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ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF PEACE



Abd Ar-Rahman bin
Abd Al-Kareem Ash-Sheha



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In the name of Allah, the
Beneficent, the Merciful.



Dear Reader,

Islam is a complete and integral Divine religion and way of life. It has a complete code of ethics for a happy life, as well as a peaceful and tranquil life after death.

Islam is free from all imperfections and defects.

Any deviant or abnormal behavior observed in a Muslim should have no bearing on Islam, none whatsoever.

The reason for such deviant behavior is generally a poor understanding of the faith, and in other cases, weak faith that leads to the person going astray from what is proper and noble.

It is unjust and unreasonable for Islam to be assessed or evaluated based on any individuals' behavior or attitudes, with the exception of the Prophet Muhammad, who is the best example and role model for all humans.

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FOREWORD

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All praise be to God, the Lord of all the worlds, the Creator of the heavens and earth and all creatures living in them. May God grant peace and blessings to Prophet Muhammad, God's final Messenger, whose message brought mercy to all

mankind. May He also give His blessings to all the prophets and messengers whom He sent to guide mankind out of darkness and into light.

At the Osoul Centre for Islamic Advocacy, every new release that we produce gives us a great opportunity to interact with our readers. All our releases have the same overall objective; to present Islam to mankind, as it truly is. We aim to make people aware of Islam's fine aspects and profound teachings and to show clearly that it is the only faith that provides practical and effective solutions to all the problems faced by humanity. Islam gives clear and solid answers to all of the questions that have troubled people over many generations, such as: How did we come into existence and why do we exist? Where do we go from here? Furthermore, Islam is the only religion that requires its followers to love and respect all the prophets God sent, particularly Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them both).

We take great care to provide solid and rational proofs for our arguments, so as to give our readers the reassurance they need, and our releases also refute the accusations levelled against Islam and provide clarification to people's misunderstandings of Islamic teachings.

By God's grace, Islam is the fastest growing religion in our time, as confirmed by a study undertaken by the Pew Research Centre⁽¹⁾, and our motive is to make this great divine faith known to all people.

Islam is the Religion of Peace, shows with clarity that Islam is the religion of perfect peace, and that the spread of Islam means the spread of peace throughout the world. Muslims must always be true to their promises and covenants, and must treat others with justice and compassion, particularly those who are weak and vulnerable.

The book also makes clear that when the early Muslims overpowered major empires and took over vast areas, their motives were not to subjugate people or to enrich themselves by taking away their resources. Indeed, Islam stands firmly against injustice, tyranny and corruption, and builds a state where all people, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, can enjoy full justice and true compassion. Islam helps people to discard the worship of other beings so that they worship God alone. It takes them out of the darkness of disbelief, delivering them into the light of faith.

We hope that readers will find this book useful in adding to their knowledge and understanding of Islam.

Basil ibn Abdullah al-Fawzan
Executive Director

(1) "The Future of the Global Muslim Population", Pew Research Center, 27 January 2011, Available at <http://goo.gl/uk8y1j>

INTRODUCTION



Muslims are routinely portrayed as terrorists even though many are either totally innocent of the charge, or more commonly, the primary victims of terrorism itself.



The government may distribute photos of its air force arsenal to prevent criminals or separatists from going forward with crimes. The objective of such operations are to instill fear into an enemy so that they surrender or at least desist from their crimes.

“Terrorism” is of two kinds, and though it may be surprising to some, there is a form of terrorism that is used to actually prevent warfare and bloodshed. This type of terrorism is used by many leading governments around the world and is sometimes called psych-ops (psychological operations). As an example, the government may distribute photos of its air force arsenal to prevent criminals or separatists from going forward with crimes. The objective of such operations are to instill fear into an enemy so that they surrender or at least desist from their crimes.

Allah says in the Qur’an about this justified form of terrorism which we are speaking of - which prevents and deters aggression:

“Make ready against them your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into the hearts of the enemies of God and your enemies, and others besides them whom you may not know but whom God knows well. Whatever you spend in the cause of God will be repaid unto you, and you will not be treated unjustly.” (8:60)

The second type of terrorism is the one we most often hear about in the news. It is evil, and founded upon injustice, double standards, tyranny, and aggression; in all the hateful connotations that these words imply. It targets women and children, civilians and non-combatants, trying to force defeat and difficult political decisions by spreading terror. This kind is what most people immediately think about when hearing the word terrorism. Often people associate it with what they have been preconditioned to picture by various government agencies and segments of the mass media.

Muslims are routinely portrayed as terrorists even though many are either totally innocent of the charge, or more commonly, the primary victims of terrorism itself. “Islamic terrorism” is a media and think tank byword, even though one would be hard pressed to find the equivalent term of Jewish, Christian, Hindu or Buddhist terrorism in usage. Certain institutions and individuals - with known agendas and backings - have been instrumental in fabricating and perpetuating misinformation, exaggeration, and previously disqualified and refuted misunderstandings and slanders.

One might claim that we are using terror here in its linguistic meaning and outside the scope of the technical legal definition of terrorism, but that definition is hotly under contention because no universally accepted standard has been agreed upon. It is disturbing to see the now apparent hypocrisy and double standards of the major powers, those who claim to hold the banner of justice, as they use state sponsored terror to achieve their goals; noble and otherwise. Thus, the point we are emphasizing is a return to universal common sense; terror can have a negative and a positive effect according to circumstance and context.

Terrorism invariably does not arise in a vacuum, but in a historical context of persecutions, injustices, and grievances that build up over time to the point of explosion and rebellion. When a people have nothing left to lose, their actions will be unpredictable. A common form of undeniable terrorism is state terrorism. Yet sadly, this is often purposely neglected or downgraded in legal and government sponsored examinations of the issues surrounding terrorism for the simple fact that those who hold power often do not wish that their institutional and party crimes are exposed as crimes against humanity. Also, they plan that their agendas of labeling others, but not their own operatives, as criminals and terrorists, are not discovered.

Is clandestine assassination and murder a form of terrorism? Is torture and rape a form of terrorism? Is deliberate military, political, economic and environmental sabotage resulting in mass death a form of terrorism? Are wholesale persecutions of one racial or ethnic group or one class with lynching, killing and beatings a form of terrorism? Is target bombing a form of terrorism? Is the use of nuclear weapons, and other weapons of mass destruction, on major population centers a form of terrorism? What is justifiable collateral damage? If these acts are not terrorism, then what are they exactly? If they are not legal and justified, then what do we call the numerous examples around the globe during the 20th century of unprecedented human wars and mass destruction? What do they call the implemented policies of what is coerced upon the world in this 21st century? Many difficult issues remain under investigation and contention, and demand serious and reasonable answers from scholars and politicians alike.

Many of the national and secular governments and systems claim to champion human rights, peace, prosperity, and happiness for man, but in reality we see that they practice narrow national and party politics meant to empower and enrich selected groups. Furthermore, these governments are inherently fragmented and self contradictory by seeking to serve various special interest groups, while professing to serve the general public good. The legislations of these regimes and agencies enact laws and policies that serve the interests of power and wealth in their societies. The social, political, economic, and environmental consequences of unchecked power and greed for profit and luxury is detrimental to the majority of mankind, and is leading humanity, in general, to irreversible devastation and destruction.



Terrorism invariably does not arise in a vacuum but in a historical context of persecutions, injustices, and grievances that build up over time to the point of explosion and rebellion.



The aim of Islam is to establish the ideal human society and brotherhood by spreading general benevolence and the Divine guidance among men for their betterment and salvation.

Islam, on the other hand, is a comprehensive and universal religion for all races and classes of people not inclined to serve a specific group of people, but aimed to address the needs of all humanity with its moral, spiritual, social, legal, political and economic systems. Its moral purity and clarity, and simplicity in a strict monotheistic creed, and comprehensive prohibition of all types of criminality, oppression and injustice appeals to all classes of people, regardless of race, culture, education, social and economic status. The aim of Islam is to establish the ideal human society and brotherhood by spreading general benevolence and the Divine guidance among men for their betterment and salvation. Part of its mission is to establish justice at all times and at all levels, to maintain amicable relations, even with potential enemies, as long as there are no open acts of hostilities, and to promote peace whenever possible. Allah, the Almighty, states in the Qur'an:

"It may be that God will grant love and friendship between you and those whom you hold as enemies. For God has power over all things; And God is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. God forbids you not, with regard to those who do not fight you for your Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for God loves those who are just. God only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for your Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support others in driving you out, from turning to them for friendship and protection. Those who turn to them do wrong." (60:7-9)

These verses call for peace with those that refrain from the hostile actions mentioned.

And Allah Most Glorified said in His Majestic Qur'an:

"If they incline towards peace, then incline towards peace, and trust in God, for He is All-Hearing and All-Knowing." (8:61)

This verse states that whenever the enemy suggests peace, it is incumbent on Muslims to cooperate towards establishing peace.

It is hoped that researchers and scholars will investigate Islam, and its laws and principles, with impartiality and thoughtful reflection. The true beauty and awesomeness of Islam is only evident to those who live by it and practice it, though all students can admire its just laws, universal brotherhood, noble and rational principles, and excellent moral examples. One of the evidences of the greatness of this Divine faith is that, regardless of the weak support extended by the followers of Islam and the vast war

waged against it by its vicious critics and enemies, it has resisted corruption and distorting innovations, and continues to spread on its own merits and values in various parts of the world. What is behind this expansion of Islam, despite the weaknesses of the Muslims, is the inherent strength of the truth and justice that by nature dissipates and conquers all falsehood and injustice. In Islam, people find full satisfaction for their spiritual, moral, physical and practical expectations and needs.

As for the people who refuse to see, hear and investigate the truth, they will undoubtedly remain mired in false desires, narrow biases and ignorant prejudices. A well-known principle is that man by nature rejects that which he fears. He fears that which he is ignorant about, and therefore, makes enemies of what he does not know. Allah has described them in the Qur'an saying:

“Many are the jinn and men We have made for Hellfire. They have hearts wherewith they understand not, eyes wherewith they see not, ears wherewith they hear not. They are like livestock. Nay! They are even more misguided. They are the heedless and neglectful.” (7:179)

Sheep follow blindly, but at least they follow the natural laws and instincts created by Allah for their survival, while many men blindly follow custom and their leaders, rejecting what Allah has revealed for man's own benefit and salvation. As Allah mentions:

“Nay! They say: We found our fathers following a certain religion, and we do guide ourselves by their footsteps.” (43:22)

I do hope and pray that Allah, the Exalted, will bring benefit to you from what has been written here. Ours is a humble effort, presented with a pure intent, to contribute to the wealth of human information and to advance understanding. The writer offers, in addition, an open invitation to all those who are interested in learning more about Islam to communicate with him at the address given, and would be delighted to answer all inquiries about Islam and provide additional literature on it.

The author expresses his deep gratitude to Allah, Most Exalted, for His continuing aid. Any and all shortcomings and omissions in this booklet are those of the author alone for which he takes responsibility, and requests from all the readers forgiveness, and he seeks the pardon and forgiveness from Allah the Most Merciful.

May Allah's Blessings and Mercy be upon the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ the final Prophet and Messenger of Allah to mankind, and may the blessings and peace of Allah also be upon his family and companions, and all those who follow their guidance and the footprints until the Day of Judgment.

Dr. Abdul Rahman b. Abdul-Kareem ash-Sheha

THE MEANING OF ISLAM



Muslims exchange the purified and noble greetings “As-Salamu Alaikum” (Peace be upon you) when they meet, when they pass by one another, when they call one another.



Even when a Muslim enters his own home and finds no one there, he says as-Salamu Alaikum since he offers this greeting upon the angels who are present in that place and upon himself.

