbāt Nubuwwat Nabiiyyina Muhammad, by ‘Ali ibn Rabban At-Tabari, p. 47. See also: Al-I’lām by Al-Qurtubi, p. 263 and what follows it.

(2) The truce is the Treaty of Hudaibiyya which was made in the year 6 A.H. and its term was ten years. See Fat’h Al-Bāri, Vol. 1, p. 34.

(3) A city in Greater Syria.

Heraclius invited them to his court and he was surrounded by the great men of Rome. He called them and his interpreter. He then asked Abu Sufyān and his company: "Which one of you is closest to this man who claims to be a Prophet?" Abu Sufyān said, "I am the closest to him in blood ties." Heraclius then told his retinue, "Bring him close to me and let his companions stand behind him." He then told his interpreter, "Tell them: I will ask this one about the man who claims to be a Prophet, and if he lies to me, you should refute that." Abu Sufyān said, "By Allah! Were it not for the shame of being called a liar by them, I would have lied about him. The first question he asked me about him was: "How is his lineage amongst you?" I said, "He is of noble lineage among us." He asked, "Has anybody among you ever said what he says before him?" I said, "No." He said, "Had anyone among his forefathers been a king?" I said, "No." He said, "Are his followers noble men or weak people?" I said, "Weak people." He said, "Do they increase or decrease?" I said, "They increase." He said, "Did anyone of them apostatize from his religion in disapproval after having embraced it?" I said, "No." He said, "Does he betray?" I said, "No. But we are now in a truce with him and we do not know what he is going to do." Abu Sufyān added, "This is the only statement where I could imply something against him." Heraclius further asked, "Did you go to war with him?" I said, "Yes." He said, "How was your war with him?" I said, "It is an alternate victory. He wins sometimes and we win sometimes." He said, "What does he command you to do?" I said, "He says, 'Worship God alone and do not associate anything in worship with him and shun what your fathers say.' He enjoins on us prayer, truthfulness, probity and kindness to the kith and kin." Heraclius then told his interpreter, "Tell him: I asked you of his lineage and you said that he of noble lineage among you. That is the case with the Messengers. They were sent from the noble lineage among their people. I asked you: Had anybody among you claimed what he claims and you said, No. And I say: If anyone had said before him what he says now, I would have said that he is repeating what others have said before him. I asked you: Had any of his ancestors been a king? And you said, No. If any of his forefathers had been a king, I would have said that he is asking for the Kingdom of his father. I asked you: Have you ever suspected him of telling lies before he said



what he said and you answered, No. I then know that he could not have shunned lying to people and tell lies against God. I asked you whether those who follow him are noble men or weak people, and you answered that his followers are weak people. Yes, those are the followers of the Messengers. I asked you if they increase or decrease in number and you said that they increase. That is what happens with faith until it becomes completed. I asked you, if any of his followers apostatize in disapproval after having embraced his religion and you said, No. Yes, that is what faith does when it penetrates the hearts. I asked you if he betrays and you said, No. That is what Messengers do; they do not betray. And I asked you about what he commands you to do and you said that he enjoined to worship Allah alone and associate nothing with Him in worship, that he forbids you from worshipping idols, and that he enjoined on you prayers, truthfulness, and probity. If all that you said is true, he shall control where I am standing now. I knew that he would emerge but I did not think that he would be from amongst you. Had I known that I could reach him, I would suffer hardship to meet him. And if I were with him, I would wash his feet.” He then called for the letter of the Messenger of Allah which he sent with Dihya to the ruler of Busra. He presented the letter to Heraclius and he read it. The text of the letter was: In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. From Muhammad, the slave of Allah and His Messenger, to Heraclius the ruler of the Romans. Peace be upon him who follows the guidance. I am inviting you with the invitation of Islam. Accept Islam, you will be safe and Allah will give you your reward twice. But if you turn away, you will bear the sins of the Yareesiyyeen (Arians)<sup>(1)</sup> **{Say, “O people of the Book, come to a common term between us and you, that we worship none but Allah and associate no partners with Him, and that we do not take one another as lords besides Allah.” But if they turn away, say, “Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Allah]}<sup>(2)</sup>.**

Testimony of the contemporary English Evangelist John Cent; he said: “After continuous reading about Islam and its principles that serve individuals and society, and its justice in establishing a society

(1) Spelled 'Areesiyyeen' in Saheeh Al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad.

(2) Narrated by Al-Bukhāri, Book of the Beginning of Revelation, Ch. 1.

based on foundations of equality and monotheism, I found myself attracted to Islam with all my reason and soul, and I pledged to Allah, may He be glorified – from that day on – that I would be a caller to Islam, preaching its guidance in all parts of the world.”

He arrived at this certainty after having studied Christianity in depth. He found that it could not provide answers to many questions of human life. So he started having doubts. He then studied communism and Buddhism but still could not find what he was looking for. He finally studied Islam deeply, then believed in it and called to it<sup>(1)</sup>.

### **The Seal of Prophethood:**

From all of the above, you come to know the truth about Prophethood, its signs and proofs, and the signs of Prophethood of Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him). Before we start talking about the seal of Prophethood, you have to know that Allah, the Exalted, does not send a Messenger except for one of the following reasons:

1. That the message of the Prophet is specifically meant for a particular people in which the concerned Messenger is not obliged to convey his message to the neighboring nations, so Allah sends another Messenger with a special message to another nation.

2. That the message of the previous Prophet has become extinct, in which case Allah sends a Prophet to revive for people their religion.

3. That the law of the previous Prophet is valid only for its time and no longer suitable for subsequent periods, so Allah sends a Messenger with another message and law that is suitable for that time and place. The Wisdom of Allah, however, entailed that He sends Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) to all mankind with a Message that is suitable for all times and places, and He preserved it against the altering and interpolating hands, so that it remains His Living Message by which people live and that will be pure and free from the blemishes of distortion and alteration. It is for this reason that Allah made it the seal of all Messages<sup>(2)</sup>.

(1) Ad-Deen Al-Fitri Al-Abadi, by Al-Mubashshir At-Tarāzi Al-Husayni, Vol. 2, p. 319.

(2) See Al-‘Aqeedah At-Tahāwīyyah, p. 156; Lawāmi‘ Al-Anwār Al-Bahīyyah, Vol. 2, p. 269, 277; and Mabādi’ Al-Islam, p. 64.

Among the things with which Allah distinguished Muhammad is that He made him the seal of all Prophets after whom there would be no Prophet. This is because, Allah completed with him all Messages, concluded with him all Laws, perfected with him the structure and fulfilled in his Prophethood the Prophecy of Jesus Christ when he said: “Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.”<sup>(1)</sup> The Reverend Ibrahim Khalil – who later converted to Islam – regarded this text to be in conformity with the saying of Muhammad (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) about himself: “Indeed, the example of me and that of the Prophets before me is like that of a man who has perfectly built a house and adorned it except for the place of a brick in a corner which he left unfilled. People went round it and admired it and said: If only this brick would be put in place? So I am the brick, and I am the seal of the Prophets.”<sup>(2)</sup>

It is for this reason that Allah made the Book that was revealed to Muhammad a witness over all previous Books and an abrogator of them all, just as He made the Law of Muhammad an abrogator of all preceding Laws. Allah guaranteed the protection of Muhammad’s Message, hence, it was transmitted successively. The Qur’an was transmitted in succession orally and in writing. Everything that Muhammad said or did (the Sunnah), which is the practical implementation of the teachings of this religion and its worship and rulings, were also transmitted successively.

Whoever reads the biography of the Prophet and his Sunnah will know that his Companions had preserved for humanity all situations, sayings and deeds of Muhammad. They transmitted his acts of worship to his Lord, his strife in His cause, his remembrance of Him and his seeking for His forgiveness. They transmitted his generosity, courage, his relationship with his Companions and his guests. They transmitted his joy and sorrow, his travel and sojourn, his manners of

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(1) Matthews 21:42.

(2) See, “Muhammad in the Torah, Gospel, and Qur’an” by Ibrahim Khalil Ahmad, p. 73. The Hadīth was narrated by Al-Bukhāri in the Book of Virtuous Traits, Ch. 18; Muslim in the Book of Virtues, No. 2286 on the authority of Abu Hurayrah; Al-Musnad, Vol. 2, p. 256, 312.

eating, drinking and clothing, and his wakefulness and sleep. When you know all this, you will know with certainty that this religion is preserved by Allah's protection and you will then know that Muhammad is the last of all Prophets and Messengers; for Allah Almighty told us that this Messenger is the last of all Prophets: **{Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the prophets}**<sup>(1)</sup> Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said about himself: "... and I was sent to all mankind, and I was made the seal of all Prophets."<sup>(2)</sup>

Now is the time to define Islam and explain its essence, sources, pillars and degrees.

### **The Meaning of the Word Islam:**

If you consult the lexicons, you will find that the word Islam means submission, yielding, surrender, and compliance with the command and prohibition of the commander without objection. Allah named the true religion 'Islam' because it is obedience to Him, submission to His Commands without objection, sincerely worshipping Him alone, believing in His words and having faith in Him. Islam became a proper name for the religion brought by Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him).

### **Definition of Islam<sup>(3)</sup>:**

Why was this religion named Islam? All the various religions on earth were named either after a particular person or nation. Christianity was named after Jesus Christ, Buddhism was named after its founder Buddha, Zoroastrianism was named after its founder Zoroaster (or Zarathustra), and Judaism was named after the tribe of Judah where it emerged, and so on. Islam is an exception; it is not attributed to any particular man or nation; its name indicates a special characteristic that the meaning of the word Islam denotes. It is evident from this name that no man has any role in bringing this religion into existence and that it is not peculiar to any nation to the exclusion of

(1) Surat Al-Ahzāb (33): 40.

(2) Narrated by Imam Ahmad in his Musnad, Vol. 2, p. 411, 412; and Muslim in the Book on Mosques, No. 523, and this is the wording he narrated.

(3) For more details, see Mabādi' Al-Islam, by Shaykh Humood ibn Muhammad Al-Lāhim; and Daleel Mukhtasar li-Fahm Al-Islam, by Ibrahim Harb.

others. Its only goal is to make all people of the earth have the characteristic of Islam. So, whoever is characterized with the qualities of Islam among ancient people or contemporary people is a Muslim, just as he shall be called a Muslim, anyone who possesses its qualities among the coming generations.

### **The Essence of Islam:**

It is known that everything in this universe is subject to a particular rule and established norm. The sun, the moon, the stars and the earth are all subjected to a consistent rule which they cannot go against or deviate from even the size of a hair. Even man himself, when you reflect on him, it will be clear that he completely submits to the norms of Allah. He cannot breathe or feel a need for water, food, light and heat except according to the Divine Decree that regulates his life; and all parts of his body submit to this Decree. The functions that these parts perform cannot be carried out except according to what Allah has prescribed for them.

This comprehensive Divine Ordainment which man surrenders to and from which none in this universe – from the biggest planet in the sky to the smallest grain of sand on earth – can escape from obeying, for it is the Divine Ordainment of the Magnificent, the Sovereign and the All-Powerful Lord. Since all that is in the heavens and the earth and between them surrender to this Divine Ordainment, this means that the whole world submits to Him and obeys His commandments. This makes it clear that Islam is the religion of the whole universe, for Islam means submission and obedience to the command of the Commander and to His Prohibitions without objection, as mentioned above. The sun, the moon and the earth all surrender to Him. Air, water, light, darkness and heat, all surrender to Him. Trees, stones and animals, all surrender. Even the man who does not know his Lord and denies His existence and signs or worships others, or associates others with Him, surrenders by nature to Him.

**If you realize all this, then let us have a look at man, and you will find that he is between two factors:**

● **First:** Man's natural disposition; like submission to Allah, loving to worship Him, seeking nearness to Him, loving what He loves of

truth, good and honesty; hating what He hates of falsehood, evil, injustice and wrong; and other natural factors like: love for money, family and children and desire for food, drink and sex and other necessary physical functions.

● **Second:** Man's free will and choice: Allah sent Messengers to him and revealed Books so that he might distinguish between truth and falsehood; guidance and error; good and evil. He gave him mental power and understanding so that he can make his choice with full insight. If he so wills, he takes to the good path that leads him to truth and guidance; and if he so wills, he takes to the evil path that leads him to evil and perdition.

If you therefore, look at man in the perspective of the first factor, you will find that he is created to submit to Allah, conditioned to adhere to that submission without making any deviation whatsoever, just like any other creature.

But if you look at him in the perspective of the second factor, you will find that he is a free creature, who chooses what he wants. He may choose to become a Muslim or a disbeliever; **{Indeed, We showed him the way, whether he is grateful or ungrateful}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

**Hence, you find people divided into two categories:**

A man who knows his Creator and believes in Him as his Lord and God whom he worships alone and follows His Law in his life voluntarily. He is also conditioned by nature to submit to his Lord, from Whom he cannot deviate and Whose ordainments he follows – such a man is the complete Muslim whose Islam is perfect and whose knowledge is sound; for he knows Allah, his Creator and Originator, Who sent Messengers to him and endowed him with the power of knowledge and learning. His reason thus becomes sound and his opinion correct; because he used his mind and decided not to worship but Allah Who blessed him with understanding and sound opinion in matters. His tongue speaks only the truth; for now, he only believes in One Lord Who is Allah, the Exalted, Who gave him the power to speak. It is as if nothing remains in his life but the truth; for he follows and surrenders to the Law of Allah in that which he has free will; and

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(1) Surat Al-Insān (76): 3.

there exists between him and other creatures in the universe a bond of familiarity and friendliness, for he worships none but Allah, the All-Wise, All-Knowledgeable, Whom all creatures worship, and unto Whose Commandments and Ordainments all surrender and submit. And Allah has subjected all these creatures to you, O man!