The word Islam means submission to Allah, the Almighty, the Creator and Lord of all creation, with the entire soul and body, by obedience to what He commanded and prohibited in His Revealed Law. It requires compliance and willful yielding of one’s will to His Will and Judgments, and by acceptance of all that Allah has decreed for man on earth. Allah is the Most Beneficent and Merciful who knows all man’s needs, who enjoins all that is good and warns against all that is evil. Thus, His revealed Law is perfectly suited to the universal needs, rights and responsibilities of man.

The Almighty states in the Qur’an, in relation to the Prophet Ibraheem (Abraham):

“Behold! His Lord said to him, ‘Submit.’ He said, ‘I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds.” (2:131)

The word “Salam” means “Peace” and is derived from the same Arabic three-letter root (SLM) as the word Islam. “Salam” is also one of the Attributes of Allah, blessed be His Names and Attributes and Exalted His Majesty, as the Qur’an states:

“He is Allah, other than whom there is no deity, the Sovereign, the Pure, the Perfection, the Bestower of Faith, the Overseer, the Exalted in Might, the Compeller, the Superior. Exalted is Allah above whatever they associate with Him.” (59:23)

“Salam” is also one of the names of Jannah (Paradise). The Almighty states in the Qur’an:

“For them will be a Home of Peace with their Lord. He will be their protecting Friend, because they practiced righteousness.” (6:127)

The inhabitants of Paradise will greet each other with “Salam” when they meet their Lord, Allah, as he mentioned:

“Their salutation on the Day they meet Him will be ‘Peace’ and He has prepared for them a generous Reward.” (33:44)

Muslims exchange the purified and noble greetings “As-Salamu Alaikum” (Peace be upon you) when they meet, when they pass by one another, and when they call one another. Even when a Muslim enters his own home and finds no one there, he says as-Salamu Alaikum since he offers this greeting upon the angels who are present in that place and upon himself. This form of greeting helps to relieve the hearts from all forms of enmity, grudges and rancor that people may keep within them, replacing it with good will, mutual respect, tranquility, security and happiness. Often Muslims greet one another by saying the fuller version, which has been taught by the Prophet of Allah, “As-Salamu alaikum wa rahmatul'laah”, which means, “may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you, and His Mercy”.

In the Prophetic traditions (hadith), we find the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ describing how the spreading of this greeting is from among the traits of the perfection of faith:

“You will not enter Paradise until you acquire full faith, and you will not acquire full faith until you love one another. Should not I guide you to an action which if you establish it among one another, you would love one another? Spread the greeting of ‘Salaam’ (Peace) as much as you can amongst yourselves (in the community).” (Muslim)

And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

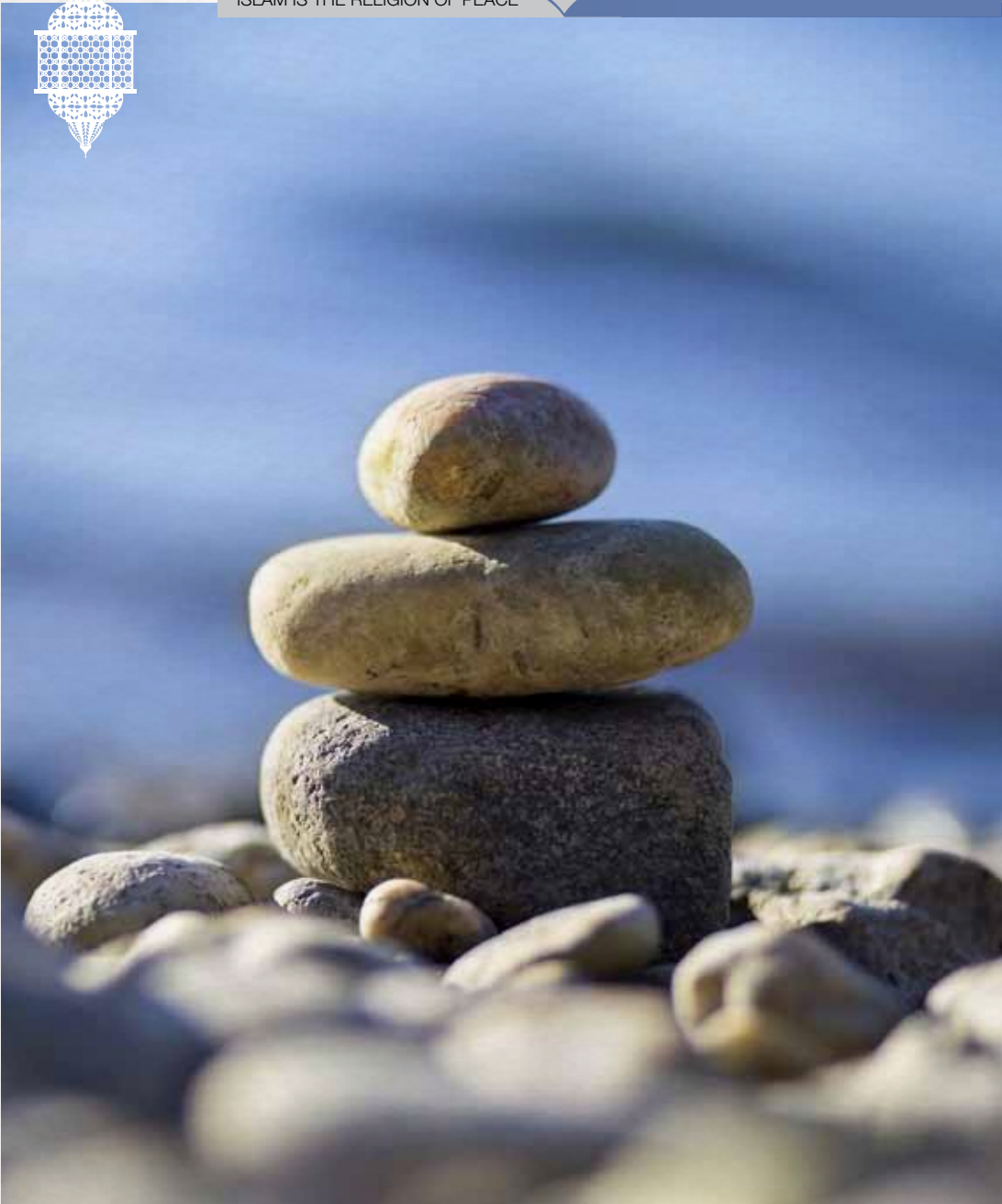
“Offer food generously to others, initiate the greeting of ‘peace’ amongst yourselves to those whom you know and those whom you do not know.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

The purpose of Islam is to continually seek to please Allah, the Creator and Lord of the Universe, by universal good and righteous deeds. Allah says in his Glorious Book, the Qur’an:

“O People of the Book! There has come to you Our Messenger revealing to you much that you used to hide in the Book, and passing over much (that is now unnecessary). There has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book by which Allah guides all who seek His pleasure to the ways of ‘salam’ (peace and safety), and leads them out of darkness, by His Will, to the light, and guides them to a Path that is Straight.” (5:15-16)

Islam comprises the complete comprehensive meaning of peace that includes the inner personal and spiritual peace, as well as outer social peace. As the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“A true Muslim is the person from whom other Muslims feel secure from his verbal or physical abuse and attacks, and a true immigrant is a person who forsakes what Allah the Almighty has declared unlawful.” (Bukhari & Muslim)



Moreover, it includes the global vision of general universal peace for all humanity, since its basic principles include mutual respect and non-aggression to those who abide peacefully to just terms, especially those who have the basic understanding of a revealed religion from Allah as the basis of their civilization like the Christians and Jews.

“O you who believe! Enter into ‘as-Silm’ (the peace of Islam by submission to Allah) completely and whole-heartedly, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan, for he is indeed an avowed enemy to you.” (2:208)

The invitation of Islam, Allah’s universal religion, is extended to all. Allah Most Exalted said in His Majestic Book:

“Say, [O Muhammad], 'O mankind, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, [from Him] to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth. There is no deity except Him; He gives life and causes death.' So believe in Allah and His Messenger....” (7:158)

And He said:

“Truly the religion before Allah is Islam.” (3:19)

And He said:

“And Whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be one of the losers.” (3:85)

إِذْ قَالَ لِلرَّبِّ رَبِّ اسْلِمْ
قَالَ اسْلِمْتَ لِلرَّبِّ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

“When his Lord said to him, ‘Submit’, he said ‘I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds.’” (2:131)

THE MISCONCEPTION THAT ISLAM WAS SPREAD BY FORCE



One misconception, promoted by the enemies of justice who do not read historical sources impartially but rehash old propaganda over and over again, is the false accusation that Islam was spread by force. Islam was spread by the sword, they say.



The Qur'an and Prophetic traditions make it clear that no coercion or compulsion in religion is allowed - no one is ever to be forced against his will to convert to Islam.

One misconception, promoted by the enemies of justice who do not read historical sources impartially, but instead rehash old propaganda over and over again, is the false accusation that Islam was spread by force. Islam was spread by the sword, they say. Yet, various selections from the Qur'an can rebut this slanderous accusation.

Allah, Most Exalted, says in His Majestic Book:

"There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong. So whoever disbelieves in false gods and believes in Allah has grasped the most trustworthy handhold with no break in it. And Allah is Hearing and Knowing." (2:256)

And He, the Most Exalted, says:

"If it had been your Lord's Will, they all would have believed, all the people on earth! Will you then compel mankind, against their will, to believe?" (10:99)

And He, the Most Exalted, says:

"And say, 'The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.' Indeed, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose walls will surround them. And if they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like murky oil, which scalds [their] faces. Wretched is the drink, and evil is the resting place." (18:29)

And He, the Most Exalted, says:

"But if they turn away, your duty is only to preach the Clear Message." (16:82)

And He, the Most Exalted, says:

"Therefore give admonition, for you are indeed one to admonish. But you are not one to control [them]." (88:21-22)

And He, the Most Exalted, says:

"Say, 'Obey Allah and obey the Messenger. But if you turn away - then upon him is only that [duty] with which he has been charged, and upon you is that with which you have been charged. And if you obey him, you will be [rightly] guided. And there is not upon the Messenger except the [responsibility for] clear notification.'" (24:54)

And He, the Most Exalted, says:

“If any one of the polytheists seeks your protection, then grant him protection so that he may hear the words of Allah. Then deliver him to his place of safety. That is because they are a people who do not know.” (9:6)

These and many other verses of the Qur’an and Prophetic traditions make it clear that no coercion or compulsion in religion is allowed; no one is ever to be forced against his will to convert to Islam. Faith must be by knowledge and free will and based upon firm conviction in the heart, followed by the testimony of correct words and good deeds. A mere pronouncement of the creed of Islam, “la ilaha illallah” (There is nothing worthy of being worshipped except Allah), is not enough to confirm one as a believer, even though, if said with the kernel of initial faith, one immediately becomes a Muslim. As Allah said about the Bedouins who professed verbally without firm conviction:

“The desert Arabs say, ‘We believe.’ Say, ‘You do not yet have real Faith, but rather say only, ‘We have submitted to Allah’, since Faith has not yet entered your hearts. But if you obey Allah and His Messenger, He will not slight you [the reward] of your deeds, for Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful.’” (49:14)

It is known that someone cannot be forced to change what is in the depths of his heart, and that one may profess with his tongue what he does not really believe with certainty. This is not Islam, nor is it the Islamic faith. For this reason, Allah said the following about the one compelled under duress to renounce his faith in Islam:

“Whoever disbelieves in Allah after his belief, except for one who is forced [to renounce his religion] while his heart is secure in faith. But those who [willingly] open their breasts to disbelief, upon them is wrath from Allah, and for them is a great punishment.” (16:106)

Disbelief occurs by opening the heart to disbelieve willingly, and upon this basis, one speaks evil and commits his criminal acts rebelling against Allah and the revealed guidance of the Messengers and becomes an apostate after having believed.

Another accusation related to the above is that Islam was spread by force of arms and warfare. It is an established fact that any system or government, regardless of its source, requires a protective force to defend it adherents, preserve its values, spread its principles, ensure a fair application of its law, and enforce the just execution of legal penalties against criminals. As reported in the tradition of the Prophet ﷺ:

“Truly, Allah admonishes with the authority of the ruler, more than what He admonishes with the Divine Revelation of the Qur’an.” (i.e. more by enforcing the punishments justly than the God-consciousness from reading scripture) (al-Hindi, Kanz-ul-Aámaal)



Let us take a glimpse of the early days of Islam and its amazing spread over the known world to analyze the truth of this accusation in the light of documented historical fact.

The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad ﷺ, after his commission from Allah to arise and publicize his divine message, remained in the sacred city of Makkah for thirteen years inviting his people, and the visitors to Makkah, to Islam. He engaged every possible way to inform and convey the message of the revelations of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, encountering false accusations, slander, persecutions, harassment, boycotts, threats, attacks, and brutal physical aggression from his people. Those who believed shared in his sufferings, and since he was not yet commanded by Allah to meet violence and aggression with armed defense, his followers persevered and suffered the harshest forms of persecutions withholding their hands and adhering to the precepts of peaceful missionary activity.

Faith must be by knowledge and free will and based upon firm conviction in the heart.



The Messenger of Allah, Muhammad ﷺ, after his commission from Allah to arise and publicize his divine message, remained in the sacred city of Makkah for thirteen years inviting his people, and the visitors to Makkah, to Islam.

Many were tortured and some were martyred for their faith in Islam, and the accounts of these brave souls bear testimony to the long suffering his followers endured in this period of severe testing. The Prophet ﷺ soothed the wounds of his companion Ammar ibn Yasir and his parents who eventually became the first martyrs of Islam with the words, "Be patient, O family of Yasir! Paradise will be your permanent abode." (Al-Hakim)

The Prophet ﷺ allowed some of his followers to immigrate to Ethiopia to escape from this oppression and torture. They sought refuge under the tutelage of its just ruler of the era, the Negus, who himself later accepted Islam. Even in these dire circumstances, Allah, the Most Wise and Merciful, commanded His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ to be patient, forbearing and tolerant with his people while propagating the message. There are repeated examples of his exceeding mercy, graciousness, magnanimity, and compassion in the face of this continued violence and aggression. The Prophet ﷺ and his companions stood firm in their belief and conveyance of the message, obeying the following command of Allah:

"Therefore patiently persevere, as did those of determination among

the messengers and do not be impatient for them. It will be - on the Day they see that which they are promised - as though they had not remained [in the world] except an hour of a day. [This is] notification. And will [any] be destroyed except the defiantly disobedient people?" (46:35)

And still he would pray for their guidance saying, "O Allah! Please guide my people as they do not know." (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Prophet ﷺ continued to propagate the message in Makkah, and to seek out any tribe that would be able to protect and aid him. He would present himself and his mission to the visiting individuals and tribes in Makkah, and at the times of the great Arab markets and meeting places. Then it so happened that a group of people from the city of Yathrib (now known as "Madinah", or the City of the Prophet) believed in the Message of Islam and gave him their pledge of allegiance to support and defend him in the same way as they would defend their own wealth, honor, integrity and household. They encouraged him and the early believers to seek refuge by immigrating to their hometown. This coincided with the persecution in Makkah reaching a grave critical stage, and the leaders of the Quraish tribe even conspired to murder the Prophet, may Allah's peace and blessing be upon him.

The immigration was to be the watershed event in Islamic history, for in Madinah the Prophet's first mosque was built, the brotherhood of Muslims expanded, and the nascent Islamic state was established and developed under his direct guidance.

Note that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and his followers never shed a drop of blood in retribution throughout these long years of persecution and oppression in the city of Makkah since he was not commanded to fight, but rather to be patient and persevere. Confrontation and armed hostilities from the Muslim side did not begin until two years after his immigration from Makkah to Madinah, when the Quraish tribe feared for its dominance and continued on the path of persecution and obstruction of the message of Islam, and after all avenues of peaceful propagation were exhausted.


Since the town of Madinah was en route of the Quraish tribe's merchant caravans to Greater Syria, the first act of confrontation occurred when Allah's Messenger ﷺ engaged a commercial caravan lead by the Quraishi nobleman Abu Sufyan. The Prophet ﷺ intended to impose a kind of economic sanction on the tribe of Quraish to allow him to peacefully propagate his faith to others in the open, and to compensate the believers for the properties, possessions and wealth which were unjustly confiscated by the Quraish in Makkah before the immigration. The caravan escaped the ambush but after learning




about the incident, the leaders of Quraish prepared a relatively large and well-equipped army to attack the Muslims. Consequently the first decisive battle took place at Badr, and the smaller and ill equipped Muslim force of 313 fighters crushed the arrogant Quraish army with a humiliating and decisive defeat.

Allah, Most Exalted and Supreme, describes the just rationale for this battle and those to follow:

“[They are] those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly, only because they say ‘Our Lord is Allah.’ If Allah did not check one set of people by means of another, many monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure, would surely have been pulled down. Allah will certainly aid those who aid His cause. Indeed Allah is Full of Strength, Exalted in Might. [They are] those who, if We establish them in the land, establish regular prayer, give regular charity, enjoy the right and forbid the wrong. And with Allah rests the end and decision of all affairs.” (22:40-41)

 The Prophet ﷺ allowed those of his followers that wished to immigrate to Ethiopia to escape from this oppression and torture.



 The immigration was to be the watershed event in Islamic history, for in Madinah the Prophet’s first mosque was built, the brotherhood of Muslims expanded and grew, and the nascent Islamic state was established and developed under his direct guidance.

And Allah, the Wise and Sublime, says:

“And why shouldn’t you fight in the cause of Allah, and for those who, being weak, are persecuted and oppressed? Men, women, and children, whose cry is, ‘Our Lord! Rescue us from this town, whose people are oppressors, and raise for us, from Yourself, a protector, and raise for us, from Yourself, a helper.’” (4:75)

And Allah, the Exalted, says:

“Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits, for Allah loves not transgressors.” (2:190)

In all the battles fought, and all the victories that Allah’s Messenger ﷺ and his companions achieved within the period of 23 years of the Prophet’s mission, only 375 people were killed in this fighting. In the ninth year of the Hijra (Immigration) known as the Year of Delegations, the Prophet ﷺ met with about a hundred various delegations from tribes over the entire Arabian Peninsula. He met them with generosity and magnanimity and replied to all their questions and concerns about the Islamic Creed (Aqeedah) and Law (Shari’ah). The majority of them

were suitably impressed by the call of the Prophet ﷺ and they accepted Islam. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also sent letters to the leaders of the surrounding regions calling them to accept the Message of Allah as will be mentioned below.

In the Prophet's lifetime and soon afterwards, the entire Arabian Peninsula was for the first time in its history unified in one just and egalitarian rule of law, under one divine religion. The majority of Arabs accepted Islam willfully in droves after hearing the Qur'an, seeing the example of the Prophet in his Sunnah (Way) and his companions, and witnessing the Islamic system, with only a few holdouts among some Jewish and Christian pockets, allowed to remain within the Muslim State on their old faith by contracts stipulating specific rights and obligations. Indeed this revolutionary change was a miraculous achievement considering the meager material means by which it took place and its lasting worldwide effect, and Allah Most Great gives success to whom He will.

The rightly-guided Caliphs, companions and righteous predecessors followed the example of the Prophet ﷺ after his passing away, defending the Muslim State from its enemies. They also worked together in conquering the surrounding tyrannical empires which threatened their existence, and in spreading Islam by the zeal of their faith and missionary activity and through their excellent upright morals and just relations. These individuals were, by no standards, equal in number or war equipment, preparations, and professional military skills, to the people they vanquished, but the vitality of their divine faith and the moral superiority of their characters conquered the common people's hearts and minds before there was a need to vanquish the corrupt tyrannical armies whose oppression of the masses was unbearable.

One of the new converts to Islam in our time, named Basheer Ahmad, said in reflection on this issue, "One of the most puzzling questions to me, and one of my most serious concerns prior to accepting Islam and embracing it as a way of life, was that we Christians claim that Islam was spread by the sword. Therefore, I posed the following question to myself, 'If that claim is true, why, then, do we notice that many people, in every corner of the world, still adhere to Islam and embrace it, join it, and accept it as a way of life? Why do we notice people come to join Islam daily, without any compulsion or force by anyone?'" [Paraphrased from Dr. Imad-du-Deen Khalil: *What Do They Say about Islam?* p.295]

Norman A. Daniel says on the origins of the fabrication of this myth, "... The West formed a more or less invariable canon of beliefs about Islam; it decided for itself what Islam was... The important thing was that it suited the West... it gave Christendom self-respect in dealing with a civilization in many ways its superior." [Islam and the West: *The Making of an Image*, p. 270]



The first decisive battle took place at Badr, and the smaller and ill equipped Muslim force of 313 fighters crushed the arrogant Quraish army with a humiliating and decisive defeat.



In all the battles fought, and all the victories that Allah's Messenger and his companions achieved within the period of 23 years of the Prophet's mission in Makkah and then in Medinah, only 375 people were killed in this fighting.

De Lacy O'Leary comments on this fallacy, "History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of a sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated." [*Islam at the Crossroads*, London, 1923, p. 8]

Dr. Gustav LeBon states in his book, *Civilization of the Arabs* [p.127-128]:
 "...force was never a factor in the spread of the Koranic teachings, and that the Arabs left those they had subdued free to exercise their religious beliefs. If it happened that some Christian peoples embraced Islam and adopted Arabic as their language, it was mainly due to the various kinds of justice on the part of the Arab victors, with the like of which the non-Moslems were not acquainted. It was also due to the tolerance and leniency of Islam, which was unknown to the other religions." [Paraphrased from Dr.Imad-du-Deen Khalil: *What Do They Say about Islam?* p.314]

He also says, "...the early Caliphs... were remarkably kind in the way they treated the peoples of Syria, Egypt, Spain and every other country they subdued, leaving them to practice their laws and regulations and beliefs and imposing only a small Jizya in return for their protection and keeping peace among them. In truth, nations have never known merciful and tolerant conquerors like the Arabs."

If Islam did spread as a consequence to the wars imposed on the Muslims from those enemies threatening their survival, and the conquests of these oppressive and corrupt regimes that followed consequently, is this unique and unknown in history, especially when compared to other civilizations? What is truly unique of the Islamic conquests is that they generally liberated others from oppression, as in the famous answer that the companion of the Prophet ﷺ gave to the Emperor of Persia when he asked him what had brought the Muslims to their their lands. It is mentioned in the history books, "Allah has sent us to deliver you from worshiping the creation, to worshiping the Creator of the creation, and to deliver you from the constriction of this world, to the vastness of the Hereafter, and from the oppression of the religions, to the justice of Islam." [see Ibn Katheer, *Bidayah wa Nihayah*].

In direct contrast to the many examples of massacres, rapes, pillaging,

and overall injustices in history, we do not find comparable accounts in the history of these early Islamic conquests.