### The Essence of Disbelief:

On the contrary is another man, who was born in submission to Allah and lived all his life in submission to Allah but never felt this submission or realized it. He did not know his Lord, nor believed in His Law or followed His Messengers. He did not use the knowledge and intellect that Allah has given him to recognize his Creator Who carved for him his ears and eyes. He rather denied His existence, disdained His worship and refused to submit to His Laws in matters of his life in which he is given the right of disposition and choice. Or he associated others with Him in worship and refused to believe in His signs that indicate His Oneness. Such a man is a Kāfir (disbeliever). For the meaning of 'Kufr' in the Arabic language is 'to cover and conceal'. So this man is called a 'Kāfir' for he conceals his inherent nature and covers it with ignorance and foolishness; when we know that he was born with the inherent nature of Islam (submission), and the parts of his body function according to the inherent nature of Islam. The whole world around him functions according to the norms of submission, but he covers his intellect with an invisible cover of ignorance and foolishness, and his insight is blind to the inherent nature of the world and his own self. You, therefore, see him using his intellectual and logical power only in that which contradicts his nature. He does not see anything but that which corrupts his nature.

It is now left to you to estimate the extent of deep error and clear transgression to which the disbeliever has degenerated<sup>(1)</sup>.

This Islam which you are required to practice is not a difficult matter, but it is quite easy for whomever Allah makes it easy. Islam is the religion which all this universe follows: **{... to Him submit all those in the heavens and on earth, willingly or unwilling...}**<sup>(2)</sup> It is

(1) Mabādi' Al-Islam, p. 3, 4.

(2) Surat al 'Imrān (3): 83.



the religion of Allah, as He says: **{The true religion with Allah is Islam}**<sup>(1)</sup> Islam is submission of one's whole self to Allah as He, Great is His praise, says: **{Then if they argue with you, say, "I have submitted myself to Allah, and so have those who follow me."}**<sup>(2)</sup> The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) explained the meaning of Islam when he said: "It is to submit your heart to Allah, direct your face to Allah (in worship), and to give the obligatory Zakah."<sup>(3)</sup> A man asked the Messenger of Allah: "What is Islam?" He said: "It is to surrender your heart to Allah; and that Muslims should be safe from the harm of your tongue and hand." The man asked: "Which part of Islam is best?" He said: "Faith (Imān)" He asked: "What is Faith?" He said: "To believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, and to believe in Resurrection after death."<sup>(4)</sup> The Messenger of Allah also said: "Islam is to bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; to observe the prayers, to give Zakah, to fast the month of Ramadān, and to perform pilgrimage to the House if you are able."<sup>(5)</sup> He also said, "A Muslim is the one from the evil of whose hand and tongue Muslims are safe."<sup>(6)</sup>

This religion – Islam – is the religion other than which Allah does not accept, not from former generations or from later generations, for all the Prophets were upon the religion of Islam. Allah says about Prophet Noah: **{Relate to them the story of Noah when he said to his people, "O my People, if my presence among you and my reminding you of Allah's signs have become unbearable to you, then in Allah I have put my trust... Till He says: ... and I have been commanded to be among those who submit to Allah [as**

(1) Surat āl 'Imrān (3): 19.

(2) Surat āl 'Imrān (3): 20.

(3) Narrated by Imām Ahmad, Vol. 5, p. 3; and Ibn Hibbān, Vol 1, p. 377.

(4) Narrated by Imām Ahmad in his Musnad, Vol. 4, p. 114; Al-Haythami said in Al-Mujma', Vol. 1, p. 59, that it was narrated by Ahmad and At-Tabarāni in Al-Kabeer, and its narrators are trustworthy. See: Fadl Al-Islam by Imām Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhāb (may Allah have mercy upon him), p. 8.

(5) Narrated by Muslim in the Book of Imān, No. 8.

(6) Narrated by Al-Bukhāri in the Book of Imān, Ch. A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hand Muslims are safe; and Muslim in his Sahīh, Book of Imān, No. 39. This is the wording narrated by Al-Bukhāri.

**Muslims].”}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah Almighty says about Abraham: **{When his Lord said to him, “Submit,” he said, “I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds.”}**<sup>(2)</sup> And Allah says about Moses: **{Moses said, “O my people, if you have faith in Allah, then put your trust in Him, if you have truly submitted.”}**<sup>(3)</sup> And He says about Jesus Christ: **{And [remember] when I inspired the disciples, “Believe in Me and in My messenger [Jesus].” They said, “We believe, and bear witness that we submit to Allah [as Muslims].”}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

This religion – Islam – derives all its laws, beliefs and rulings from the Divine Revelation: the Qur’an and Sunnah. I will give you brief information about them.

## Origin of Islam and its Sources

It is the habit of the followers of false religions and man-made creeds to hallow books that were passed down from one generation to the other, written in ancient times and whose authors or translators or the time of their writing may not be known. They were written by people who suffered what all human beings suffer of weakness, deficiency, whimsical desires and forgetfulness.

As for Islam, it is different from all other books as it depends on the true source which is the Divine Revelation: the Qur’an and Sunnah. Following is a brief introduction of both:

### A. The Glorious Qur’an:

You know from the above that Islam is the religion of Allah, and that is why Allah revealed the Qur’an to His Messenger, Muhammad, as a guidance for the pious, a Law for the Muslims, a healing for the diseases that are in the hearts of those whom Allah wants to heal and a light for those whom Allah wants to give success. It contains the fundamentals for which Allah sent the Messengers<sup>(5)</sup>. The Qur’an was not the first Book to be revealed nor was Muhammad the first Messenger to be sent. Allah had revealed the Scriptures to Abraham,

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(1) Surat Yunus (10): 71-72.

(2) Surat Al-Baqarah (2): 131.

(3) Surat Yunus (10): 84.

(4) At-Tadmuriyyah, p. 109-110; and Surat Al-Mā’idah (5): 11.

(5) As-Sunnah wa Makānatuha fi At-Tashree‘ Al-Islami, by Mustafa As-Sibā’i, p. 376.

the Torah to Moses, the Psalms to David, and the Gospel to Jesus. All these Books were revelations from Allah to His Prophets and Messengers. But the contents of most of these Books have been lost and have become extinct, and interpolation and alterations were made to them.

As for the Glorious Qur'an, Allah Himself guaranteed its protection and made it witness and abrogator of earlier Books. He says, addressing Prophet Muhammad: **{We have revealed to you [O Prophet] the Book in truth, confirming the scriptures that came before it and as a criterion over them}**<sup>(1)</sup> He describes the Qur'an as an explanation of everything: **{We have sent down to you the Book as an explanation of everything}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also describes it as guidance and mercy: **{Now there has come to you a clear proof from your Lord, a guidance and a mercy}**<sup>(3)</sup> And that it guides to uprightness: **{Indeed, this Qur'an guides to what is most upright}**<sup>(4)</sup> The Qur'an guides mankind to the most righteous path in all aspects of their life.

The Qur'an is an everlasting miracle for Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). It contains signs that shall abide till the Day of Resurrection. The signs and miracles of previous Prophets used to end with the termination of their lives, but Allah made the Qur'an an everlasting proof.

It is the conclusive evidence and dazzling sign. Allah challenged mankind to produce the like thereof or ten Surahs like it or even a single Surah that resembles it, and they were unable to do that although it is composed of letters and words and the people on whom it was first revealed were masters of eloquence and rhetoric. Allah says: **{Or do they say, "He fabricated it?" Say, "Produce then one Chapter like it, and call upon whoever you can other than Allah, if you are truthful!}**<sup>(5)</sup>

Among the signs that testify to the fact that the Qur'an is a revelation from Allah is that it contains stories of the past nations, it

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(1) Surat Al-Mā'idah (5): 48.

(2) Surat An-Nahl (16): 89.

(3) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 157.

(4) Surat Al-Isrā' (17): 9.

(5) Surat Yoonus (10): 38.

prophesied future events that came to happen as it has prophesied, and it mentions many scientific facts some of which have not been discovered but recently. Another proof of its being a Divinely revealed Book is that the Prophet on whom it was revealed was unknown for anything similar to that or reported to have known anything similar to the Qur'an. Allah says: **{Say, "If Allah had willed, I would not have recited it to you, nor would He have made it known to you. I have spent a lifetime among you before this. Do you not then understand?}**<sup>(1)</sup> He was rather unlettered who neither read nor wrote, and neither did he sit with any tutor; nevertheless, he challenged the most eloquent people to produce the like of it. Allah says: **{You [O Prophet] never recited any book before this, nor did you write with your hand. Otherwise, the people of falsehood would have raised suspicions}**<sup>(2)</sup> This unlettered man who was described in the Torah and the Gospel as illiterate, not knowing how to read or write, was visited by Jewish rabbis and Christian priests – who had some remnants of the Torah and the Gospel – and asked him about issues over which they differed and requested his arbitration in matters in which they contended. Allah says, explaining the description of Muhammad in the Torah and the Gospel: **{Those who follow the Messenger – the unlettered Prophet – whose description they find in their Torah and the Gospel. He enjoins them to do what is good and forbids them from what is evil; he makes lawful for them what is pure and makes unlawful for them what is impure}**<sup>(3)</sup> Allah, the Exalted, also says, while speaking about the questions that the Jews and Christians asked the Prophet: **{The People of the Book ask you to bring down upon them a Book from the heaven}**<sup>(4)</sup> He, may His praise be exalted, also says: **{They ask you [O Prophet] about the soul}**<sup>(5)</sup> He also says: **{They ask you about Dhul-Qarnayn}**<sup>(6)</sup> He also says: **{Indeed, this Qur'an explains to the Children of Israel most of that over which they differ}**<sup>(7)</sup>.

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(1) Surat Yunus (10): 16.

(2) Surat Al-'Ankaboot (29): 48.

(3) Surat Al-A'rāf (7): 157.

(4) Surat An-Nisā' (4): 153.

(5) Surat Al-Isrā' (17): 85.

(6) Surat Al-Kahf (18): 83.

(7) Surat An-Naml (27): 76.

Reverend Ibrahim Philobus made an attempt in his doctorate thesis to undermine the Qur'an, but he failed and the Qur'an overwhelmed him with its proofs, evidences and signs. The man proclaimed his own weakness, surrendered to his Creator and embraced Islam<sup>(1)</sup>.

When a Muslim presented a translated copy of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an as a gift to the American college professor Dr. Jeffrey Lang, he found that this Qur'an was addressing him, answering his questions and removing the barrier between him and His own self. He said, "It seems that He Who revealed the Qur'an knows me more than I know myself."<sup>(2)</sup> How could this not be, when the One Who revealed the Qur'an is the Creator of man, and He is Allah, may He be Glorified: **{Does He not know His Own creation, when He is the Most Subtle, the All-Aware?}**<sup>(3)</sup> Dr. Lang's reading of the translation of the meanings of the Noble Qur'an led him to embracing Islam and to writing this book from which I quoted him.

The Qur'an is comprehensive to all that man needs. It contains all the fundamentals of faith, legislations, human interactions and manners. Allah says: **{We have neglected nothing in the Book}**<sup>(4)</sup> In the Qur'an, there is a call to belief in the Oneness of Allah, and mention of His Names, Attributes, and His Deeds. It calls to belief in the authenticity of what the Prophets and Messengers brought. It affirms the Resurrection, reward, and reckoning, and establishes evidence and proofs for that. It narrates the stories of past nations, the punishment meted out upon them in this world as well as the torment and exemplary punishment that awaits them in the Hereafter.

It also contains many proofs and signs that dazzle the scientists and are suitable for all ages; and in which many scholars and researchers find what they are looking for. I will give only three examples that reveal part of this miraculous aspect of the Qur'an:

1. Allah Almighty says: **{It is He Who merges the two bodies of water: one fresh and palatable and the other salty and bitter,**

(1) See: Al-Mustashriqoon wal-mubashshiroon fi Al-'ālam Al-'Arabi wal-Islami, by Ibrahim Khalil Ahmad.

(2) Struggling to Surrender, by Dr. Jeffrey Lang; Arabic translation by Mundhir Al-'Absi, published by Dar Al-Fikr, p. 34.

(3) Surat Al-Mulk (67): 14.

(4) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 38.

**and He has made between them a barrier and an insurmountable partition}**<sup>(1)</sup> He also says: **{Or [their deeds] are like layers of darkness in a deep sea covered by waves upon waves, above which are clouds - layers of darkness, one above another. If one stretches out his hand, he can hardly see it. Whoever Allah does not give light will have no light at all}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

It is well-known that Muhammad never traveled by sea, and neither was there in his time material instruments that could have helped to discover the depths of the sea. Who else could have provided Muhammad with this information if not Allāh?

2. Allah says: **{We created man from an extract of clay, then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a safe place, then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, then We made the clinging clot into a lump, then We made the lump into bones, and We clothed the bones with flesh, and then We developed it into another creation. So Blessed is Allah, the Best of Creators}**<sup>(3)</sup> The scientists did not discover these minute details about the stages of embryonic development except in this present age.