Thomas Carlyle, in his famous series of lectures, commented on the spread of Islam with the following words, “Much has been said of Mahomet’s propagating his Religion by the sword. It is no doubt far nobler what we have to boast of the Christian Religion, that it propagated itself peaceably in the way of preaching and conviction. Yet with all, if we take this for an argument of the truth or falsehood of a religion, there is a radical mistake in it. The sword indeed, but where will you get your sword? Every new opinion, at its starting, is precisely in a minority of one. In one man’s head alone, there it dwells as yet. One man alone of the whole world believes it; there is one man against all men. That he take a sword, and try to propagate with that, will do little for him. You must first get your sword! On the whole, a thing will propagate itself as it can. We do not find, of the Christian Religion either, that it always disdained the sword, when once it had got one. Charlemagne’s conversion of the Saxons was not by preaching. I care little about the sword, I will allow a thing to struggle for itself in this world, with any sword or tongue or implement it has, or can lay hold of. We will let it preach, and pamphleteer, and fight, and to the uttermost bestir itself, and do, beak and claws, whatsoever is in it; very sure that it will, in the long-run, conquer nothing which does not deserve to be conquered. What is better than itself, it cannot put away, but only what is worse. In this great Duel, Nature herself is umpire, and can do no wrong. The thing which is deepest-rooted in Nature, what we call truest, that thing and not the other will be found growing at last.” [*Heroes, Hero Worship, and the Heroic in History*, Lecture 2, Friday, 8th May 1840]

In comparison to the above, let us take some passages from the Holy Bible and read what the Jews and Christians hold as sacred and divine guidance about the conduct of war, and that which has guided them in the times of their expansions and conquests.

We read in the Book of Deuteronomy:

“When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall offer it terms of peace. If it agrees to make peace with you and opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall become your forced labor and shall serve you. However, if it does not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. When the Lord your God gives it into your hand, you shall strike all the men in it with the edge of the sword. Only the women and the children and the animals and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourself; and you shall use the spoil of your enemies which the Lord your God has given you. Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations nearby. Only in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you



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The Christian conquerors of Jerusalem during the Crusades slaughtered all of its Jewish and Muslim inhabitants, whereas the re-conquest of Jerusalem by Salahudeen al-Ayubi stands as a noteworthy example of magnanimity and generosity.

as an inheritance, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes. But you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the Lord your God....” [Deuteronomy 20: 10-18].

On the conquest of the city of Jericho, and the fate of the indigenous inhabitants therein we read, “So the people shouted, and priests blew the trumpets, and when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted with a great shout and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight ahead, and they took the city. They utterly destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword.” [Joshua 6:20-21]

In the towns of Makkedah and Libnah, they did the same as in Jericho. [Joshua 10: 28].

A perplexing passage of the Gospel of Mathew on a statement of Jesus reads, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace, but a sword.” [Matt. 10:35-37; and compare Luke 22:36]

What is this sword? Who has the authority to raise it? This is not clear and is open to interpretation. Perhaps it will be raised upon his second coming. Until the reign of Constantine, the early Christians were a persecuted minority apparently committed to non-violence and waiting for his imminent return. But thereafter, when Trinitarian Christianity became the official state religion in the era after Constantine, the sword was wielded openly by the State, and Christian rulers down through history conducted numerous wars and conquests in the name of religion.

The Christian principle of obedience to any authority in power is based upon the purported statement of Jesus to “render unto Caesar.” This was increasingly extended by the Christian theologians to rationalize and legitimize the right of divine rule and then, even national and secular rule, on the basis of Pauline doctrine as enshrined in his decree, “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities,

for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.” [(NIV) Romans 13:1]

The statements and facts above will be compared with some of the guidance from the Qur’an, and the Way of the Prophet (the Sunnah), to provide more proofs that indeed Islam is the religion of peace. This will be illustrated despite the fact that some disobedient Muslims have distorted, by word and deed, the image of Islam, and despite the venomous propaganda, slander and misinformation fabricated and distributed by the haters of Islam in their crusades against Islam and the Muslims.

We do not deny that aberrations and injustices took place occasionally by some of the Muslims, but the general sweep of historical trends is our evidence, as noted above. And along these lines it may be pertinent to mention two more examples, since they show a general pattern.

The Christian conquerors of Jerusalem during the Crusades slaughtered all of its Jewish and Muslim inhabitants, whereas the reconquest of Jerusalem by Salahudeen al-Ayubi stands as a noteworthy example of magnanimity and generosity.

We also have the contrast of Spain and Anatolia (Asia minor). The Christians expelled the Muslims and Jews from Spain, or put them to the sword, or forced them to convert to Christianity during the infamous “Inquisition,” the paradigm of the treatment of Muslims under Christian rule. In the same era, when the Muslims conquered what is now Turkey, they were comparatively much more tolerant, and to this day the seat of the Eastern Orthodox Church remains in Istanbul (the conquered Constantinople).

The noted orientalist, Sir Thomas Arnold, rejects this malicious propaganda about Islam saying, “...of any organized attempt to force the acceptance of Islam on the non-Muslim population, or of any systematic persecution intended to stamp out the Christian religion, we hear nothing. Had the caliphs chosen to adopt either course of action, they might have swept away Christianity as easily as Ferdinand and Isabella drove Islam out of Spain, or Louis XIV made Protestantism penal in France, or the Jews were kept out of England for 350 years. The Eastern Churches in Asia were entirely cut off from communion with the rest of Christendom throughout which no one would have been found to lift a finger on their behalf, as heretical communions. So the very survival of these Churches to the present day is a strong proof of the generally tolerant attitude of [the Muslim] governments towards them.” [Sir Thomas W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam, A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith, Westminster*, Westminster A. Constable & Co., London, 1896, p. 80]

The unfortunate reality of history is that European, rather than Islamic, historical trends have come to dominate the world, and this has led to a degree of bias and distortion.

THE MISCONCEPTION THAT WORLDLY GAINS WERE THE AIM OF THE ISLAMIC CONQUESTS



The Arab leaders of Quraish made all their offers with one condition, that the Prophet ﷺ immediately cease calling to his religion of Islam and cease opposing their Pagan beliefs in idols and superstitions.



The letters sent by the Prophet ﷺ to the prominent kings, governors and rulers of neighboring countries were very clear in allowing them to keep their positions of leadership, kingdoms, and possessions if they accepted Islam and preserved peace and justice.

A third and related accusation is that the swift Islamic conquests, which startled the known world and by which the Muslim faith was able to spread North, East and West, were primarily only for war spoils, worldly pleasures, fame and glory. Let us present some facts about the biography of the Prophet ﷺ and about Islamic principles from the historical record.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ at the beginning of his mission as the Prophet and Messenger of Allah was approached by his people in every possible way and by every possible means to back off and abandon his Call to Islam. The Prophet ﷺ was asked by the Quraish leaders, "If you desire a kingdom and dominion over all the Arabian Peninsula, we will ensure this for you. If you desire women, we offer you, freely, to marry the most beautiful virgin girls in the Arabian Peninsula." The Prophet ﷺ was also offered excesses of wealth that no one ever dreamed of possessing in the Arabian Peninsula, but he rejected all these offers. Why? The Arab leaders of Quraish made all their offers with one condition - that the Prophet ﷺ immediately cease calling to his religion of Islam and cease opposing their Pagan beliefs in idols and superstitions.

The Prophet's ﷺ simple, direct and honest reply to all their tempting and lucrative deals was full and final rejection. One famous narration of the words of the Prophet ﷺ is recorded as follows:

"By Allah! If they were able to place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand in order to convince me to abandon the call for this mission, I would not. I will never surrender, nor accept their requests, but will continue on my mission until either this Call (of the religion of Islam) becomes predominant and widely accepted and practiced in the Arabian Peninsula, or my head is removed from my body." [Ibn Hisham, *The Biography of Muhammad* ﷺ vol.1, p.170]

Another fact worthy of noting is that the letters that the Prophet ﷺ sent

to the prominent kings, governors and rulers of neighboring countries were very clear in allowing them to keep their positions of leadership, kingdoms, and possessions if they accepted Islam and preserved peace and justice.

For instance, the following famous letter to Heraclius, Emperor of the Byzantine Roman Empire, reads as follows:

“In the name of Allah, the Compassionate and Merciful.

From Muhammad, who is the servant of Allah and His Prophet, to Heraclius.

Peace be upon him who follows the right path. I invite you to the fold of Islam. Therefore, if you desire security, accept Islam. If you accept Islam, Allah shall reward you doubly and if you refuse to do so, the responsibility for the transgression of the entire nation shall be yours. [Allah, the Almighty, says]:

‘Say, ‘O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you - that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah.’ But if they turn away, then say, ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Him].’” [3:64] (Bukhari & Muslim)

The companion Anas reported that:

“Allah’s Messenger ﷺ was never approached to give a reward to a person who accepted Islam, but condoned it. Once, a man came and asked for something if he accepted Islam. The Prophet ﷺ offered him (from the Islamic treasury) a herd of sheep that was grazing in a valley between two mountains (in Madinah). As such, the man who received the reward went back to his people and told them, ‘O My people! Accept Islam, as Muhammad ﷺ gives such rewards that the recipient will never fear poverty’. [All the people related to this man accepted Islam and joined the Muslims]. Anas continued in his report saying: ‘A man would accept Islam only for materialistic gains, but as soon as he would feel the sweetness of Islam, the faith would become dearer to the heart of such a person, more than the entire world and its possessions.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Let’s also examine the amount of wealth that the Prophet ﷺ left behind as inheritance after his death. Amr bin al-Harith reported:

“The Prophet ﷺ upon his death left no silver or gold coin, slave or anything else, other than his white mule, his weapon, and a piece of land which he had declared as a charity for Muslims.” (Muslim)

In fact, the Prophet’s personal armor was bonded to a Jew as collateral against a measurement of barley for his family’s food at the time of his death. How could any



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sensible person, then, accuse a man like the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ of being infatuated with materialistic gains and possessions, ephemeral status and glory? Emperors, nationalistic leaders, their generals and warriors seek after glory, land and booty. Yet, the facts above prove that the aim of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was to spread the religion of Islam to mankind by peaceful means for their benefit, and to leave them alone in earning their livelihood and fulfilling their material needs as they pleased within the boundaries of Islam.

The companions of the Prophet ﷺ and the followers in truth, show by example of their righteous, upright and ascetic way of life, that they were not after worldly possessions and the fleeting pleasures of this life.

During the Battle of Uhud, the Prophet ﷺ commented, "Get up to gain Paradise which is as spacious as all the heavens and earth put together!" A man named Omair bin al-Hemam heard the Prophet's ﷺ statement. As such, this man raised the question to Allah's Messenger ﷺ, "O Prophet of Allah! Did you say the reward is Paradise, which is as wide as the heavens and earth put together?" The Prophet ﷺ answered positively. The Companion said, "Blessed be it! Blessed be it!" The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, asked the man, "What urged you to say what you said?" The man replied, "O Prophet of Allah! The only hope I entertain is to be one of the dwellers of this Paradise!" The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, "Surely, you are one of the dwellers of this Paradise." Upon hearing such a word from the Prophet ﷺ, the man took a few dates out of his bag to eat before the fight began. But, the man threw the dates in the air saying, "By Allah! If I lived to finish eating these dates it would be a very long life! He rushed into battle until he was martyred." (Muslim)

A man called Shaddad bin al-Hadi reported that a Bedouin came to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and expressed interest in Islam. The Bedouin soon embraced Islam. The Bedouin expressed his interest to Allah's Messenger ﷺ to immigrate with him to Madinah. As such, Allah's Messenger ﷺ asked the Muslims to take care of the Bedouin, which they did. The Muslims fought a battle against the pagans and as a

result, they won some war spoils. Allah's Messenger ﷺ distributed the booty among his Companions. The Bedouin was given a share of the booty due to his participation in the fight. The Bedouin asked, "What is this for?" Allah's Messenger ﷺ stated, "This is a share of the spoils for your participation in the fight."

The Bedouin replied, "I did not give you my pledge of allegiance for worldly gains. In fact, I followed you and embraced Islam hoping that an arrow of the enemy would hit my throat, then I would die, then I would be rewarded with Paradise." Allah's Messenger ﷺ commented on the statement of the Bedouin, "If you are truthful with Allah, surely Allah would fulfill your desire." Later on, a battle was fought, and the Bedouin was found dead with an arrow in his throat. He was carried forward and brought before the Prophet ﷺ. Allah's Messenger ﷺ inquired, "Isn't he the same Bedouin?" The people answered affirmatively. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"Verily this man was truthful with Allah. Therefore, Allah Most Exalted is Truthful with him."

Allah's Messenger ﷺ gave his cloak to be used as a shroud for the martyred Bedouin. The funeral was brought forward and they offered a funeral prayer for his soul, using the following supplication for the soul of the martyr:

"O Allah! This is Your slave-servant, who immigrated for Your cause. He was killed as a martyr. I am a witness for that." (Nisaa'e)

The incident is a testimony for this man and his likes who refused to accept his entitled share of the war booty seeking complete sincerity in his desire for the reward from Allah alone.

Omar bin Al-Khattab, the famous rightly-guided Caliph and Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, whose conquests reached into vast areas in the known world including the Roman and Persian empires, heard his stomach growl due to lack of a proper diet. Upon hearing the growl of his own stomach, Omar exclaimed, "O My dear stomach, growl or be still! By Allah! You will not get properly filled until all the Muslims have enough to eat." (Baihaqi in al-Sunan, 9/42)

The spoils of warfare the early Muslims gained by their conquests were sufficient to let them lead a prosperous and gracious life, but the real motive behind the conquests was to call other peoples to the Word of Allah and the religion of Islam. This was proven by the fact that the conquered peoples were given the freedom of choice to accept Islam as a religion and way of life, and if they did, they would be entitled to all the rights of the other Muslims. This equalitarian and universal approach was unknown in the world at that time; a world built upon racial and national empires where some were privileged nobles



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and the rest were second-class citizens, at best, and more probably servants, slaves and feudal serfs. If the conquered people rejected Islam, and remained upon their previous religion and did not wage war against the Muslims, they were required to pay the Jizyah (“Head Tax”). This was a symbolic amount of tax in exchange for the protection of their lives, properties and wealth guaranteed and secured by the Muslim government. Additionally, payers of the head tax would enjoy all public facilities offered and maintained by the Islamic government and were not required to pay any additional taxes, whereas Muslims, on the other hand, were required to pay the Zakah (obligatory charity on accumulated wealth, the sum of 2.5% of their annually accumulated funds or a specified amount of agricultural and husbandry produce). Zakah is often much more than what the amount of the head tax is annually. Thus, people actually had to pay more tax upon becoming Muslim, yet they still converted in large numbers.

If the non-Muslims in a conquered land refuse to accept either option, and choose to remain belligerent, war would be waged against them in order to remove the impediment to the delivery of the Message of Islam. Thus, a potential reason for waging a war against other non-Muslims is the fact that, some inhabitants of such non-Islamic countries may, embrace Islam, had they known its principles and mission. For this essential and noble objective, and Allah Knows best, Islam imposes on Muslims to wage wars in order to allow for the unimpeded delivery of the Message of Allah to the non-Muslims.

Khalid bin al-Waleed, the most famous and successful general of the early Muslims, died while he owned only a horse, a sword, and a servant. Where could any one find a trace of materialistic life in the inheritance of such a great Muslim general and warrior?

The books of Islamic history are replete with numerous narratives of men of this high caliber that confirm that worldly gains were not the objective of the early Muslims. Rather, they hoped for the reward from Allah, the Most Generous and Bountiful, for their sincerity in calling to Islam, the divine religion of guidance from Allah. As was revealed and promised by the Prophet ﷺ when he said:

“If a single soul, male or female, is guided through you to Islam, it is better for you than the choice red camels (i.e. the most prized possessions on earth).” (Muslim & others)

There are many reliable accounts of early Muslims willingly giving up their entire wealth and life savings as charity upon their conversion to Islam. The early members of the Quraish tribe were noteworthy in this regard. Others were deprived of their wealth because their families boycotted them in anger for their embracement of Islam. Others had all their possessions confiscated upon immigration to Medina. Others were extremely involved in the work of Islamic propagation and gave their time and wealth to this activity.

To “cite” one example, in the major and decisive battle of Nahāvand, a companion of the Prophet ﷺ named an-Nu'man bin Muqrin al-Mozani offered the following supplication, “O Allah! Honor and Glorify Your Divine religion, and make those victorious who believe in You. O Allah! Let me be the first to be martyred in the battle. O Allah! Grant my eyes the true pleasure to see the best conquest that grants honor and dignity to Islam. O people! Put faith in Allah, He will certainly shower you with His Mercy”. Do you see any materialistic greed and desire for personal glory in this supplication? The main objective is surely to seek the pleasure of Allah and the sincere wish to call others to accept Islam for their own benefit.

The Ruler of Egypt, the Muqawqis, sent his messenger to the Muslim General, Amr bin al-Aas who conquered Egypt. The Muslim General was holding the Babylon fortress in siege. The Egyptian Ruler asked his spies to report on what they observed. There was general consensus on their observation. They said, “We have noticed that they prefer death over life. They prefer to be modest and humble, rather than proud and arrogant. We have noticed that they have no interest among them in worldly gains and possessions. They sit on the floor, and their leader sits like one of them. No one could differentiate between the leader and the led, the master and the slave. They are all almost alike, irrespective of their ranks.”

These, and many more, examples show that accumulation of the spoils of war and self-aggrandizement were not the objectives of early Muslims. Rather the zeal of the mission of Islam to guide mankind propelled them from their native homeland to the surrounding areas, carrying with them the universal message of Islam.



JUST WAR THEORY AND PRACTICE IN ISLAM

Allah has limited the application of the times to go to war to five situations. “Jihad” according to Islamic terminology, means to strive and exert one’s utmost effort in the cause of Allah.



The wars of mankind historically have most often been waged as an act of aggression and for unjust personal and national vendettas; for imperial, colonial and corporate expansion and hegemony; for the control, exploitation, plunder and theft of material and human resources.

Islam, as we explained earlier, is a divine religion of submission to Allah and His revealed guidance for man, which teaches peace and mercy. Although Islam calls for peaceful interactions with all peoples of all countries, engagement in war may become necessary at times as a final remedy. Allah has limited the application of the times to go to war to five situations. “Jihad” according to Islamic terminology, means to strive and exert one’s utmost effort in the cause of Allah; it can apply to combat, but is by no means limited to this action. The objective of Jihad, when referring to combat, is to defend the Muslims and allow their right to deliver the invitation to Islam. It may also be waged in defense against aggression, a legitimate reason within certain conditions.

The wars of mankind historically have most often been waged as an act of aggression and for unjust personal and national vendettas; for imperial, colonial and corporate expansion and hegemony; for the control, exploitation, plunder and theft of material and human resources; or for mere fame, glory and arrogance. Islam does not condone any of these war objectives and considers them all illegitimate and worthy of just retribution. There are only five legitimate reasons for Jihad, as follows:

01 Defense against attack upon life, property, and wealth of the Muslim nation and national borders. This is based on the verse revealed in the Qurán:

“Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah does not love the transgressors.” (2:190)

This is also based on the tradition of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who said:

“Whoever is killed while attempting to protect his belongings is a martyr, whoever is killed while attempting to protect himself is a martyr, whoever is killed while attempting to protect his religion is a martyr, and whoever is killed while attempting to protect his family is a martyr.”

(Tirmidhi, Abu Da’ood, Nisaa’l & Ibn Majah)

02 Defense against oppression or those assisting in the oppression of the weak and defenseless. Jihad of this type has a clear and obligatory humanitarian objective. Allah, Most Majestic, states in His Qur'an:

“And what is [the matter] with you that you fight not in the cause of Allah and [for] the oppressed among men, women, and children who say, ‘Our Lord, take us out of this city of oppressive people and appoint for us from Yourself a protector and appoint for us from Yourself a helper.’” (4:75)

This command to resist aggression and persecution is also based on the verse revealed in the Qur'an:

“Those who believed, immigrated, and fought for the Faith, with their property and their persons, in the cause of Allah, as well as those who gave them asylum and aid, these are all friends and protectors, one of another. As to those who believed, but did not immigrate; you do not owe them the duty of protection until they come into exile. But, if they seek your aid in religion, it is your duty to help them, except against a people with whom you have a treaty of mutual alliance. And remember that Allah sees all that you do.” (8:72)

03 In retaliation to the breach and violation of solemnly concluded covenants, pacts and treaties. This is based on the verse revealed in the Qur'an that states:

“And if they break their oaths after their treaty and defame your religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief, for indeed, there are no oaths [sacred] to them; [fight them that] they might cease. Would you not fight a people who broke their oaths and determined to expel the Messenger, and they had begun [the attack upon] you the first time? Do you fear them? But Allah has more right that you should fear Him, if you are [truly] believers.” (9:12-13)

04 Disciplinary actions against those Muslims who aggress and start hostilities without any just cause, and continue obstinately on the path of aggression as Allah the Almighty states:

“If two parties among the Believers fall into a quarrel, make peace between them. But, if one of the parties transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight against the one that transgresses until it complies with the Command of Allah. If it complies, make peace between them with justice, and be just and fair, for Allah loves those who are just and fair.” (49:9)

This type of jihad proves that the purpose of jihad is always for law and justice since it is waged even against Muslim criminals.



05 For the invitation to the religion of Islam when peaceful means are impossible. This type is only a last resort after a series of efforts proves to the Muslim ruler that peaceful means have become impossible.

The first step is an invitation to allow the peaceful preaching of Islam, following the practice (sunnah) of the Prophet ﷺ when, as mentioned above, he had sent letters to the surrounding rulers inviting them to Islam. If the ruler refused this invitation, he and his people are offered the option of becoming dhimmies, that is, people of the protected non-Muslim community governed by its own religious laws, but obliged to abide by the general Islamic laws to maintain law, order and security, and to pay the Jizya tax in lieu of performing military service¹. Only when the non-Muslims refused these conditions did the Muslim ruler have grounds for the commencement of open battle for the fact that they oppose the peaceful propagation of Islam.

Defense against oppression or those assisting in the oppression of the weak and defenseless. Jihad of this type has a clear and obligatory humanitarian objective.



If at any time the enemies of Islam and the Muslims cease their hostilities and aggressions and sue for, or accept, just terms of peace, Muslims are obliged to stop the state of war.