3. Allah also says: **{He alone has the keys of the unseen; no one knows them except Him. He knows what is in the land and sea. Not a leaf falls without His knowledge, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything moist or dry, but is [written] in a Clear Record}**<sup>(4)</sup> Mankind is not used to this all-encompassing thought and does not think about it, let alone be able to do it. Rather, if a group of scientists observe a plant or an insect and record their findings about it, we become dazzled with that, though we know that what is hidden from these scientists about this plant or insect is much more than what they observed.

The French scientist Maurice Bucaille made a comparison between the Torah, the Gospel, the Qur'an and between modern scientific discoveries concerning the creation of the heavens, the earth and man, and he found out that these modern discoveries conform with what is

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(1) Surat Al-Furqān (25): 53.

(2) Surat An-Noor (24): 40.

(3) Surat Al-Mu'minoon (23): 12-14.

(4) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 59.

in the Qur'an. Meanwhile, he found out that the Torah and the Gospel that are in circulation today contain much erroneous information about the creation of the heavens, the earth, man and animals<sup>(1)</sup>.

### B. The Prophetic Sunnah:

Allah revealed the Qur'an to the Messenger and revealed to him its like which is the Prophetic Sunnah that explains the Qur'an. The Messenger of Allah said: "Indeed, I have been given the Qur'an and its like with it."<sup>(2)</sup> Allah permitted him to explain the general and particular verses of the Qur'an. Allah says: **{and We have sent down to you [O Prophet] the Reminder to explain to people what has been sent down to them, and so that they may reflect}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

The Sunnah is the second source of the religion of Islam. It comprises all that is reported from the Prophet – with well-connected and authentic chains of transmitters – of his sayings, deeds, approvals and attributes.

It is also a revelation from Allah to His Messenger Muhammad, for the Prophet did not speak of his own desire. Allah says: **{It is but a revelation sent down [to him]. He was taught by [an angel of mighty power]}**<sup>(4)</sup> The Prophet only conveys to people what he is commanded to convey. Allah says about him: **{I only follow what is revealed to me, and I am not but a clear warner}**<sup>(5)</sup>.

The purified Sunnah is the practical implementation of Islam in terms of rulings, beliefs, acts of worship, transactions and manners. The Messenger of Allah exemplified what he was commanded, explained it to people and commanded them to do like he did. He says, for instance: "Pray as you have seen me praying."<sup>(6)</sup> The All-Mighty Allah commanded the believers to emulate him in all his deeds and sayings in order that their faith might be complete. He says: **{Indeed, in the Messenger of**

(1) See: "The Bible, the Qur'an and Science" by Maurice Bucaille, p. 133-283. He was a French Christian doctor who reverted to Islam.

(2) Narrated by Imām Ahmad in his Musnad, Vol. 4, p. 131; and Abu Dawood in his Sunan, Book of Sunnah, Ch. Adhering to the Sunnah, No. 4604, p. 200.

(3) Surat An-Nahl (16): 44.

(4) Surat An-Najm (53): 4-5.

(5) Surat Al-Ahqāf (46): 9.

(6) Narrated by Al-Bukhāri in the Book of The Call to Prayer, Ch. 18, Vol. 1, p. 155.



**Allah you have an excellent example for those who look forward to Allah and the Last Day, and remember Allah much}**<sup>(1)</sup> The Prophet's noble Companions transmitted his sayings and deeds to those who came after them, who in turn transmitted them to those who came after them. They were then recorded in the books of Sunnah. The Sunnah transmitters were quite strict regarding those from whom they transmitted, and they set a condition that the reporter they were transmitting from had to be contemporaneous to the reporter that preceded him in the chain of transmission, till the chain of transmission would be connected from the most recent narrator back to the Messenger of Allah<sup>(2)</sup>. They also set a condition that all the people involved in the transmission had to be trustworthy, just, sincere and people of integrity.

The Sunnah, in addition to being the practical implementation of Islam, it also explains the Qur'an, makes comments on it, and details its rulings that have general indications. The Messenger of Allah used to do all this, sometimes with his words, sometimes with his deeds, and sometimes with both. The Sunnah may, in some cases, give independent explanations of some rulings and legislations that are not in the Qur'an.

One must believe in the Qur'an and Sunnah that they are the principle sources of the religion of Islam that must be followed and turned to. The command of both must be obeyed, their prohibitions must be abstained from and their contents must be believed. One must also believe in what both contain of the Names, Attributes and Actions of Allah, what He has prepared for His faithful allies and that with which He threatened His disbelieving enemies. He says: **{But no, by your Lord, they will not believe until they accept you [O Prophet] as judge in their disputes, and find no discomfort within their hearts about your judgments, but accept them wholeheartedly}**<sup>(3)</sup>

(1) Surat Al-Ahzāb (33): 21.

(2) As a result of this unique academic methodology and precision in transmitting the Sunnah, new sciences were introduced among the Muslims known as 'Ilm Al-jarh wa At-Ta'deel (Science of Criticizing and Commending) and 'Ilm Mustalah Al-Hadeeth (Science of Hadeeth Terminology). These two sciences are among the exclusive characteristics of the Muslim nation, which no one possessed before them.

(3) Surat An-Nisā' (4): 65.

He also says: **{Whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and whatever he forbids you, refrain from it}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

After this introduction about the sources of this religion, it is appropriate to discuss its degrees, which are: Islam, Imān and Ihsān. We are also going to talk about the pillars of these degrees in brief.

### **The First Degree: [234]**

**Islam:** Its pillars are five, they are: The Shahādah (bearing witness that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger); Prayer, Zakah, Fasting (of Ramadan), and Pilgrimage.

**First Pillar: The Shahādah** (testimony of faith) that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

The first part of the Shahādah means: there is no rightful deity on the earth or in the heavens except Allah alone. He is the only true God and all deities besides Him are false<sup>(2)</sup>. This testimony entails sincere dedication of all acts of worship to Allah alone and negation of worshiping anything other than Him. It does not benefit the one who says it until two matters are fulfilled in him:

● **First:** saying it out of belief, knowledge, conviction, affirmation, and love.

● **Second:** disbelieving in all that is worshiped besides Allah. Whoever says this testimony without disbelieving in all that is worshiped besides Allah, this statement will not benefit him.

Testifying that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah means: to follow him in all that he commanded, to believe in all that he informed, to abstain from all that he prohibited and warned against, and to worship Allah with only what he legislated. It also means: to know and believe that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger to all people, that he is only a slave of Allah and he must not be worshiped, rather he should be obeyed and followed, and that whoever follows him enters Paradise and whoever disobeys him enters Hellfire. It also means: to know and believe that Islamic injunctions in matters of

(1) Surat Al-Hashr (59): 7.

(2) Deen al-Haqq, p. 38.

belief, acts of worship that are commanded by Allah, system of law and legislation, morals, building a family, and declaring things lawful or unlawful, all this cannot be received except through this noble Prophet, Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) for he is the Messenger of Allah, who conveys His Law to mankind<sup>(1)</sup>.

**Second Pillar: Prayer**<sup>(2)</sup>. Prayer is the second pillar of Islam. It is rather the mainstay of Islam, for it is the connection between man and his Lord. He repeats it five times a day, thereby renewing his faith, purifying himself from the filth of sins, and it stands between him and immorality and misdeeds. When he wakes up from sleep in the morning, he stands before his Lord pure and clean before he starts engaging in the matters of this world. He glorifies his Lord, affirms his servitude to Him, asks Him for help and guidance, and renews the covenant of obedience with His Lord. He does this by standing, bowing, and prostrating to Him five times each day. A requirement for performing this prayer is that he purifies his heart, body, clothes and place of his prayer. Another requirement is that the [male] Muslim performs this prayer in congregation with his fellow Muslims, while they all turn to their Lord with their hearts and face to the direction of the Ka'bah, the House of Allah. Prayer was prescribed in the best form as the Creator enjoined upon His slaves to worship Him; for it contains His glorification with all parts of the body; from word of the tongue, deeds of the hands, legs, head, senses and all other parts of his body; each part taking its share of this great act of worship.

The senses and limbs take their share from it, and the heart as well takes its share, for prayer comprises exaltation of Allah, praising Him, glorifying Him, extolling Him, giving the testimony of faith, reciting the Qur'an, and standing before the Almighty Lord, then humiliating oneself to Him in this position, imploring Him and seeking His nearness. He then bows, prostrates and then sits down, all in submission, humility and showing helplessness for His greatness and His Might. The heart of this slave becomes broken, his body becomes humble and all his senses surrender with humility to his Lord. He then concludes his prayer with giving thanks to Allah and praising Him, and invoking

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(1) Deen al-Haqq, p. 51-52.

(2) For more details, see "Kayfiyyat Salāt An-Nabiyy" by Shaykh Bin Bāz.

peace and blessings upon His Prophet, Muhammad, and finally asks his Lord of the good things of this world and the Hereafter<sup>(1)</sup>.

**Third Pillar: Zakah** (obligatory charity)<sup>(2)</sup> It is the third pillar of Islam. It is mandatory on the rich Muslim to pay Zakah from his wealth. It is a very little portion of his wealth that he gives to the poor and needy and others among those who are entitled to it.

The Muslim must pay Zakah to its due recipients willingly. He should neither remind the recipient of it (as if he did him a favor) nor offend him in any way on account of it. He must pay it seeking the pleasure of Allah; not desiring by that any recompense or thanks from people. He should rather pay it for the sake of Allah not for showing off or for fame.

Paying Zakah brings blessings and gladdens the hearts of the poor, the destitute and the needy. It spares them the humiliation of begging and protects them against destitution and neediness if the rich neglected them. As regards the payer of Zakah, it is a quality of generosity, magnanimity, altruism, philanthropy and compassion. It also means ridding oneself of the traits of the stingy, avaricious and mean people. It is by Zakah that Muslims support one another, that the wealthy shows mercy to the poor, so that there will not remain in the community - if this rite is properly implemented - a poor destitute, an overburdened debtor, or a traveler without provision.

**Fourth Pillar: Fasting:** It is to fast the month of Ramadan from dawn to sunset. The fasting Muslim abandons food, drink, sexual intercourse as an act of worship for Allah and curbs his self from fulfilling its desires. Allah has relieved the sick, the traveler, the pregnant woman, the nursing mother, the menstruating woman, and the woman who has just delivered a baby from fasting. He ordained for each of them rules that suit them.

In that month, the Muslim curbs his self from responding to its lusts, so this act of worship takes him out of an animal-like nature to an angel-like nature. The fasting Muslim is like one who has no need in this world except earning the pleasure of Allah.

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(1) Miftāh Dār As-Sa‘ādah, Vol. 2, p. 384.

(2) For more details, see "Risālatān fee Az-Zakah was-Siyām" by Shaykh Ibn Bāz.

Fasting revives the heart, makes one renounce the world and seek what is with Allah. It reminds the wealthy of the poor and their conditions so that their hearts may have sympathy for them, and they also realize the blessings of Allah that they have and thus increase in gratitude to Him.

Fasting purifies the soul and creates in it the fear of Allah. It makes the individual and the society feel the watchfulness of Allah over them in bliss and hardship and in public and secret; as the society spends a whole month observing this act of worship and being conscious of its Lord, spurred by the fear of Allah, the belief in Him and in the Last Day, and the belief that Allah knows what is hidden and secret, that man will inevitably stand before Him on a day in which He will be asked of all his deeds: minor and major<sup>(1)</sup>.

**Fifth Pillar: Hajj:**<sup>(2)</sup> Pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah in Makkah. It is obligatory on every adult, sane and able Muslim to perform Hajj; who possesses or can afford to hire means of transportation to Makkah, and also possesses sufficient provision throughout his journey provided that his provision should be in excess of the provision needed for his dependents. He should also be sure that the road is safe and must ensure the safety of his dependents while he is away. Hajj is compulsory once in a lifetime for whoever is able.

Whoever intends to perform Hajj should repent to Allah so that his soul would be free from the filth of sins. When he reaches Makkah and other holy sites, he carries out the rites of Hajj as an act of worship and glorification for Allah. He must know that the Ka‘bah as well as all other sites are not to be worshiped beside Allah, for they neither benefit nor harm. Had Allah not commanded Muslims to embark on pilgrimage to those places, it would not have been valid for them to do that.

In pilgrimage, the pilgrim wears two white garments: a top piece and a bottom piece. Muslims gather from all parts of the world at one place, wearing one garment and worshipping one God; with no

(1) See "Miftāh Dār as-Sa‘ādah", Vol. 2, p. 384.

(2) For more details, see: "Daleel Al-Hājj wal-Mu‘tamir" by a group of scholars; and "Explanation of Many Issues pertaining to Hajj and Umrah" by Shaykh Ibn Bāz.

difference between the leader and the led; the rich and the poor; the white and the black. All are creation of Allah and His slaves. There is no superiority for a Muslim over another Muslim except by piety and good deeds.

By Hajj, Muslims achieve cooperation and acquaintance; they remember the Day that Allah will resurrect all of them and gather them in one place for reckoning, so they prepare for what is after death through obedience to Allah<sup>(1)</sup>.