Islam is the universal faith and religion of Allah, the Creator and Lord - Sustainer of mankind, and therefore is not for any specific people, but for all. Acceptance of Islam and conversion is not the mission or objective that Muslims seek because guidance is only in the Hands of Allah, Most Wise and Sublime. All people must have a chance to hear about the goodness, justice, brotherhood, love, equality and peace that Islam teaches. The Benevolent and Almighty Lord of Man states in His Qur'an: "And fight them until there is no more temptation, strife or oppression, and there prevails justice and faith in Allah altogether and everywhere. But if they cease, verily, Allah sees all that they do." (8:39)

If at any time the enemies of Islam and the Muslims cease their hostilities and aggressions and sue for, or accept, just terms of peace, Muslims are obliged to stop the state of war, start negotiations, and it becomes unlawful for them to pursue any course of warfare against them. Allah, the Wise and Omniscient said:

"Except for those who take refuge with a people between yourselves

¹ If a community wishes to fight alongside the Muslims against aggressors, then they are not required to pay the Jizya, and this historically did happen.

and whom is a treaty or those who come to you, their hearts strained at [the prospect of] fighting you or fighting their own people. And if Allah had willed, He could have given them power over you, and they would have fought you. So if they remove themselves from you and do not fight you and offer you peace, then Allah has not made for you a cause [for fighting] against them.” (4:90)

The causes of legitimate warfare are thus identified above, and other verses in this context are as follows:

Allah, the Great, said:

“They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say, ‘Fighting therein is a great [transgression] but a greater [transgression] in the sight of Allah is to prevent mankind from following the Way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to prevent access to the Holy Mosque [in Makkah], and to drive out its inhabitants and [trying to force Muslims to revert from their religion] is worse than killing.’” (2:217)

Allah, the Great, says:

“And fight them until there is no more [idol worship] and worship is for Allah. But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against the tyrants.” (2:193)

Allah, the Exalted, says:


“Those who believe, they fight in the Way of Allah, and those who disbelieve, they fight in for their false gods. So fight you against the followers of Satan. Indeed, the plot of Satan is feeble.” (4:76)

All other types of wars, as mentioned above, resulting in destruction and great loss of life and property, are banned and declared unlawful in Islam. Wars waged to arrogantly demonstrate force and supposed superiority are also prohibited in Islam. As Allah, the Exalted, says:


“And do not be like those who came forth from their homes insolently and to be seen by people and avert [them] from the way of Allah. And Allah is encompassing of what they do.” (8:47)

Although Islam permits fighting for the necessary reasons mentioned above, it lays down strict rules and regulations for the conduct of warfare on both the leaders and the soldiers, and directs all to observe the noble Islamic manners and ethics even in this most difficult of times. The Muslim fighters are permitted to target and kill only those who fight against them or assist and support other fighters in the battlefield. As for elderly people, minors, women, the sick, wounded, or those who isolate and seclude themselves in worship by belief in non-violence; all these categories of people who are non-combatants are not to



 All people must have a chance to hear about the goodness, justice, brotherhood, love, equality and peace that Islam teaches.



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be targeted, killed or even bothered in any manner by Muslim fighters. It is prohibited to kill an enemy soldier who is wounded and fallen on a battlefield as well. Islam bans mutilation of the bodies and cadavers of all killed enemies.

Furthermore, Islam bans the killing of the enemies' animals, and the destruction of their agriculture and dwellings and infrastructure, except in very specific circumstances necessary for the immediate battle. Additionally, Islam prohibits intentional pollution of the water sources of the enemies and their wells. Islam considers all the aforementioned activities as acts leading to the disruption of the society and unnecessary hardship on the common people. As Allah states in His Qur'an, the intention of this life for a Muslim is to seek the life of the Hereafter through good deeds:

"But seek with that which Allah has bestowed upon you, the Home of the Hereafter, and do not forget your due portion in this World. Do good as Allah has been good to you, and do not seek occasions for mischief in the land. Indeed Allah does not love those who do mischief." (28:77)

From among the many teachings and guidance from Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, to the fighters, are the following:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ stated that there is only one legitimate intention for combat, when he said:

"He who strives and fights in order to make the Word of Allah, the Most Supreme, is the one who strives and fights for the cause of Allah." (Bukhari & Muslim)

When a woman was found killed in one of these battles, the Messenger of Allah mentioned that this one was not fighting and forbade the killing of women and children. (Muslim)

He also gave the following instructions:

"Begin your fight with the Name of Allah against those who declare the state of disbelief in Allah. Fight against them, but do not breach your contracts or covenants. Do not mutilate the bodies of the fighters killed. Do not kill a newly born baby." (Muslim)

And he said:

“Go forward in the name of God. Do not kill an elderly person, nor a child, nor a woman, and do not exceed the bounds.” (Malik & Abu Dawood)

The eminent companion, Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq the first Muslim Caliph of the Muslim State, gave the following advice to the Muslim army he deployed, saying, “Wait before you leave. I would like to give you the following advice. Do not betray or act treacherously. Do not steal from the war booty before its proper and lawful distribution. Do not breach your pledges and covenants with your enemies. Do not mutilate the bodies of the killed fighters. Do not kill a child, a woman, or an elderly person. Do not cut or burn a palm tree [or any other tree for any reason]. Do not cut a fruit-bearing tree. Do not slaughter a sheep, a cow or a camel, except for your food. You may come across people who seclude themselves for the worship of God, leave them alone. Do not bother them or cause any disruption to their lives.” [Reported by at-Tabari, Vol.3, p.226, and others]

Similarly, Muslims must declare war prior to the beginning of the fight. This is because Muslims are neither betrayers, nor dishonest fighters. Islam imposes some of the best of war ethics and morals onto the Muslim fighters. Islam requires full adherence to justice and no oppression to the fighting enemies.

Omar bin Abdul-Aziz, may Allah have mercy on him, one of the early Umayyad Muslim Caliphs, was approached by a delegation of fighters of the city of Samarqand who complained about the Muslim leader, Qutaibah, who had taken them by a surprise attack. The Caliph sent a letter to the governor of the concerned area commanding him to assign a judge to investigate this matter, and if the judge deemed that Muslims should get out of the city and leave it as a result of any breach of trust, they must comply with the judgment. The governor of Samarqand assigned a judge named Jomai' bin Hader al-Baji who passed his verdict that the Muslims should leave the city which they had conquered. The Muslim army commander must first declare war openly and with a proper proclamation, prior to invading the land and launching their attack upon the people of Samarqand, give them a chance to prepare themselves for the fight and to know the reasons for the attack. The people of Samarqand, seeing the just dealing of the Muslims, decided against restarting hostilities and accepted the terms of Islamic rule. [see: *Countries of the Conquests*, by Balathuri, p.428]

As with reference to captives and prisoners, always a sensitive and divisive subject between warring parties, Islam strictly forbids intimidation, torture, mutilation, or starving them to death. Indeed, feeding them is a virtue and worthy of the reward of Allah as he says:

“And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive; saying, ‘We feed you for the sake of Allah alone. We do not desire from you reward nor thanks.’” (76:8-9)



The Islamic leader reserves the full freedom to release the prisoners of war free without ransom, set terms for their ransom, or release them in exchange for the release of Muslim prisoners of war. This is based on the verse revealed in the Qur'an:

“At length, when you have thoroughly subdued them, then secure their bonds, and either [confer] favor afterward or ransom [them] until the war lays down its burdens. That [is the command]. And if Allah had willed, He could have taken vengeance upon them [Himself], but [He ordered armed struggle] to test some of you by means of others....” (47:4)

As for the defeated non-Muslim residents of the conquered countries, the People of the Book like the Christians and Jews, were treated with respect, and their security, dignity and honor was maintained. Even their wealth and properties were secured from aggression and unjust confiscation. They and their women were never molested or unduly humiliated in any manner. The homes and dwellings for their families were left unharmed. In summary, they were dealt with fairly and justly. Their originally divine faith was honored and dignified, and if they chose to remain upon it, they were responsible to respect and obey the Islamic tenants and religion, and maintain obedience to the public good, security and rule of equitable law. This is based on many verses and teachings, including what Allah said as follows:

“[They are] those who, if We give them authority in the land, establish prayer and give zakah and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. And to Allah belongs the outcome of all matters.” (22:41)

One of the best evidences reflecting these teachings is the example set by Omar bin al-Khattab, the second Muslim Caliph, and the conqueror of the Roman and Persian empires, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem upon entering it as a victor. Tabari reported that he wrote to them as follows:

“In the Name of Allah, the Most Compassionate and Most Gracious.

This is the assurance of safety which the servant of God, Omar, the Commander of the Faithful, has given to the people of Jerusalem. He has given them an assurance of safety for themselves, for their property, their churches, their crosses, the sick and healthy of the city

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Islam bans the killing of the enemies' animals, and the destruction of their agriculture and dwellings and infrastructure, except in very specific circumstances necessary for the immediate battle.

and for all the rituals which belong to their religion. Their churches will not be inhabited by Muslims and will not be destroyed. Neither they, nor the land on which they stand, nor their cross, nor their property will be damaged. They will not be forcibly converted. No Jew will live with them in Jerusalem².

The people of Jerusalem must pay the taxes like the people of other cities and must expel the Byzantines and the robbers. Those of the people of Jerusalem who want to leave with the Byzantines, take their property and abandon their churches and crosses will be safe until they reach their place of refuge. The villagers may remain in the city if they wish but must pay taxes like the citizens. Those who wish may go with the Byzantines and those who wish may return to their families. Nothing is to be taken from them before their harvest is reaped.

If they pay their taxes according to their obligations, then the conditions laid out in this letter are under the covenant of God, are the responsibility of His Prophet, of the caliphs and of the faithful. This is witnessed by Khalid Ibn Al-Walid, 'Amr Ibn Al-'Aas, Abdur-Rahman Ibn Al-'Awf and Mu'awiyah Ibn Abi Sufyan. Executed in the year 15 Hijri."

Surely, there is nothing comparable in the recorded history of mankind. We believe that this is the best form of nobility, justice and tolerance from the conqueror's side towards the vanquished. Most conquerors strip the defeated people from all rights, freedoms and honor, including the right to a decent life, subjugating them to labor as slaves or second-class citizens and to serve the conquerors' interests. Omar bin al-Khattab could have easily dictated harsh terms and conditions against the defeated Christians at the time, but instead he followed the lead of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in his generosity and magnanimity when he conquered Makkah after years of dealing with their treacherous warfare and bitter persecution. This justice was aimed at the noble goal of propagating the word of Allah and not gaining personal or national advantage. These examples, among others, illustrate the justice, tolerance, and beauty of Islam, the divinely revealed religion of Allah for universal and just peace. The laws of Allah, the Almighty, must apply to all people without any exception or favoritism.

Non-Muslims living under the Islamic rule are obligated to pay the Jizyah (sometimes referred to as head tax) which is a minimal, symbolic amount imposed on the non-Muslim residents who willingly choose to maintain their previous faith and live under the government of the Muslim State. The basis of this is found in the verse of Allah:

² An interesting clause that was demanded by the Christians of Jerusalem.



Non-Muslim residents of the conquered countries, the People of the Book like the Christians and Jews, were treated with respect, and their security, dignity and honor was maintained. Even their wealth and properties were secured from aggression and unjust confiscation.



Most conquerors strip the defeated people from all rights, freedoms and honor, including the right to a decent life, subjugating them to labor as slaves or second-class citizens and to serve the conquerors' interests.

“Fight against those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which has been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of truth, from among the people of the Scripture, until they pay the jizya willingly while they are humbled.” (9:29)

This tax is of three types as calculated by the currency of the time:

- ▶ The head tax of the rich and the affluent people. This is estimated as forty-eight dirhams of silver taken from each individual annually.
- ▶ The head tax of the middle-class individuals such as merchants, businessmen, and farmers. This is estimated as twenty-four dirhams of silver taken from each individual annually.
- ▶ The head tax taken from the laborers and craftsmen who are in business. This is estimated as twelve dirhams of silver taken from each individual annually.

The Jizya tax is imposed on the non-Muslims living in the Muslim territory as a symbolic payment for the guarantee that their honor, integrity, wealth and life will be protected by the Muslim government against external enemies and internal violations, and because they are exempted from serving in the military. This protection includes all rights and obligations as specified and agreed upon contractually. In comparison, Muslims have additional duties, including the obligation to serve in the military when required, and to pay the Zakah (obligatory alms) and other forms of sadaqah (charity).