### **Worship in Islam: [244]**

It is to worship Allah in meaning and in reality. Allah is the Creator and you are created; you are the slave and Allah is the deity you worship. If that is the case, then man must live in this life upon the Straight Path of Allah, following His Law and the Path of His Messengers. Allah ordained great legislations for His slaves, like achieving Tawhīd (worship of Allah alone), performing prayers, paying Zakah, observing fasting and performing Hajj.

However, these are not the only acts of worship in Islam. Worship in Islam is more comprehensive. It is all that Allah loves and is pleased with of deeds and words, apparent or hidden. So, every word or deed that you say or do that Allah loves and He is pleased with is an act of worship. Rather, every good habit that you do with an intention to please Allah is worship. Your good relationship with your parents, relatives, spouse, children and neighbors, are acts of worship if done for the sake of Allah. Your good conduct at home, in the market, or at the office, if done for the sake of Allah, is worship. Fulfilling the trust, being truthful and just, abstention from harming others, giving assistance to the weak, earning from lawful means, spending on your family and children, consoling the poor, visiting the sick, feeding the hungry and supporting the wronged are all acts of worship if done for the sake of Allah. So, all deeds that you do either for yourself, your family, your society, or your country in which you intend to win the pleasure of Allah are acts of worship. Even to fulfill your personal lusts in a lawful way is worship if you do that with a good intention. The Messenger of Allah said: "... Even if one of you

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(1) Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 385; and "Deen al-Haqq", p. 67.

satisfies his sexual desire, it is an act of charity." The Companions said, "O Messenger of Allah! Would any of us satisfy his lust and still get a reward?" He answered, "What if he had done that in an unlawful way, would he not bear a sin? Likewise, if he does it in a lawful way, he gets a reward."<sup>(1)</sup>

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Every Muslim must pay charity." He was asked, "What if he does not find something to give in charity?" He said, "He should work with his hands so as to benefit himself and pay charity." He was asked again, "What if he is not able to do that?" He said, "He should assist the needy who is in distress." He was again asked, "What if he is not able to do that?" He answered, "He should enjoin what is good." He was asked once more, "What if he is not able to do that?" He answered, "He should refrain from doing evil, for that is charity."<sup>(2)</sup>

## The Second Degree: [247]

**Faith and its six pillars:** Belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and belief in the destiny.

● **First: Belief in Allah.** You must believe in His Lordship; that He is the Lord, the Creator, the Sovereign and the Controller of all matters. You must also believe in His right to be worshiped, that He is the only True Deity, that all deities besides Him are false. You must believe in His Names and Attributes; that He has the most beautiful Names and the most perfect Sublime Attributes.

You must believe in His Oneness in all that; that He has no partner in His Lordship, nor in His right to be worshiped, nor in His Names and Attributes. He says: **{Lord of the heavens and earth and all that is between them. So worship Him and be constant in worshiping Him. Do you know anyone equal to Him?}**<sup>(3)</sup>

You must also believe that no slumber or sleep overtakes Him; that He knows all that is hidden and evident; and that to Him belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth. He says: **{He alone has the**

(1) Narrated by Muslim, Book of Zakah, No. 1006.

(2) Al-Bukhāri, Book of Zakah, Ch. 29; and Muslim, Book of Zakah, No. 1008. This wording is narrated by Muslim.

(3) Surat Maryam (19): 65.



**keys of the unseen; no one knows them except Him. He knows what is in the land and sea. Not a leaf falls without His knowledge, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything moist or dry, but is [written] in a Clear Record}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

You must also believe that He – may He be exalted – rose high over His Throne, above His creation, and that He is with them by His knowledge and He knows their conditions, hears their utterances, sees their places and controls their affairs. He provides for the poor, gives relief to the dejected, gives authority to whom He wills, withdraws it from whom He wills, and that He is Able to do all things<sup>(2)</sup>.

**Among the fruits of belief in Allah are the following:**

1. It makes one love Allah and glorify Him and thus carry out His commandments and abstain from all that He forbids. If he does that, he attains perfect happiness in this world and the Hereafter.

2. Belief in Allah creates in the mind self-esteem and dignity, for one knows through it that it is only Allah who is the True Sovereign of all that is in this universe, that no one can bring harm or benefit except Him. This knowledge makes him dispense of all that is besides Allah and removes from his heart the fear of everything other than Allah and he will not hope except for Allah and will not fear except Him alone.

3. Belief in Allah creates humbleness in the heart; for man will know that whatever favor he has is from Allah. Satan will not be able to deceive him, nor will he become overbearing and arrogant or boast of his power or wealth.

4. The believer in Allah will have certain knowledge that there is no path to success and salvation except through good deeds that please Allah. Meanwhile, some people have false beliefs that Allah commanded that His son be crucified as an atonement for the sins of mankind; some believe in false deities, believing that they will do for them what they want while actually they can neither benefit nor harm; while some are atheists, who do not believe in the existence of a Creator at all. All these beliefs are mere wishful thoughts; for when those who hold these beliefs

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(1) Surat Al-An‘ām (6): 59.

(2) See: ‘Aqeedat Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah, p. 7, 11.

meet Allah on the Day of Resurrection and they see the reality, they will realize that they have been in clear error.

5. Belief in Allah creates in man great power of determination, courage, perseverance, steadfastness and trust in Allah when he struggles in lofty matters in this world to achieve the pleasure of Allah. It makes him have perfect certainty that he is putting his trust in the Possessor of the heavens and the earth and that He will help him and guide him. He will then be firm like mountains in his patience, steadfastness and in his trust in Allah<sup>(1)</sup>.

● **Two: Belief in the angels:** A Muslim must believe in the angels and that Allah created them to obey Him and described them as: **{honored slaves, they do not speak before He speaks, and they only do as He commands. He knows what is ahead of them and what is behind them. They cannot intercede except for whom He pleases, and they are fearful in awe of Him}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also described them as: **{not too proud to worship Him, nor do they ever grow weary. They glorify Him day and night tirelessly}**<sup>(3)</sup> Allah concealed them from our eyes, so we cannot see them. But Allah sometimes showed some of them to some of His Prophets and Messengers.

Angels have functions assigned to them. Jibreel (Gabriel) is assigned with the Revelation which he brings from Allah to whoever Allah wills of His Messengers. Among them is also an angel of death assigned to seize the souls; among them are those assigned to the fetuses in the wombs; among them are those assigned to the protection of mankind; and among them are those assigned to the recording of their deeds. Every person has two angels: **{one on the right, and the other on the left. Not a single word he utters but there is with him a vigilant watcher, ready [to record it]}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

#### **Among the fruits of belief in angels:**

1. It purifies the belief of the Muslim from stains of polytheism; for when a Muslim believes in the existence of angels whom Allah assigns

(1) See: 'Aqeedat Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, p. 44; and Mabadi' Al-Islam, p. 80, 84.

(2) Surat Al-Anbiyā' (21): 26-28.

(3) Surat Al-Anbiyā' (21): 19-20.

(4) Surat Qāf (50): 17,18. See also, 'Aqeedat Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, p. 19.

with these great functions, he will be free from belief in the existence of imaginary creatures that some people claim to have a share in the running of the affairs of the universe.

2. It lets the Muslim know that the angels neither benefit nor harm, but they are honored slaves who do not disobey Allah when He commands them but they do what they are commanded, so he should not worship them, nor direct his affairs to them nor depend on them.

● **Three: Belief in the Books:** To believe that Allah revealed Books to his Prophets and Messengers, in order to explain the truth and call to it. Allah says: **{We have sent Our messengers with clear proofs, and sent down with them the Scripture and the criteria of justice, so that the people may uphold justice}**<sup>(1)</sup> These Books are many. Among them are the Scriptures of Abraham, the Torah given to Moses, the Psalms given to David, and the Gospel which was brought by Jesus Christ, may peace be upon all of them.

These Books that Allah informs us about have all become extinct. The Scriptures of Abraham no longer exist in the world. As for the Torah, the Gospel, and the Psalms, even though they do exist by name in the hands of Jews and Christians, they have become altered, interpolated and adulterated and many of their original contents are missing; that which is not part of them has been included in them, and they are attributed to other than their authors. The Old Testament, for instance, has more than forty books, and only five of them are attributed to Moses. As for the existing gospels of today, not a single one of them is attributed to Jesus.

Belief in these previous Books means believing that it is Allah Who revealed them to His Messengers and that they contained the Law that Allah wanted to be conveyed to the people at that time.

As for the last Book revealed by Allah, it is the Qur'an which was revealed to Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him). It has always been and still is protected and preserved by Allah. No change or alteration has crept into any of its letters, words, diacritics or meanings.

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(1) Surat Al-Hadeed (57): 25.

**The Qur'an is different from all previous Books in many ways, including:**

1. The past Books have been lost; changes and interpolations found their way into them; they have been attributed to those who are not their rightful writers; many commentaries and exegesis have been added to them, and they contain many things that contradict Divine Revelation, reason and innate human nature.

As for the Qur'an, it is still protected by Allah, with the same letters and words which Allah revealed to Muhammad. No alteration or addition has crept into it; for Muslims have been keen on keeping the Qur'an free from all defects. They do not mix it with anything from the Prophet's biography or the biographies of his Companions or commentaries of the Qur'an or rulings pertaining to acts of worship and human relations.

2. Today, there is no known historical authority for the ancient books. It is even not known on whom some of them were revealed or in which language they were revealed. Some of them are attributed to other than those who actually brought them.

As for the Qur'an, Muslims have transmitted it from Muhammad in a successive manner, verbally and in written form. There are thousands of Muslims in every age and region who know this Book by heart just as there are thousands of its written copies. If the oral copies do not conform with written copies, the divergent copies will not be recognized; for what is in the memories of people must conform to what is in the written copies.

Above all, the Qur'an was transmitted orally in a way that none of the books of this world had enjoyed. Even this particular method of transmission cannot be found except among Muslims alone. The methodology of oral transmission of the Qur'an is as follows: The student learns the Qur'an by heart at the hand of his teacher; who had in turn learned it by heart at the hand of his own teacher. The teacher gives the student a certificate called "Ijāzah" in which the teacher testifies that he taught the student what he himself had learned from his own teachers one after another, each and everyone of these teachers will name his teacher from whom he learned the Qur'an in succession till the chain reaches back to the Messenger of Allah

himself. This is how the chain of teachers goes in oral succession from the student till it reaches the Messenger of Allah.

There exists many strong evidences and historical proofs – also with a connected chain of transmitters – on the knowledge of each chapter and each verse of the Qur'an concerning the place and time in which it was revealed to Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him).

3. The languages in which past Books were revealed had become extinct long time ago. No one in this age speaks those languages and very few people can now understand them. As for the language in which the Qur'an was revealed, it is a living language spoken today by tens of millions of people. It is taught and studied in every country of the world. Even the one who does not study it will find everywhere those who can teach him the meanings of the Qur'an.

4. Each of the previous Books was meant for a particular time and sent to a particular nation; that was why it contained rules that were peculiar to that nation and that time. Whatever book has these characteristics is not suitable for all mankind.

As for the Great Qur'an, it is a Book meant for all times and all places. It comprises of ordainments, rulings on how humans should interact with one another, and manners that are suitable for every people and time; for it is addressed to all mankind.

In view of the above, it becomes clear that it is not possible that Allah's proof against humanity should be in books whose original copies no longer exist and whose languages no one speaks in the world today after they have been altered. Rather, Allah's proof against His creation is in a Book that is protected and safe from addition, deficiency or alteration. Its copies are spread in every place and written in a living language that is read by millions of people who can convey the Message of Allah to all mankind. This Book is the Magnificent Qur'an which Allah revealed to Muhammad, which is the witness over all the previous Books and it confirms them – before they were interpolated. It is the Book that all mankind must follow, so that it can be light, healing, guidance and mercy for them. Allah says: **{This [Qur'an] is a blessed Book which We have sent down, so**

**follow it and fear Allah, so that you may be shown mercy}**<sup>(1)</sup> He - may His praise be exalted - also says: **{Say [O Prophet], "O people, I am the Messenger of Allah to you all}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

#### ● **Four: Belief in the Messengers.**

To believe that Allah sent Messengers to His creation in order to give them glad tidings of Paradise if they believe in Allah and believe the Messengers, and to warn them of punishment if they disobey. Allah says: **{Indeed, We sent to every community a messenger, [saying], "Worship Allah and shun false gods.}"**<sup>(3)</sup> He - may His praise be exalted - also says: **{These messengers were sent as bearers of glad tidings and as warners, so that the people may have no excuse before Allah after [the coming of] the messengers}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

These Messengers are many. The first of them was Noah and the last of them is Muhammad. There are many among them, those whom Allah told us stories about like Abraham, Moses, Jesus, David, John, Zacharia, and Sālih. There are also some whom Allah did not tell us about. Allah says: **{There are messengers whose stories We have already mentioned to you, and messengers We have not mentioned to you}**<sup>(5)</sup>.

All these Messengers were humans created by Allah. They possessed nothing of the qualities of Lordship or Divinity. Therefore, no act of worship should be directed to them; for they could not avail themselves of any harm or benefit. Allah says about Prophet Noah – who was the first of them – that he said to his people: **{I do not tell you that I have Allah's treasures or that I know the unseen, nor do I say that I am an angel}**<sup>(6)</sup> Allah commanded Muhammad – the last of them – to say: **{I do not tell you that I have the treasures of Allah, nor that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an**

(1) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 155.