Khalid bin al-Waleed, one of the most renowned Muslim war generals, in one of his contractual pledges to the non-Muslims living in the Islamic State said, “I have given you my pledge of trust to accept your head tax and in return, to protect you against all possible odds (that we protect ourselves against). If we succeed in offering you the protection we would take the head tax. If not, then you would not have to pay it until we can provide you such protection.” (Balathuri’s history)

L. Veccia Vaglieri, in her book entitled, *Defending Islam*, says, “Conquered people by Islamic governments were given full freedom to maintain and preserve their faith and traditions provided that individuals who elected this option and did not accept Islam as a way of life, would pay a fair head tax to the Islamic government. Head tax was less than what Muslims paid to their government. Non Muslims, residing under Islamic ruled state, paid such tax in exchange for the general blanket protection offered by the Islamic government extended for its own people.”

One must remember that the three types of the *jizya* tax calculated above were for the earning members, whereas other classes of the non-Muslims - namely the poor, needy, minors, women, the monks, priests, rabbis, the permanently disabled, and the blind - were exempted entirely from the payment of this head tax, and their protection, needs and general welfare was undertaken free of cost by the Islamic Treasury.

For example, Omar bin al-Khattab was sitting once when an old Jew passed by asking people to give him charity. Omar asked about the welfare of the individual and was informed that the man was living as a non-Muslim under the rule of the Muslim state and protection, paying head tax. Omar declared, “We have not been fair to you! We have imposed head tax on you and charged you such tax when you were young and able, and now we are not providing you with the proper social care and welfare (when you are old and disabled).”

As a result, Omar took the man to his own home, fed him and offered him proper clothing. Thereafter he commanded the Muslim Treasurer, “Look into the case of this man, and those of similar situation, and give them a sufficient income from the Islamic Treasury, along with their families.”

Allah, the Almighty, stated in His Qur’an:

“Zakah expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakah] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveler - an obligation [imposed] by Allah. And Allah is Knowing and Wise.” (9:60)

The poor are the Muslims. The needy are the People of the Book. This is one interpretation of this command of Allah. [Abu Yousef, *al-Kharaj*, p.126]

In Khalid bin al-Waleed’s pledge, may Allah be pleased with him, to the non-Muslims of al-Heerah, in Iraq, the following was written, “Any non-Muslim living under the protection of the



Muslim empire who grows old and becomes unable to work, or becomes a terminal patient, or becomes bankrupt in such a manner that he would be entitled for charity by his own people's faith, will no longer be required to pay the head tax. Such individuals will be provided their essential needs from the Islamic Treasury, along with their families." [Abu Yousef, *Al-Kharaj*, p.144]

Lis Lichtenstadter, a German scholar, in her book titled, *Islam and the Modern Age*, states, "The option given to the people of Persia and Rome or the West, during the time of the spread of Islam, was not to be killed by the sword or accept Islam. In fact, the option was either to accept Islam as a way of life, or else to pay the head tax (in exchange for protection). This is a praiseworthy plan which was applied later on in England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth." [*Islam and Modern Age*, p. 67. See also, Ahmad Shalabi, *Comparative Religious Studies*, vol. 3, p.174]

Non-Muslims living under the rule of the Islamic state are fully entitled for full protection and respect for their rights. Allah the Almighty states in the Qur'an:

"It may be that God will grant love and friendship between you and those whom you hold as enemies. For God has power over all things; And God is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful. God forbids you not, with regard to those who do not fight you for your Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them, for God loves those who are just. God only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for your Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support others in driving you out, from turning to them for friendship and protection. Those who turn to them (in these circumstances) do wrong." (60:7-9)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"The one who wrongs a person protected by a treaty or impairs his right or overworks him or forcibly takes something from him, I will be his prosecutor on the Day of Judgment."

(Abu Dawood & Nasa'ee)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:


"The one who kills a person protected by a treaty will never smell the scent of heaven though its scent is found at the distance of forty years." (Bukhari)

وَيُطْعَمُونَ بِالطَّعَامِ عَلَى حُبِّ مَسْكِينٍ وَبَيْتِ مَسْكِينٍ وَاسْتِئْذَانِ


"And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, saying, 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone, and we do not desire from you reward nor thanks.'" (76:8-9)

ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES ENJOIN MERCY AND CONDEMN AGGRESSION



 The Divine religion of Islam is a religion of peace, mercy, tolerance, kindness and benevolence. It stands upright against all brutality, wanton violence, and viciousness in order to promote and protect justice and peace.



 The teachings of Islam call all Muslims to show mercy and kindness to all of the creation.

The Divine religion of Islam is a religion of peace, mercy, tolerance, kindness and benevolence. It stands upright against all brutality, wanton violence, and viciousness in order to promote and protect justice and peace. Allah, the Most Benevolent, urged all Muslims to follow the pattern of Allah's Messenger ﷺ as follows:

“By mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].” (3:159)

Allah, the Wise and Sublime, characterizes the mission of Muhammad ﷺ as a mercy to all, when He said:

“We have not sent you but as a Mercy for all creation.” (21:107)

The teachings of Islam call all Muslims to show mercy and kindness to all of the creation. The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said:

“The merciful and kind people will receive the Mercy of the Merciful Lord, Allah. Be merciful to people on earth, and Allah, Who is in Heaven, will grant you His Mercy.” (Tirmidhi)

And in another version he said:

“Allah would be Merciful to the merciful people. Be merciful to those on earth, and the One in Heaven would be Merciful to you.” (Tirmidhi & Abu Dawood)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“You must be gentle. Verily, gentleness is not in anything except that it beautifies it, and it is not removed from anything except that it disgraces it.” (Ahmad)

The Messenger of Allah, may the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him, said, “He who is deprived of forbearance and gentleness is, in fact, deprived of all good.” [Reported by Muslim].

The Prophet ﷺ said to his wife while educating her:

“O Aisha, Allah is gentle and He loves gentleness. He rewards for gentleness what is not granted for harshness, and He does not reward anything else like it.” (Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to Ashaj Abdul-Qais, may Allah be pleased with him:

“You possess two qualities that Allah loves, clemency and tolerance.” (Muslim)

Furthermore, Islam requires that mercy and kind treatment should be meted out to all people, even to the enemies of the Muslims captured during battle, as in the command of the Prophet of Allah ﷺ when he said, “Be kind and merciful to the captives.” [see Al-Mu’jammal-Kabeer, 22/393].

If the Prophet ﷺ gave this command to Muslims concerning the hostile enemies who are fighting against them, then the treatment towards the peaceful people would naturally be even better.

Never is any life to be taken unjustly. As Allah said:

“And do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right. And whoever is killed unjustly - We have given his heir authority, but let him not exceed limits in [the matter of] taking life. Indeed, he has been supported [by the law].” (17:33)

More on this topic will be presented below, but here let us note that Islamic mercy and kindness, not to mention the prohibition of taking life unjustly, is not limited to human beings, but includes animals and all living creatures as well.

The Prophet of Allah, may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, noticed someone shooting a little bird for fun and then leaving it to die for no reason, whereupon he said:

“This little bird would supplicate its case before Allah the Almighty on the Day of Judgment, saying: ‘O My Lord! This man killed me for no reason to benefit by my death (like hunting for food which is allowed).’” (Ahmed & Nasa’ee)

The companion Abdullah ibn Omar is reported to have passed by a group of young men who had captured a bird and set it up as a shooting target. He said: “Who placed this bird as a shooting target? May Allah’s Curse descend on the person who did this! The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

‘Allah, the Almighty curses the person who captures and sets any living creature as a shooting target.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ commanded Muslims to show kindness in every action, even when slaughtering an animal, by the words:

“Allah, the Almighty, prescribes perfection in every action... If you slaughter an animal



[for eating], perfect your act of slaughtering. Sharpen your knife and be good, kind, and merciful to the animal you are about to slaughter. Give the slaughtered animal the best comfort you can while being slaughtered.” (Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Once a man suffered from thirst while he was walking on a journey. When he found a well, he climbed down into it and drank from it. Then he came out and saw a dog lolling its tongue from thirst and licking the ground. The man said, ‘This dog has suffered thirst just as I have suffered from it.’ He climbed down into the well, filled his shoe with water, and caught it in his mouth as he climbed up. Then he gave the dog a drink. Allah appreciated this deed, so he forgave him.” It was said, “O Messenger of Allah, is there a reward for charity even to the animals?” The Prophet said, “In every living being there is a reward for charity.” (Bukhari)

If the Prophet ﷺ gave this command to Muslims concerning the hostile enemies who are fighting against them, then the treatment towards the peaceful people would naturally be even better.



Islamic mercy and kindness, not to mention the prohibition of taking life unjustly, is not limited to human beings, but includes animals and all living creatures as well.

Conversely a woman deserved the penalty and the wrath of Allah, the Almighty, and was to become one of the dwellers of the Fire of Hell, as a result of her cruelty to a cat. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ is reported to have said:

“A woman entered the Fire because of a cat which she had confined, neither giving it food, nor setting it free to eat from the vermin of the earth.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

The list of the Prophet’s ﷺ commands to Muslims to be kind, merciful, and kindhearted even to animals is endless. We only cite above a few examples. Some other examples include:

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, in great disappointment, while passing by a donkey that had been tattooed on its face:

“May Allah’s Curse descend on the person who placed this tattoo on the face of the donkey.” (Muslim)

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ is reported to have said while passing by a camel that appeared extremely thin from hunger:

“Be mindful and honor the Commandments of Allah concerning these animals, which can’t express their needs by speech. Ride them while

you keep them in good shape, and slaughter and eat them while you keep them in good shape.” (Abu Da’ood)

If such was the mercy and kindness to animals and living creatures, what about the human being, who is given preference, honor and respect over all other creatures of Allah’s creation? The Omniscient and Almighty Allah honored man above all others, and enumerated His bounties to mankind:

“We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference.” (17:70)

Indeed by obedience to Allah and the guidance revealed to His Messengers, man is honored, but by disobedience he falls into disgrace and dishonors himself by shameful and obnoxious deeds.

وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ
لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ

“If you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult them in the matter. And when you have decided, then rely upon Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who rely [upon Him].” (3:159)

CONCLUSION



Look at the greatness of Islam, and the happiness one finds in their heart when they embrace it. This happiness remains in the heart and makes one forget about all the pains and troubles that they may have been through in their lives.



Look at the greatness of Islam, and the happiness one finds in their heart when they embrace it. This happiness remains in the heart and makes one forget about all the pains and troubles that they may have been through in their lives. The joy the Muslims feel upon applying their faith is far greater than any materialistic joy one can possibly experience in this life. If you really want to experience this happiness in your life, then you've got to take that bold step.

Witness the following words of Abu Sufyan Bin Harb when he said, "Heraclius, upon receiving a letter from Prophet Muhammad ﷺ called for us while we were in Shaam." He said, "Heraclius's messenger found us somewhere in the Greater Syria area, so he took me and my companions to Jerusalem, and we were admitted into the presence of Heraclius. We found him sitting in his royal court wearing a crown, surrounded by the senior Byzantine dignitaries. He said to his translator. 'Ask them who amongst them is a close relation to the man who claims to be a prophet.'"

Abu Sufyan added,

"I replied, 'I am the nearest relative to him.' He asked, 'What degree of relationship do you have with him?' I replied, 'He is my cousin,' and there was none from the tribe of Abd Manaf in the caravan except myself. Heraclius said, 'Let him come nearer.' He then ordered that my companions stand behind me near my shoulder and said to his translator, 'Tell his companions that I am going to ask this man about the one who claims to be a prophet. If he tells a lie, they should contradict him immediately.'"

Abu Sufyan added,

"By Allah, had it not been for shame that my companions brand me a liar, I would not have spoken the truth about him when he asked me. But I considered it shameful to be called a liar by my companions, so I told the truth."