(2) Surat Al-A'rāf (7): 158. See also: Al-Aqeedah As-Saheehah, p. 17; Aqeedat Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, p. 22; Mabādi' Al-Islam, p. 89.

(3) Surat An-Nahl (16): 36.

(4) Surat An-Nisā' (4): 165.

(5) Surat An-Nisā' (4): 164.

(6) Surat Hūd (11): 31.

angel}<sup>(1)</sup> And to say: **{Say, "I have no power to benefit or harm myself, except what Allah wills}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

The Prophets are therefore honored slaves, whom Allah chose and honored with the Message and described as His slaves. Their religion is Islam and Allah will not accept any religion other than it. Allah says: **{The true religion with Allah is Islam}**<sup>(3)</sup> Their messages were one in their fundamentals, but their laws differed. Allah says: **{To each of you We have ordained a law and a way of life}**<sup>(4)</sup> The final of all these Laws is that of Muhammad. It abrogates all other previous laws. His Message is the last of all Divine Messages and he is the last of all Messengers.

Whoever believes in a Prophet must believe in all of them, and whoever denies anyone of them has denied all of them; for all Prophets and Messengers call to belief in Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, and because their religion is one. So, whoever believes in some and disbelieves in others has disbelieved in all of them; because every one of them called to belief in all Prophets and Messengers<sup>(5)</sup>. Allah says: **{The Messenger believes in what has been sent down to him from his Lord, as do the believers. All of them believe in Allah, His angels, His Books, and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers."}**<sup>(6)</sup> He - may His praise be exalted - also says: **{Those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers, and wish to make a distinction between Allah and His messengers, and they say, "We believe in some and disbelieve in others," wishing to adopt a way in between}**<sup>(7)</sup>.

● **Five: Belief in the Last Day.** That is because, the end of every being in this world is death! What then is the fate of man after death? What is the end of the unjust people who escaped punishment in this world? Will they escape the consequence of their injustices? What

(1) Surat Al-An‘ām (6): 50.

(2) Surat Al-A‘rāf (7): 188.

(3) Surat āl ‘Imrān (3): 19.

(4) Surat Al-Mā‘idah (5): 48.

(5) See: Al-‘Aqeedah As-Saheehah, p. 17; and ‘Aqeedat Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā‘ah, p. 25.

(6) Surat Al-Baqarah (2): 285.

(7) Surat An-Nisā’ (4): 150.



about the righteous people who missed their share of the reward of this world, are their rewards going to be wasted?

Indeed, mankind shall continue to die, generation after generation, until Allah gives His permission that this world should come to an end and all creatures on the face of the earth die. Allah will thereafter resurrect all creatures in a day that will be witnessed by all; a day in which Allah will gather all former and later generations. He will then call men to account for all their deeds, good or bad, which they had earned in the world. The believers will be guided to Paradise and the disbelievers will be led to Hellfire.

Paradise is the abode of peace which Allah has prepared for His believing allies. Therein are all kinds of bliss which no one can describe. It has degrees and every degree will have dwellers according to the level of their belief in Allah and their obedience to Him. The lowest in degree of the dwellers of Paradise in bliss will be equal to the Kingdom of one of the kings of this world plus ten times like it.

Hell is the abode of punishment which Allah has prepared for those who disbelieve in Him. It has all kinds of torment whose mere mention is terrifying. Had Allah allowed someone to die in the Hereafter, the dwellers of the Fire would certainly die at mere seeing it.

Allah knows – by His Prior Knowledge – what every man will do or say of good or evil, secretly or publicly. He assigned to every man two angels: one records his good deeds and the other his evil ones and nothing escapes them. Allah says: **{Not a single word he utters but there is with him a vigilant watcher, ready [to record it]}**<sup>(1)</sup> All these deeds are recorded in a book that will be given to man on the Day of Resurrection. Allah says: **{And the record [of deeds] will be placed before them, and you will see the wicked scared of what it contains. They will say, “Woe to us! What is this book that leaves nothing, small or big, except that it has recorded it?” They will find all what they did before them, and your Lord does not wrong anyone}**<sup>(2)</sup> Man will then read his record and will not be able to deny anything therein, and whoever denies anything of his deeds, Allah will give power of speech to his ears, eyes, hands, legs

(1) Surat Qāf (50): 18.

(2) Surat Al-Kahf (18): 49.

and skin, so that they testify against him. Allah says: **{And [consider] the Day when Allah's enemies will be gathered to the Fire, driven in rows. until when they reach it, their hearing, their sight and their skins will testify against them concerning what they used to do. They will say to their skins, "Why did you testify against us?" They will say, "It is Allah Who made us to speak, the One Who made everything speak. It is He Who created you the first time, and to Him you will be returned. You did not bother to hide yourselves [when committing sins] from your hearing, your sight, and your skins lest they testify against you; rather you thought that Allah does not know much of what you do}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

Belief in the Last Day – the Day of Resurrection – was preached by all Messengers and Prophets. Allah says: **{And among His signs is that you see the land withered, but when We send down rain upon it, it stirs and swells. He Who gives it life will surely give life to the dead, for He is Most Capable of all things}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: **{Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and earth, and was not wearied by creating them, is able to bring the dead to life?}**<sup>(3)</sup> This is what the Divine Wisdom necessitates; for Allah did not create His creation in vain or leave them aimlessly. The weakest person in intelligence cannot carry out any important action without having a purpose for it. How can this not be imagined in case of man and then think that Allah only created His creation for fun and that He shall leave them in vain. Far and Highly Exalted is Allah above all that they say. Allah says: **{Did you think that We created you with no purpose, and that you would not be brought back to Us?}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also says: **{We have not created the heavens and earth and all that is between them in vain. That is the assumption of those who disbelieve. So woe to the disbelievers from the Fire!}**<sup>(5)</sup>.

All wise men testify to the necessity of belief in the Last Day; for that's what the intelligence and reason necessitate and what the sound human nature agrees to. When man believes in the Day of Resurrection,

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(1) Surat Fussilat (41): 19-22.

(2) Surat Fussilat (41): 39.

(3) Surat Al-Ahqāf (46): 33.

(4) Surat Al-Mu'minoon (23): 115.

(5) Surat Sād (38): 27.

he knows why he should abstain from what he is ordered to leave and do what he is ordered to do, hoping for what is with Allah. He will also know that, he who does injustice to people will inevitably have his recompense and that those he wrongs will take revenge on him on the Day of Resurrection. He will also know that man must have a reward: good reward for good deeds and commensurate punishment for evil deeds, so that each soul shall be rewarded for what it strove for and Divine Justice can be established. Allah says, **{So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

No one among mankind knows when the Day of Resurrection will come. This is a Day that is known to neither a sent Prophet nor a favored Angel. Allah keeps the knowledge of that to Himself alone. He says: **{They ask you [O Prophet] about the Hour, "When will it come to pass?" Say, "Its knowledge is only with my Lord. None can reveal its due time except Him}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: **{Indeed, Allah has the knowledge of the Hour}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

#### ◆ Six: Belief in Predecree.

You must believe that Allah knows what was and what will be; that He knows the conditions, deeds, life spans and provisions of His slaves. He says: **{Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing of everything}**<sup>(4)</sup> He – may His praise be exalted – also says: **{He alone has the keys of the unseen; no one knows them except Him. He knows what is in the land and sea. Not a leaf falls without His knowledge, nor a grain in the darkness of the earth, nor anything moist or dry, but is [written] in a Clear Record}**<sup>(5)</sup> He registered all that in a

(1) Surat Az-Zalzalah (99): 7-8.

(2) Surat Al-A'rāf (6): 187.

(3) Surat Luqmān (31): 34.

(4) Surat Al-'Ankaboot (29): 62.

(5) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 59. Had not there been in the Qur'an but only this verse, it would have been enough as clear evidence and decisive proof that it is from Allah, because mankind, in all their ages – even in this age, where knowledge is widespread and man grew arrogant – have not thought of this comprehensive encompassment, let alone having the ability to do any of that. The highest extent to which their efforts could carry them is to closely observe a tree or insect in a particular environment, in order to reveal to us a part of its mysteries. But what is hidden from them in that tree or insect is greater. As for comprehensive thinking and encompassment, it is a matter that mankind have not known and does not have the ability to know.



Record with Him. He says: **{and We keep an account of everything in a clear Record}**<sup>(1)</sup> He also says: **{Do you not know that Allah knows all that is in the heaven and on earth? That is all [written] in a Record. This is indeed easy for Allah}**<sup>(2)</sup> If Allah wills a matter, He only says: "Be," and it is: **{Whenever He wills something to be, He only says to it, "Be", and it is}**<sup>(3)</sup> Just as Allah preordained all things, it is also He who Created all things. He says: **{Indeed, We have created everything according to a determined measure}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also says: **{Allah is the Creator of all things}**<sup>(5)</sup> He created men so that they worship Him and made that clear to them. He commanded them to obey Him and forbade them from disobeying Him and made that clear to them. He gave them the ability and will by which they could carry out the Commandments of Allah and deserve to be rewarded, and by which they could commit acts of disobedience and deserve to be punished.

**If man believes in the Fate and Preordainment, he will achieve the following:**

1. He will rely on Allah while making use of the means; for he knows that the means and its causes are all governed by the Divine Preordainment of Allah.

2. Peace of mind and tranquility: so long as he knows that it is Allah Who gives that and that the preordained unpleasant thing shall happen no matter what, he will have peace of mind and he will be pleased with the decision of Allah. No one has a more pleasant life and more peace of mind than he who believes in Divine Preordainment.

3. He will not be arrogant when he attains what he wants; for he will know that this attainment is a blessing from Allah through the means of good and success He has decreed. He will therefore thank Allah for it.

4. He will not be sad or distressed when the desired goal is missed or when something bad happens; because of his knowledge that it

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(1) Surat Yā Seen (36): 12.

(2) Surat Al-Hajj (22): 70.

(3) Surat Yā Seen (36): 82.

(4) Surat Al-Qamar (54): 49.

(5) Surat Az-Zumar (39): 62.

happens through the irresistible Decree of Allah. For no one can resist His Command or appeal His judgment. What he has decreed will inevitably happen. He will therefore be patient and expect the reward for his patience from Allah. Allah says: **{No calamity befalls the earth or yourselves but it is already written in a Record before We bring it into existence. That is indeed easy for Allah. So that you may not grieve over what you have missed, nor exult over what He has given you, for Allah does not love anyone who is conceited and boastful}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

5- Complete reliance on Allah, for the Muslim knows that it is only Allah Who has the power to cause benefit or harm. He will then not fear any powerful person because of his power and will not hesitate to do good deeds out of fear of any human being. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said to Ibn 'Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him and his father): "...and know that if all mankind get together to benefit you, they cannot benefit you except with what Allah has decreed for you; and if they get together to harm you, they cannot harm you except with what Allah has decreed for you."<sup>(2)</sup>.

### The Third Degree:

**"Ihsān"** (utmost sincerity and perfection in acts of worship).

It means that you worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, He sees you. One should worship his Lord like this. That is, to be heedful that Allah is close to him, and that he is standing before his Lord. This condition makes man feel awe, fear and glorification of Allah. It makes man sincere in acts of worship and gives him courage to strive more towards perfecting them.

A believer should be conscious of his Lord while observing acts of worship and remind himself of His nearness to him as if he is sees Him. If this is difficult for him, he should seek help from his belief that Allah sees him and knows his secret and public affairs, and that nothing is hidden from Him<sup>(3)</sup>.

(1) Surat Al-Hadeed (57): 22-23. See: Al-'Aqeedah as-Saheehah, p. 19; 'Aqeedat Ahl-us-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah, p. 39; and Deen al Haqq, p. 18.

(2) Narrated by Ahmad in his Musnad, Vol. 1, p. 293; and At-Tirmidhi in his Sunan, Book of the Day of Judgment, Vol. 4, p. 76.

(3) See Jāmi' Al-'uloom wal-Hikam, p. 128.

A believer who reached this level worships his Lord sincerely, not looking to others besides Him. He neither looks forward to people's praise nor fears their blame, for it is enough for him that his Lord is pleased with him and praises him.

This person's public and private affairs are the same. He worships his Lord in private and public with certain faith that Allah knows all that is in his heart and all that comes to his mind. His heart is overwhelmed by faith and he is conscious that his Lord is watching him; thus his body and senses surrender to Allah and he does not use them except in what pleases Allah and what He loves, in total submission to Him.

Since his heart has become attached to his Lord, he does not seek help from any creature, for Allah suffices him; he does not complain to any human being, for he turns to Allah with his needs, and enough is He as a Helper! He does not feel lonely in any place nor does he fear anyone, for he knows that Allah is with him in all conditions. He is enough for him and He is the Best Helper. He does not abandon any order that Allah commands him to carry out and does not commit any sin, for he is shy from Allah and hates that He misses him where He commanded him or finds him where he forbade him. He neither oppresses nor wrongs anyone or takes anyone's right, for he knows that Allah sees him, and that He shall call him to account for all his deeds. He does not cause mischief in the land, for he knows that all good in the earth are properties of Allah which He subjects for His Creation. He takes of these good things according to his needs and thanks his Lord for facilitating them for him.

All that I have mentioned and presented to you in this booklet are only the important matters and great pillars in Islam. Whoever believes in these fundamentals and acts upon them becomes a Muslim. If not, Islam – as I have mentioned – is both a religion and a way of life. It is the comprehensive and perfect Divine Order that encompasses in its ordainments all that the individual and the society need in all aspects of their life, whether religious, political, economical, social or related to safety and security. Man finds therein principles, fundamentals and rules that regulate peace and war and binding duties; and

preserves the dignity of man, birds, animals and the environment that surrounds him. They also explain to him the reality of man, life and death, and resurrection after death. He also finds in Islam the best methodology of interacting with people around him; such as the saying of Allah: **{and speak good words to people}**<sup>(1)</sup> And His saying: **{and those who pardon people}**<sup>(2)</sup> And His saying: **{and do not let the hatred of a people lead you away from justice. Be just; that is closer to righteousness}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

After we have discussed the degrees of this religion and the fundamentals of each degree, it is appropriate that we discuss briefly the beauties of Islam.

### **Some Beauties of Islam: [292]**

The beauties of Islam are beyond what pens can write, and no expressions can describe the virtues of this religion. The only reason is that it is the religion of Allah. Just as the eye cannot perceive Allah and mankind cannot encompass His Knowledge, likewise is His Law, the pen cannot encompass its description. Ibn Al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: “If you reflect on the dazzling wisdom in this upright religion and perfect legislation, which no expression can perfectly describe, and that cannot be surpassed by the collective propositions of the wisest of the wise, you would realize its beauty and virtues, and that the world had not known a law more perfect and greater than it. Even if the Messenger of Allah had not brought any proof in support of it, it is a sufficient proof that it is from Allah. Every aspect of it attests to perfect knowledge, perfect wisdom, expansiveness of mercy, righteousness and kindness, absolute encompassment of all that is hidden and manifest, and knowledge of beginnings and ends. It also shows that it is one of the greatest favors that Allah has bestowed on His slaves, for He bestows not on them a favor greater than that He guided them to this religion, made them its adherents and chosen it for them. Hence, He reminds His slaves of His favor of guiding them to it.

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(1) Surat Al-Baqarah (2): 83.

(2) Surat āl ‘Imrān (3): 134.

(3) Surat Al-Mā'idah (5): 8.



He says: **{Allah has conferred favor on the believers when He sent them a messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and Wisdom, although before that they were clearly misguided}**<sup>(1)</sup>

He also says, making Himself known to His slaves and reminding them of His great favor on them, calling them to thank Him for making them among its adherents: **{Today I have perfected your religion for you}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

**It is therefore part of showing gratitude to Allah for this religion that we mention some of its beauties:**

### **1. It is the religion of Allah:**

It is the religion which He has chosen for Himself, sent with His Messengers and by which He allowed His slaves to worship Him. Just as the Creator is in no way comparable to the created, His religion – which is Islam – is in no way comparable to man-made religions and legislations. Just as Allah possesses the attribute of absolute perfection, so is His religion; it has absolute perfection in providing ordainments that reform the worldly life and eternal life of mankind; and it encompasses the rights of the Creator, the obligations of His slaves towards Him, their obligations towards one another, and their rights upon one another.

### **2. Comprehensiveness:**

One of the most prominent beauties of this religion is its comprehensiveness of everything. Allah says: **{We have missed nothing in the Record}**<sup>(3)</sup> This religion encompasses everything related to the Creator, like His Names, Attributes and rights; and everything related to the creation, like laws, obligations, manners and interactions. This religion also encompasses the stories of former and latter generations, angels, Prophets and Messengers. It tells about the heaven, the earth, orbits, planets, seas, trees and the universe. It mentions the purpose of creation and its ultimate end, Paradise and the final abode of the believers, and Fire and the final abode of disbelievers.

(1) Surat āl ‘Imrān (3): 164.

(2) Surat Al-Mā'idah (5):3; See also: Miftāh Dār As-Sa'ādah, V. 1, pp. 374-375.

(3) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 38.

### **3. It establishes a connection between the Creator and the creation:**

Every false religion and creed is characterized by connecting man with another man who is prone to death, weakness, incapacity and illness. Some even connect man to someone who has died hundreds of years ago and had become bones and dust. Islam, on the other hand, is characterized by connecting man directly to his Creator. There is no priest or saint or holy secret; rather, it is a direct connection between the Creator and the created. It is a connection that links the heart with its Lord so it receives light, guidance and loftiness. It seeks perfection and deems itself high above insignificant and debased matters, for every heart that has no connection with its Lord is more erroneous than animals.

It is a communication between the Creator and the creature, by which he knows what his Creator wants from him and thus worships Him based on this knowledge, and gets to know things that please His Creator and seeks for it, and things that displease Him and shuns it.

It is a communication between the All-Mighty Creator and the weak needy creature, so the latter asks his Creator for aid, assistance and success, and asks Him for protection against the schemes of the evil planners and the deeds of devils.

### **4. It caters for benefits of this world and the Hereafter:**

The Islamic Law is based on protection of what benefits of this world and the Hereafter, and on perfection of good morals.

As for the explanation of the benefits of the Hereafter, the religion of Islam explained it all and neglected nothing thereof. Rather, it explained it in detail so that nothing of it may be unknown. Islam promises the bliss in the Hereafter and warns against its torment.

Concerning what benefits in this world, Allah ordained in this religion what protects for man his religion, life, property, lineage, honor, and mind.

Concerning noble morals, Islam enjoins them outwardly and inwardly, and forbids debasing manners. Among the apparent (outward) noble morals that Islam enjoins are cleanliness and purification from all kinds of impurities and dirt. Islam recommends using perfume and

improving the appearance; it forbids wicked behavior like adultery and fornication, consuming alcohol, eating dead animals, blood and pork; and it enjoins eating of lawful good things and prohibits wastefulness and extravagance.

As for inner purification, it is achieved by shunning dispraised morals and embracing commendable ones. Among the dispraised morals are lying, obscenity, anger, envy, stinginess, debasing oneself, love of prestige and love of this world, arrogance, haughtiness, and hypocrisy. Among the commendable morals are good manners, good companionship to people and kindness to them, justice, modesty, truthfulness, magnanimity, generosity, reliance on Allah, sincerity in acts of worship, fear of Allah, patience, and showing gratitude<sup>(1)</sup>.

### 5. Easiness:

Easiness is one of the unique qualities of this religion. In every ritual there is easiness and in every act of worship there is facilitation. Allah says: **{and He has not imposed upon you any hardship in religion}**<sup>(2)</sup> The first manifestation of easiness in Islam is that whoever wishes to become a Muslim does not need a human intermediary or a confession of past sins. He only needs to cleanse himself (by bathing) and utter the statement: I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and to believe in the meaning of this statement and act according to its implication.

Further, every worship in Islam is characterised by easiness and alleviation. If a person is traveling or is sick, the reward of the deed that he used to do when he was at home or healthy continues to be recorded to his credit. The whole life of the Muslim is easy and filled with tranquility, while the life of a disbeliever is conversely filled with hardship and toil. Likewise, the death of a Muslim is easy as his soul comes out of his body as a drop of water comes out of a vessel. Allah says: **{those whose souls the angels take while they are in a state of purity, saying, "Peace be upon you; enter Paradise for what**

(1) See: Al-I'lām bima fee Deen An-Nasāra min Al-Fasād wal-Awhām, by Al-Qurtubi, pp. 442-445.

(2) Surat Al-Hajj (22): 78.

**you used to do}**<sup>(1)</sup> As for the disbeliever, the stern and harsh angels come at the time of his death and beat him with whips. Allah says: **{If only you could see the wrongdoers in the throes of death while the angels are stretching out their hands [saying], "Give up your souls! Today you will be recompensed with a disgracing punishment, because you used to tell lies against Allah and you arrogantly rejected His verses}**<sup>(2)</sup> He also says: **{If only you could see when the angels take the souls of the disbelievers, beating their faces and their backs, "Taste the punishment of the scorching fire!}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

### 6. Justice:

The one who ordained the Islamic injunctions is Allah alone. He is the Creator of all people; black and white, male and female. They are equal before His judgment, justice, and mercy. He ordained for each of the male and female what suits them. It is then impossible that the Law of Islam favors male at the expense of female or gives female preference and do injustice to male. Islam also does not endow white man with privileges and deny that to black man. All are equal before the Laws of Allah and there is no difference between them except by piety.

### 7. Enjoining good and forbidding evil:

The teachings of Islam include a noble characteristic, which is enjoining good and forbidding evil. This duty is incumbent on every male or female Muslim who is adult, sane and able to enjoin and forbid according to his or her ability and according to the degrees of enjoining and prohibiting. He or she should command or forbid with the hand; if not able to do so then with the tongue; and if not able then with the heart. By this, all members of the Muslim community will be supervisors in the community. Every individual should command whoever is negligent to do good deed, and forbid whoever does wrong to desist, whether he is a ruler or ruled; each according to his ability and in accordance with Islamic regulations that regulate this matter.

This matter – as you can see – is obligatory upon each individual according to his ability. Compare this to contemporary political systems

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(1) Surat An-Nahl (16): 32.

(2) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 93.

(3) Surat Al-Anfāl (8): 50.

who boast that they give the opportunity to opposition parties to monitor government activities and the performance of official authorities.

These are some of the beauties of Islam. If I wanted to go into details, this would require pausing at every rite, every obligation, every commandment and every prohibition in order to explain what lies therein of extensive wisdom, precise ordainment, immense beauty, and matchless perfection. Whoever ponders over the ordainments of this religion, he will know with certainty that it is from Allah, and that it is the truth free from doubt and the guidance free from error.

So if you wish to turn to Allah, to follow His Law and to follow the path of His Prophets and Messengers, the door of repentance is open before you and your Lord is the Oft-Forgiving, the Most Merciful. He calls you in order to forgive you.

## Repentance

The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "All children of Adam commit sins, and the best of the sinners are those who repent."<sup>(1)</sup> Man by nature is weak; he is weak in resolve and determination and is unable to bear the consequences of his sins and misdeeds. So Allah, out of mercy, made matters easy for man and prescribed for him repentance. The essence of repentance is to abandon the sin because of its ugliness – out of fear for Allah and hope for His Mercy, to regret what one has done, to determine not to commit the sin again, and to spend what is left of one's life in doing good deeds<sup>(2)</sup>. As you can see, repentance is an act of the heart that is between the slave and his Lord. It is neither a hard nor difficult task for him; it is just an act of the heart; to abandon the sin and not to return to it. Abstention from sins leads to well-being and peace of mind<sup>(3)</sup>.

You do not need to repent at the hand of a man who will expose you, reveal your secret, and take advantage of your weakness. It is only a private communication between you and your Lord; you seek His forgiveness and guidance and He forgives you.

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(1) Narrated by Imām Ahmad in his Musnad, Vol. 3, p. 198; At-Tirmidhi in his Sunan, Chapters on the Description of the Day of Judgment, Vol. 4, p. 49; and Ibn Mājah in the Book of Asceticism, Vol. 4, p. 491.

(2) Al-Mufradāt fi Ghareeb Al-Qur'an, p. 76, quoted freely.

(3) Al-Fawā'id by Ibn Al-Qayyim, p. 116.

There is nothing like "inherited sin" in Islam, nor is there anything like an expected mankind savior. Islam, is as discovered by Muhammad Asad, an Austrian Jewish revert to Islam, who said, "I could not find anywhere in the Qur'an any mention of the need for 'salvation'. In Islam, there is no inherited original sin that stands between man and his destination, because: **{and that man will not receive except what he strives for}**<sup>(1)</sup> Islam does not ask man to present a sacrifice or kill himself in order to have the door of repentance opened for him and to be saved from sin."<sup>(2)</sup> Rather, it is as Allah Almighty says: **{no bearer of burden will bear the burden of another}**<sup>(3)</sup>.

**Repentance has great effects and benefits, some of which are:**

1. It makes man realize the expansiveness of Allah's forbearance and His magnanimity in concealing his misdeeds. Had Allah willed, He would have hastened to punish him and disgrace him in front of people and he would not be able to live with dignity among them. But Allah honored him by concealing his sins, covered him by His forbearance and endowed him with strength and energy and with provision and sustenance.

2. It makes him know his real self, that it is inclined to evil, and that whatever it has committed of sins, misdeeds or negligence is an indication of its weakness and its inability to exercise control over its forbidden lusts, and that it cannot dispense of Allah – for even the blink of an eye – to purify it and guide it.

3. Allah prescribed repentance in order to seek with it the greatest causes of happiness for man, which is resorting to Allah and seeking His help; and also to bring about different kinds of supplication, submission, neediness for Allah, love for Him, fear of Him, and hope in Him; thus the soul draws closer to its Creator in a special way which would not occur to it without repentance and resorting to Allah.

4. It entails that Allah forgives for him his past sins. Allah says: **{Say to those who disbelieve that if they desist, their past will be forgiven}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

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(1) Surat An-Najm (53): 39.

(2) The Road to Mecca, by Muhammad Asad, p. 140, quoted freely.

(3) Surat An-Najm (53): 38.

(4) Surat Al-Anfāl (8): 38.

5. It turns man's evil deeds into good deeds. Allah says: **{except those who repent and believe, and do righteous deeds; for them Allah will change their evil deeds into good deeds, for Allah is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

6. It makes man treat his fellow humans – when they offend or harm him – as he loves Allah to treat him as regards his own misdeeds and sins; for recompense is of the same type of the deed. If he treats people in this good manner, he will be treated by Allah in the like manner. Allah will be kind to him regarding his evil deeds and sins just as he was kind to his fellow human beings.

7. It makes him know that he is full of faults and defects, thus entailing that he refrains from focusing on the faults of others and preoccupies himself with reforming his own self instead of thinking about the faults of others<sup>(2)</sup>.

I conclude this section with the story of a man who came to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and said: "O Messenger of Allah! I have not left any small or big sin but I have committed it." The Messenger of Allah said, "Do you not testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah?" He asked him this question three times and the man answered each time, "Yes." He then said, "This (the testimony of faith) erases all that."<sup>(3)</sup>

In another narration, the man came to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and said: "Tell me! If a man committed all sins but has not associated anything in worship with Allah, and yet did not leave any small or big sin uncommitted, can his repentance be accepted?" The Prophet asked the man, "Have you embraced Islam?" The man answered, "As for me, I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone without any partner

(1) Surat Al-Furqān (25): 70.

(2) See Muftāh Dār As-Sa'ādah, Vol. 1, pp. 358, 370.

(3) Narrated by Abu Ya'la in his Musnad, Vol. 6, p. 155; At-Tabarāni in Al-Mu'jam Al-Awsat, Vol. 7, p. 132; and in Al-Mu'jam As-Sagheer, Vol. 2, p. 201; Ad-Diā' in Al-Mukhtārah, Vol. 5, p. 151-152, and he said it has an authentic Isnād Al-Haythami said in Majma' Az-Zawā'id, Vol. 10, p. 83: It was narrated by Abu Ya'la, Al-Bazzār, At-Tabarāni in As-Sagheer and Al-Awsat, and their reporters are trustworthy.



and that you are the Messenger of Allah.” The Prophet said, “Yes! Do good deeds and refrain from evil ones, so that Allah may turn all those evil deeds to good ones for you.” The man said, “Even my acts of treachery and my sins?!” The Prophet said, “Yes.” The man said, “Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Most Great) and he kept saying that until he disappeared.”<sup>(1)</sup>

Hence, Islam erases whatever sin was committed before it, and sincere repentance erases whatever sin was committed before it, as authentically reported from the Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him).

### **The End of the Person Who Does Not Adhere to Islam:**

It has been made clear to you in this book that Islam is the religion of Allah, that it is the true religion, that it was the religion preached by all Prophets and Messengers. Allah has prepared great reward in this world and the Hereafter for those who believe in it and threatened those who disbelieve in it with severe torment.

Since Allah is the Creator, the Possessor and Disposer of this universe, and you, man, are part of His creation; He created you, and subjected for you all that is in the universe, ordained His Law for you and commanded you to obey Him; if you believe, obey His Commandments and abstain from all that He forbids you, you will attain what He promises you of the everlasting bliss in the Hereafter and you will be happy in this world with what He will endow on you of all kinds of favors. You will then be like the wisest of men and the purest of them in soul; the Prophets, Messengers, righteous people and the favored angels.

But if you disbelieve and disobey your Lord, you will lose your worldly life and your Hereafter and expose yourself to His wrath and punishment in this world and the Hereafter. You will then be like the most wicked of all creatures, the most defective in intelligence and the most debased in mind from the devils, corrupt people and false deities and tyrants, just to mention a few.

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(1) Narrated by Ibn Abi ‘Āsim in *Al-Āhād wal-Mathāni*, Vol. 5, p. 188; At-Tabarāni in *Al-Kabeer*, Vo. 7, p. 314; Al-Haythami said in *Al-Majma‘*, Vol. 1, p. 32: It was narrated by At-Tabarāni and and Al-Bazzār.

**Let me now mention to you something of the consequences of disbelief in detail:**

### **1. Fear and lack of security:**

Allah promises complete security in this world and the Hereafter for those who believe in Him and follow His Messengers. He says: **{Those who believe and do not mix their faith with falsehood are the ones who will be secure, and it is they who are rightly guided}**<sup>(1)</sup> Allah is the Giver of security, the Watcher over His creation, the Possessor of all that is in the universe. If He loves a person for his belief, He gives him security, tranquility and peace, but if a person disbelieves in Him, He withdraws tranquility and security from him and you will not see such a person but afraid of his fate in the Hereafter, afraid for his self from calamities and diseases, and afraid for his future in this world. That is why there is a flourishing insurance market for life and property, due to the lack of security and lack of having trust in Allah.

### **2. A difficult life:**

Allah created man, subjected to him all that is in the universe, and He portioned out for every creature its share of sustenance and its lifespan. Hence, you see the bird leaving its nest in the morning to find its provision and pick it up. It moves from one branch to another and sings in most melodious tone. Man is also one of these creatures for whom Allah has portioned out his provision and lifespan. If he believes in his Lord and stands firm upon His Law, Allah will give him happiness and stability and will make his matters easy for him, even if he does not possess more than the least means of livelihood.

But if he disbelieves in his Lord and is too arrogant to worship Him, Allah will make his life straitened and make him suffer sorrow and distress even if he has all the means of comfort and enjoyment at his disposal. Don't you see the great numbers of suicide victims in countries in which all means of affluence are guaranteed for their citizens? Don't you see extravagance in all kinds of furniture and foods for the enjoyment of this life? The cause of all this extravagance

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(1) Surat Al-An'ām (6): 82.

is the vacuity of the heart from faith, feelings of constraint and distress, and attempts to dismiss all this anxiety with different renewed means. Allah says the truth in His Words: **{But whoever turns away from My Reminder will have a miserable life, and on the Day of Resurrection We will raise him blind}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

### **3. He lives in conflict with his own self and with the world around him:**

This is because his self is created upon the sound inherent nature of Tawhīd (worshiping Allah alone). Allah says: **{This is the natural disposition with which Allah has created mankind}**<sup>(2)</sup> And his body surrenders to its Lord and moves according to His order, but the disbeliever insists on going against his own nature, and lives his voluntary life in rebellion against his Lord. Although his body surrenders to the will of the Creator, his voluntary will is in opposition.

He is also in conflict with the world around him because this entire universe, from its greatest galaxy to its smallest insects, move according to the way which Allah has ordained for it. Allah says: **{Then He turned to the heaven when it was all smoke, and said to it and to the earth, ‘Come into being, willingly or unwillingly.’ They both said, ‘We come willingly.’}**<sup>(3)</sup> Rather, this universe loves those who conform with it in submission to Allah and hates those who oppose it. The disbeliever is the recalcitrant in this universe, for he makes himself an opponent to his Lord and contender with Him, that is why it is appropriate for the heavens and the earth and all other creatures to hate him and his disbelief and atheism. Allah says: **{They say, “The Most Compassionate has begotten a son.” You have made a monstrous statement, at which the heavens are about to be torn apart, the earth split asunder, and the mountains tumble down, because they have ascribed to the Most Compassionate a son. It is not appropriate for the Most Compassionate to beget a son. There is none in the heavens and earth except that he will come to the Most Compassionate in full submission}**<sup>(4)</sup> Allah says

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(1) Surat Tā Ha (20): 124.

(2) Surat Ar-Room (30): 30.

(3) Surat Fussilat (41): 11.

(4) Surat Maryam (19): 88-93.

about Pharaoh and his army: **{Neither the heaven nor earth wept for them, nor were they given any respite}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

#### **4. He lives a life of ignorance:**

For disbelief is ignorance, or rather the greatest ignorance; because the disbeliever is ignorant of his Lord. He sees this universe created by his Lord in the most wonderful way, and he sees in himself the greatness of Allah's creation, yet he is ignorant of the Creator of this universe and the Constructor of his own self. Is this not the greatest ignorance?

#### **5. He pursues wronging himself and wronging those around him:**

This is because he subjected his self to other than that for which it was created. He does not worship his Lord but worships others. Injustice is to put something where it does not belong; and what injustice is greater than worshiping other than the One Who deserves it. The wise man Luqmān said to his son while explaining the hideousness of polytheism: **{When Luqmān said to his son, while advising him, "O my dear son, do not associate partners with Allah. Indeed, associating partners with Allah is the worst wrongdoing}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

It is also injustice to the people and other creatures around him; because he does not acknowledge the right of any person or creature to whom right is due. On the Day of Resurrection, every man or animal whom he has wronged will stand facing him and asking Allah to avenge for him.

#### **6. He exposes himself to the wrath of Allah in the life of this world:**

He exposes himself to calamities and afflictions as immediate punishment for his disbelief. Allah says: **{Do those who devise evil plots feel secure that Allah will not make them sink into the earth or that the punishment will not come upon them from where they do not expect? Or that He may seize them while they are going about, and they will have no escape? Or that He will seize them when they are in a state of fear? But your Lord is indeed Ever Gracious, Most Merciful}**<sup>(3)</sup> He also says: **{Calamities**

(1) Surat Ad-Dukhān (44): 29.

(2) Surat Luqmān (31): 13.

(3) Surat An-Nahl (16): 45-47.

**will continue to befall the disbelievers or strike close to their homes because of their deeds, until the promise of Allah comes to pass, for Allah does not fail in His promise}**<sup>(1)</sup> He says in another verse: **{Or do the people of the towns feel secure that Our punishment will not befall them by day while they are at play?}**<sup>(2)</sup> This is the fate of every person who turns away from the remembrance of Allah. Allah tells us of the punishments of past nations who were disbelievers: **{Each of them We seized for their sin: against some of them We sent a storm of stones; some were seized by a blast; some We caused the earth to swallow; and some We drowned. It was not Allah Who wronged them, but it was they who wronged themselves}**<sup>(3)</sup> And you can see the calamities of those around you who incurred the punishment of Allah.

### **7. Failure and loss will be his lot:**

Because of his injustice, he loses the greatest thing hearts and souls enjoy, which is knowing Allah, finding comfort in private discourse with Him, and feeling tranquility in turning to Him. He also loses the world, for he lives therein a wretched and confused life, and he loses his own self for which he amasses the wealth of this world; for he subjects it for a purpose different from what it was created for. He therefore does not attain happiness with it in this world, for it lives in misery and dies in misery and it shall be resurrected with the miserable people. Allah says: **{But those whose scales are light, it is they who have lost their own souls, because they wrongfully rejected Our verses}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also loses his family, for he lives with them a life of disbelief in Allah, so they are like him in misery and hardship, and their destination will be the Hellfire. Allah says: **{Indeed, the losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection}**<sup>(5)</sup> On the Day of Resurrection, they will be led to the Hellfire, and evil it is as a resting place. Allah says: **{[The angels will be told], "Gather all those who did wrong**

(1) Surat Ar-Ra'd (13): 31.

(2) Surat Al-A'rāf (7): 98.

(3) Surat Al-'Ankaboot (29): 40.

(4) Surat Al-A'rāf (7): 9.

(5) Surat Az-Zumar (39): 15, Surat Ash-Shoora (42): 45.

**and their fellows, and whatever they used to worship besides Allah, and lead them to the way of Hell} <sup>(1)</sup>.**

**8. He lives as a disbeliever in his Lord and a denier of His blessings:**

Allah created him from nothing and showered on him favors; how can he then worship, take as ally, and thank others besides Him? Which ingratitude is greater and more heinous than this?

**9. He is deprived of purposeful life:**

This is because the person who deserves life is the one who believes in his Lord, knows his goal, recognizes his fate and is certain of his resurrection. He thereby gives every right to whom it is due. He does not deny a due right, nor harm a creature. He thus lives blissful life and attains a good life both in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah says: **{Whoever does righteous deeds, male or female, while being a believer, We will surely grant him a good life} <sup>(2)</sup>** And in the Hereafter, his reward will be: **{pleasant dwellings in Gardens of Eternity. That is the supreme triumph} <sup>(3)</sup>.**

But whoever lives in this world like animals, not knowing his Lord or his goal and fate, rather, his only aim is to eat, drink and sleep, what then is the difference between him and all animals? He is even in greater error than animals. Allah says: **{We have surely created for Hell many jinn and humans. They have hearts with which they do not understand, eyes with which they do not see, and ears with which they do not hear. They are like cattle, rather, they are more astray. It is they who are the heedless} <sup>(4)</sup>** He also says: **{Do you think that most of them hear or understand? They are just like livestock, rather they are further astray from the right way} <sup>(5)</sup>.**

**10. He abides eternally in the torment:**

This is because the disbeliever moves from a torment to another. He leaves this world – after he had tasted its agonies and afflictions –

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(1) Surat As-Sāffāt (37): 22-23.

(2) Surat An-Nahl (16): 97.

(3) Surat As-Saff (61): 12.

(4) Surat Al-A'rāf (7): 179.

(5) Surat Al-Furqān (25): 44.

to the Hereafter. In the first stage of the Hereafter, the angels of death come upon him preceded by the angels of torment who will make him taste his deserved punishment. Allah says: **{If only you could see when the angels take the souls of the disbelievers, beating their faces and their backs, "Taste the punishment of the scorching fire!}**<sup>(1)</sup> Then his soul departs and when he is put in the grave, he meets a greater torment. Allah says about the People of Pharaoh: **{the Fire, which they will be exposed to [in their graves] morning and evening, and on the Day when the Hour takes place [it will be said], "Admit the people of Pharaoh into the most severe punishment."}**<sup>(2)</sup> On the Day of Resurrection, when the creatures are resurrected and the deeds are presented, and the disbeliever sees that Allah has accurately enumerated all his deeds in that book about which He says: **{And the record [of deeds] will be placed before them, and you will see the wicked scared of what it contains. They will say, "Woe to us! What is this book that leaves nothing, small or big, except that it has recorded it?" They will find all what they did before them, and your Lord does not wrong anyone.}**<sup>(3)</sup> Here, the disbeliever will wish that he were dust. Allah says: **{Indeed, We have warned you of an imminent punishment on the Day when everyone will see what his hands have sent forth, and the disbeliever will say, "Oh, I wish that I were dust!"}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

Because of the horror of that Day, man will wish that he owned all that is in the earth so that he could ransom himself with it from the torment of that Day. Allah, the Exalted, says: **{If the wrongdoers were to possess all that is on earth and the like of it, they would surely offer it to ransom themselves}**<sup>(5)</sup> He also says: **{The wicked will wish he could ransom himself from the punishment of that Day by offering his children, and his wife and his brother, and his kindred who stood by him, and everyone on earth, just to save himself}**<sup>(6)</sup>.

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(1) Surat Al-Anfāl (8): 50.

(2) Surat Ghāfir (40): 46.

(3) Surat Al-Kahf (18): 49.

(4) Surat An-Naba' (78): 40.

(5) Surat Az-Zumar (39): 47.

(6) Surat Al-Ma'ārij (70): 11-14.



Because the Hereafter is an abode of recompense and not of wishful thinking, man must inevitably be recompensed for his deeds; if they are good, he gets a good recompense, and if they are evil, he gets an evil recompense. The worst punishment that a disbeliever may meet on the Day of Resurrection is that of Fire in which Allah has provided different kinds of retribution for its dwellers so that they can taste the consequences of their deeds. Allah says: **{[They will be told] "This is the Hell that the wicked used to deny." They will go round between it and scalding water}**<sup>(1)</sup> He also informs us of the drink and the garments of the dwellers of Hell: **{As for the disbelievers, garments of Fire will be tailored for them, and scalding water will be poured over their heads, melting all that is in their bellies and their skins. And for [striking] them there will be maces of iron}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

## The End

### O man!

You were before non-existent. Allah says: **{Does man not remember that We created him beforehand, when he was nothing?}**<sup>(3)</sup> Then Allah created you from a sperm drop and made you hearing and seeing. Allah says: **{Was there not a period of time when man was not a thing [even] mentioned? Indeed, We created man from a drop of mixed fluids, in order to test him. So We gave him hearing and sight}**<sup>(4)</sup> Then you moved gradually from a state of weakness to strength, and you shall be returned to a state of weakness again. Allah says: **{It is Allah Who created you in a state of weakness, then after weakness He gave you strength, then after strength He made you weak and old. He creates what He wills, and He is the All-Knowing, the Most Capable}**<sup>(5)</sup> Then the inevitable end is death, and you, through these stages, move from weakness to weakness. You cannot avert evil from yourself nor can you bring about benefit for yourself except by using the strength and

(1) Surat Ar-Rahmān (55): 43-44.

(2) Surat Al-Hajj (22): 19-21.

(3) Surat Maryam (19): 67.

(4) Surat Al-Insān (77): 1-2.

(5) Surat Ar-Room (30): 54.

provision that Allah bestows on you. You are by nature poor and needy. Many are the things that you need to stay alive which you do not possess or which you sometimes have and sometimes are deprived of. Many are also the things that are useful to you and you would like to have and which you sometimes attain and sometimes not. Many are things that harm you, frustrate you, waste your efforts and bring plights upon you and you wish to avert them; and you sometimes succeed in averting them but sometimes fail to do so. In view of this, do you not feel your helplessness and need to Allah? Allah says: **{O people, it is you who are in need of Allah, whereas Allah is the Self-Sufficient, the Praiseworthy}**<sup>(1)</sup>.

You are exposed to a weak virus which you cannot see with your naked eyes, and it causes you painful disease which you cannot ward off. Then you go to a weak human being like yourself to treat you. Sometimes, the medicine works and sometimes the doctor fails to cure you and then both you and doctor are left confused.

**O man!** What a weak creature you are when a fly snatches something from you and you cannot take it back! Allah says the truth when He says, **{O people, a similitude is set forth, so listen to it: those whom you invoke besides Allah can never create even a fly, even if they all come together for that. And if the fly snatches something away from them, they cannot retrieve it. How feeble is the invoker as well as the invoked!}**<sup>(2)</sup> If you cannot take back what the fly snatches away from you, then which of your affairs do you have control over? “Your forelock is in the Hand of Allah, and so is your soul. Your heart is between two of His fingers which He turns as He wills. Your life, death, happiness and misery are all in His Hand. Your undertakings and sayings are by the permission of Allah and His Will. You do not move except with His permission, and you do not perform any act except by His Will. If He leaves you to yourself, He leaves you to weakness, negligence, sin and misdeed; and if He leaves you to others, He leaves you to those who cannot avail you of any benefit, harm, death, life or resurrection. You cannot dispense of Allah for the blink of an eye. Rather, you need Him in

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(1) Surat Fātir (35): 15.

(2) Surat Al-Hajj (22): 73.

every aspect for as long as you live. Meanwhile, you invite His wrath with sins and disbelief although you are in dire need for Him in every way. You forget Him while your return is to Him and in front of Him you shall stand.”<sup>(1)</sup>

**O man!** Due to your weakness and inability to shoulder the consequences of your sins: **{Allah wants to lighten your burdens, for man was created weak}**<sup>(2)</sup> Allah sent Messengers, revealed Books, ordained Laws, established the Straight Path before you, and established signs, proofs and evidence and made in everything a sign that proves His Oneness, Lordship and His right to be worshiped. But, despite all this, you repel the truth with falsehood, take Satan as an ally besides Allah and argue with falsehood. **{but man is the most quarrelsome of all beings}**<sup>(3)</sup> Allah’s favors that you enjoy day and night made you forget your beginning and your end! Don’t you remember that you were created from a sperm drop, that you will end up in the grave, and that your final destination will either be Paradise or Hellfire? Allah says: **{Does man not see that We have created him from a sperm drop, then he becomes a clear adversary, producing arguments against Us while forgetting his own creation. He says, “Who can give life to the bones after they have crumbled to dust?” Say, “The One Who created them in the first place will give life to them, for He has full knowledge of every created being}**<sup>(4)</sup> He also says: **{O mankind, what has lured you away from your Lord, the Most Generous, Who created you, then shaped and proportioned you, and assembled you in whatever form He willed?}**<sup>(5)</sup>

**O man!** Why are you depriving yourself the pleasure of standing before your Lord and privately talking to Him, asking Him to enrich you of poverty, heal you from illness, relieve you of distress, forgive your sins, remove your harm, support you when you are oppressed, guide you when you are confused or lost, teach you what you do not

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(1) From Al-Fawā'id by Ibn Al-Qayyim, p. 56.

(2) Surat An-Nisā' (4): 28.

(3) Surat Al-Kahf (18): 54.

(4) Surat Yā Seen (36): 77-79.

(5) Surat Al-Infītār (82): 6-8.

know, give you security when you are frightened, show mercy to you when you are weak, drive away your enemies and provide for you your livelihood<sup>(1)</sup>.

**O man!** The greatest blessing that Allah endowed man with after the blessing of religion is the blessing of intellect, so that he can distinguish with it between what benefits him and what harms him, to understand the commandments and prohibitions of Allah and to know by it the greatest objective, which is to worship Allah alone Who has no partner. Allah says: **{Whatever blessing you have, it is from Allah. Then when you are afflicted with hardship, to Him alone you cry out for help. Then as soon as He removes the hardship from you, some of you associate partners with their Lord}**<sup>(2)</sup>.

**O man!** The wise person loves lofty matters and abhors debased ones. He loves to emulate every righteous and magnanimous person from among the Prophets and pious people and yearns to join them even if he cannot reach their status. The only way to that is what Allah directed us to, as He says: **{Say, "If you love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you}**<sup>(3)</sup> If man complies with this command, Allah will make him join the rank of the Prophets, Messengers, Martyrs and righteous people. Allah says: **{Those who obey Allah and the Messenger will be with those whom Allah has blessed: the prophets, the people of truth, the martyrs, and the righteous. What excellent companions they are!}**<sup>(4)</sup>.

**O Son of Adam!** I advise you to sit with yourself and think deeply of the truth that has come to you, reflecting over its signs and proofs. If you find it to be true, then hasten to follow it and do not be a slave of customs and traditions. Know that your own self is dearer to you than your friends, companions and the legacy of your forefathers. Allah has admonished the disbelievers with this and called them to it. He says: **{Say [O Prophet], "I only advise you to do one thing: stand up for Allah, in pairs and individually, then reflect. There**

(1) Miftāh Dār As-Sa‘ādah, Vol. 1, p. 251.

(2) Surat An-Nahl (16): 53-54.

(3) Surat āl ‘Imrān (3): 31.

(4) Surat An-Nisā’ (4): 69.

**is no madness in your companion; he is but a warner to you ahead of a severe punishment.”} (1).**

**O Son of Adam!** When you accept Islam, you lose nothing. Allah says: **{What harm would it do to them to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and spend out of what Allah has provided for them? For Allah is All-Knowing of them}** (2) Ibn Katheer (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "What would harm them if they believed in Allah, followed the praiseworthy way, believed in Allah hoping for His promise in the Hereafter for those who did good deeds and spent out of what He has given them in ways which He loves and is pleased with? He knows their good and evil intentions; he knows who deserves success among them to grant him success and show him guidance and appoint him for good deeds with which He is pleased. He also knows who deserves disgrace and expulsion from His Divine Affection which whoever is expelled from has indeed failed and lost in this world and the Hereafter." (3) Your Islam does not stand between you and anything that you want to do or to have from the things that Allah has made lawful for you. Rather, you will be rewarded for any good deed you do in which you seek the pleasure of Allah even if it is good for your worldly life or increases your wealth or prestige. Even when you do lawful deeds seeking thereby to abstain from doing what is unlawful, you will be rewarded for that. The Messenger of Allah (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "There is charity in satiating your sexual desire." The Companions said, "O Messenger of Allah! Will one of us satiate his lust and still get reward for that?" He answered, "What if he satiates it in an unlawful way, won't he be committing a sin by doing that? Likewise, if he satiates it in the lawful way, he will be rewarded for that." (4).

O man! The Messengers came with the truth and conveyed the will of Allah, and man needs to know the Law of Allah so as to live his life with sure knowledge and to be among the successful in the Hereafter. Allah says: **{O mankind, the Messenger has come to you with the**

(1) Surat Saba' (34): 46.

(2) Surat An-Nisā' (4): 39.

(3) From Tafseer Al-Qur'an Al-'Azheem, Vol. 1, p. 497.

(4) Narrated by Muslim, Book of Zakāh, No. 1006.

truth from your Lord, so believe; it is better for you. But if you disbelieve, then to Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and earth, and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise<sup>(1)</sup> And He also said: {Say, "O people, the truth has come to you from your Lord. So whoever accepts guidance, it is only for his own good; and whoever goes astray, it is only for his own loss. I am not a keeper over you."}<sup>(2)</sup>.

**O man!** If you embrace Islam, you will only benefit yourself, and if you disbelieve, you only harm yourself. Allah is in no need of His slaves. The sin of the sinners does not harm Him nor does the obedience of the obedient benefit Him. He is not disobeyed except by His knowledge and He is not obeyed except by His permission. Allah says as was reported from Him by His Prophet: "O My Slaves! I have made injustice forbidden for myself and I have also made it forbidden amongst you, so do not wrong one another. O My slaves! You are all in error except whom I guide, so seek guidance from Me, I will guide you. O My slaves! All of you are hungry except whom I feed, so seek food from Me, I will feed you. O My slaves! All of you are naked except whom I clothe, so seek clothing from Me, I will clothe you. O My slaves! You commit sins by day and night, but I forgive all sins. So seek forgiveness from Me, I will forgive you. O My slaves! You can never be able to harm Me, and you can never be able to benefit Me. O My slaves! If the first and the last of you, and all the jinn and mankind among you were to be as pious as the most pious one among you, that adds nothing to My Kingdom. O My slaves! If the first and the last among you, and all the jinn and mankind of you are to be as sinful as the most sinful one among you, that decreases nothing from My Kingdom. O My slaves! If the first and the last among you, and all the jinn and mankind of you were to stand at one place and ask Me and I grant each and everyone his request, that decreases nothing from My Kingdom except like what a sewing needle decreases from the ocean when it is dipped inside it and then withdrawn. O My slaves! These are only your deeds that I enumerate accurately for you, and for which I give you reward. So whoever finds good reward, let

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(1) Surat An-Nisā' (4): 170.

(2) Surat Yunus (10): 108.

him thank Allah, but whoever finds anything else, let him not blame but himself."<sup>(1)</sup>

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds. May peace and blessings be upon the noblest of all Prophets and Messengers, Our Prophet Muhammad, and all his family and Companions.



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(1) Narrated by Muslim, Book of Virtue and Upholding Kinship Ties, Chapter on Prohibition of Injustice, No. 2577.



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