"He then said to his translator, 'Ask him what kind of family he belongs to.' I replied, 'He belongs to a noble family amongst us.' He said, 'Has anybody else amongst you ever claimed the same before him?' I re-

plied, 'No.' He said, 'Have you ever blamed him for telling lies before he claimed what he claimed?' I replied, 'No.' He said, 'Was anybody amongst his ancestors a king?' I replied, 'No.' He said, 'Do the noble or the poor follow him?' I replied, 'It is the poor who follow him.' He said, 'Are they increasing or decreasing (daily)?' I replied, 'They are increasing.' He said, 'Does anybody amongst those who embrace his religion become displeased and then discard his religion?' I replied, 'No.' He said, 'Does he break his promises?' I replied, 'No, but we are now at truce with him and we are afraid that he may betray us.'"

Abu Sufyan added,

"Other than the last sentence, I could find no opportunity to say anything against him."

Heraclius then asked, "Have you ever had a war with him?" I replied, 'Yes.' He said, 'What was the outcome of your battles with him?' I replied, 'Sometimes he was victorious and sometimes we.' He said, 'What does he order you to do?' I said, 'He tells us to worship God alone, and not to worship others along with Him, and to leave all that our forefathers used to worship. He orders us to pray, give in charity, be chaste, keep promises and return what is entrusted to us.'

"When I had said that, Heraclius said to his translator, 'Say to him, 'I asked you about his lineage and your reply was that he belonged to a noble family. In fact, all the Messengers before came from the noblest lineage of their nations.

Then I questioned you whether anybody else amongst you had claimed such a thing, and your reply was in the negative. If the answer had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man was following a claim that had been said before him.

When I asked you whether he was ever blamed for telling lies, your reply was in the negative, so I took it for granted that a person who did not tell a lie to people could never tell a lie about God.

Then I asked you whether any of his ancestors was a king, your reply was in the negative, and if it had been in the affirmative, I would have thought that this man wanted to take back his ancestral kingdom.

When I asked you whether the rich or the poor people followed him, you replied that it was the poor who followed him. In fact, such are the followers of the Messengers. Then I asked you whether his followers were increasing or decreasing. You replied that they were increasing. In fact, this is the result of true faith till it is complete [in all respects].

Then I asked you whether there was anybody who, after embracing his religion, became displeased and discarded his religion, and your reply was in the negative. In fact, this is the sign of true faith, for when its pleasure enters and mixes in the hearts completely, nobody will be displeased with it.



And I asked you whether he had ever broken his promise. You replied in the negative. And such are the Messengers; they never break their promises.

When I asked you whether you fought with him and he fought with you, you replied that he did and that sometimes he was victorious and sometimes you. Indeed, such are the Messengers; they are put to trials, yet the final victory is always theirs.

Then I asked you what he ordered you. You replied that he ordered you to worship God alone and not to worship others along with Him, to leave all that your forefathers used to worship, to offer prayers, to speak the truth, to be chaste, to keep promises, and to return what is entrusted to you. These are really the qualities of a prophet who, I knew [from the previous Scriptures] would appear, but I did not know that he would be from amongst you. If what you say is true, he will very soon occupy the ground under my feet, and if I knew that I would reach him definitely, I would go immediately to meet him. And were I with him, then I would certainly wash his feet.”

Abu Sufyan added,

“Heraclius then asked for the letter of the Messenger of God and it was read. Its contents were the following:

‘I begin with the name of God, the most Beneficent, the most Merciful. [This letter is] from Muhammad, the servant of God, and His Messenger, to Heraclius, the Ruler of the Byzantine Empire. Peace be upon the followers of guidance. I invite you to surrender to God. Accept Islam and you will be safe. Accept Islam and God will bestow on you a double reward. But if you reject this invitation of Islam, you shall be responsible for misguiding your nation.

‘Say, ‘O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you - that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah.’ But if they turn away, then say, ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Him].’” (3:64)

Abu Sufyan added,

“When Heraclius had finished his speech, there was a great hue and cry caused by the Byzantine dignitaries surrounding him, and there was so much noise that I did not understand what they said. So, we were ordered out of the court.”

“When I went out with my companions and we were alone, I said to them, ‘Verily, Ibn Abi Kabsha’s⁽¹⁾ affair has gained power. This is the King of the Romans fearing him.’”

Abu Sufyan added:

“By God, I became surer and surer that his religion would be victorious till I ended up accepting Islam.” (Bukhari #2782)

1 A nickname of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

ISLAMIC GENERAL PRINCIPLES CHAMPION COMPREHENSIVE PEACE



For peace to be true and comprehensive, it must encompass all spheres of human activity fulfilling the needs of life in a balanced and just manner. Islamic laws and teachings include the following principles, legal precepts and guidance - presented as examples only - all of which aim at promoting universal and just peace.

01 RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE

Islam values all human life, and for its protection imposes the death penalty [Qisaas] for premeditated and intentional murder of an innocent soul.

Islam values all human life, and for its protection imposes the death penalty [Qisaas] for premeditated and intentional murder of an innocent soul. Accidental and unintentional killing has a different penalty, which is called “Diyah” (blood-money or retribution), defined as a pre-determined sum of money, given to the heirs of the person killed. This blood-money is by no means an equal for the loss of the person killed, but it is rather a financial compensation for the harm they suffer as a result of the loss of their loved one.



Accidental and unintentional killing has a different penalty, which is called “Diyah” (blood-money or retribution), defined as a pre-determined sum of money, given to the heirs of the person killed.

Atonement (kaffarah) is to be performed by the killer by emancipation of a slave, or observation of a continuous fast for two consecutive months to expiate the sin of his mistake. If the murderer cannot observe this fast for a legitimate reason, he is obliged to feed sixty poor people a reasonably sufficient meal. This atonement is an act of worship by which the sinner seeks pardon and forgiveness from Allah, Most Merciful, for his unintentional sin of killing a human. All this is done to demonstrate the sacredness of human life.

Islam prescribes the ultimate penalty for taking a human life intentionally since, if a potential killer realizes that he or she will be killed in retaliation for the crime, perhaps they will reconsider before committing murder. If the penalty were anything less than strict retribution, the criminals would continue boldly in their crimes. The same applies to all capital and corporal punishments, called Hudood (castigatory) punishments in Islam. Castigatory punishments in Islam are efficient, just penalties and successful deterrents for the noble reason of preserving and

maintaining the security of human life, as Allah, the Most wise, states in His Qur'an: "And there is for you in legal retribution [saving of] life, O you [people] of understanding, that you may become righteous." (2:179)

And Allah, Most Beneficent, said:

"Thus, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. And our messengers had certainly come to them with clear proofs. Then indeed many of them, [even] after that, throughout the land, were transgressors." (5:32)

Furthermore, the hardened unrepentant criminal is threatened with the everlasting penalty in the Hellfire, a permanent abode of humiliation and endless torture, under the Wrath of Allah, the Almighty, in the Hereafter. Allah, the Wise and Almighty, states:

"But whoever kills a believer intentionally - his recompense is Hell, wherein he will abide eternally, and Allah has become angry with him and has cursed him and has prepared for him a great punishment." (4:93)

Abu Bakrah narrated: "I heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ saying:

'When two Muslims fight each other with their swords, both the murderer as well as the murdered will go to Hell-fire.' I said, 'O Allah's Messenger! I understand for the murderer, but what about the murdered one?' Allah's Messenger replied, 'He surely had the intention to kill his companion.'" (Bukhari)

Of course if one sincerely repents, then Allah's Mercy and Forgiveness encompasses all sinners.

02 EQUALITY OF HUMAN STATUS

All humans are innately equal and this applies to both male and female alike. When Allah, the Almighty, created the first human, Adam, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, - our great grandfather and the father of all humanity - he also created our grandmother Eve. Thus humanity is essentially one family and of one race from this honorable couple. Humans became distinguished thereafter by their belief and obedience, or their disbelief and disobedience. Allah, the Almighty, states in the Qur'an:

"O Mankind! Reverence your Lord, who created you from a single Person and created its mate, and from the two of them scattered countless men and women. Fear Allah, through Whom you demand your mutual rights, and reverence the wombs [that bore you], for Allah is ever watchful over you." (4:1)



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“All people are the children of Adam and Adam was created from earth.” (Ahmed)

Since earth is of different colors and traits, man also developed into different colors and traits.

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

“Allah has relieved you from the burden of ignorance with its pride in fathers and ancestors. You are all from Adam, and Adam is from the earth. There is no difference between an Arab and a non-Arab, nor between a black man and a red man, except in piety.” (Abu Dawood)

All humans initially believed in the common faith of Islamic monotheism as revealed to Adam, and spoke the same common language. As Allah, the Almighty, states in His Magnificent Qur’an:

“Mankind was not but one community [united in religion], but [then] they differed. And if not for a word that preceded from your Lord, it would have been judged between them [immediately] concerning that over which they differ.” (10:19)

Consequently man began to differ, and the reasons for their differences include: multiplication of their numbers; emigrations to various areas of the earth; divergence of colors and other features of the human subgroups; development of local languages and dialects and so forth.

Since Islam regards each human being, regardless of race, color, language, creed, religion, or country on an equal footing with other human beings in the trait of humanity, all human beings are equal before the Laws of Allah, the Almighty:

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.” (49:13)

And in the traditions we read that Aishah, Allah be pleased with her, reported: “The Quraish were very worried about the case of a woman who had committed theft, and they wondered who should intercede on her behalf with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Some said Usamah bin

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Zaid was his beloved and thus he may dare do so. So Usamah spoke to him about that matter, and the Prophet ﷺ said to him,

‘Are you interceding when one of the penal codes ordained by Allah has been violated?’ Then he got up and addressed the people saying, ‘The people before you were ruined because when a noble person amongst them committed theft, they would leave him, but if a weak person amongst them committed theft, they would execute the legal punishment on him. By Allah, were Fatimah¹, the daughter of Muhammad, to commit the theft, I would have cut off her hand.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

All human beings are also equal in terms of basic freedom and responsibilities. Omar bin al-Khattab made an eloquent statement on this fact some fourteen centuries ago when he declared to a sinning Muslim who arrogantly had wronged a non-Muslim, “Have you enslaved the people though their own mothers gave birth to them free?” Therefore, every human being, in the sight of Islam, is entitled to the following types of freedom, mentioned in brief examples as follows:

Freedom of thought and opinion. Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, commanded the Muslims to declare the truth, express their honest opinion, and refrain from intimidating others as he is reported to have said:

“A person who knows the truth and does not declare it, is a mute devil” (Tirmidhi)

Freedom of access to benefit from the wealth, minerals, and natural resources of the earth. The Almighty states:

“It is He who made the earth tame for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection.” (67:15)

Freedom of access to lawful income and ownership. Islam encourages all to work in beneficial trades so as to have free access to lawful income. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“By him in whose hand is my soul, if one of you were to carry a bundle of firewood on his back and sell it, that would be better for him than begging a man who may or may not give him anything.” (Bukhari)

Freedom of learning and teaching. Islam advocates the freedom of learning for every member in the society. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Seeking knowledge is an obligatory duty upon every Muslim.” (Baihaqi)

1 His most favored daughter.



In fact, Islam classifies the act of monopolizing essential, useful and Islamic knowledge, concealing it from others, and not sharing it with them, an unforgivable act that leads to the Wrath of Allah, the Almighty, and His Penalty. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported to have said:

"A knowledgeable person who is asked to share his knowledge with others but refuses to do so and hides his information would have a harness of fire put on him on the Day of Judgment." (Abu Dawood & Tirmidhi)

Freedom of access to leadership positions in the society, if he possesses the necessary qualifications. Ability and understanding are the main criteria required for holding a leadership position in the Islamic society, as opposed to color, lineage and race, for instance. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported to have said:

"If a person is assigned the charge of the Muslim affairs, then appoints a person on favoritism, irrespective of his qualifications, he would deserve the Wrath and Curse of Allah. Allah, the Almighty, would not accept any of his actions and such a person would be in the Hellfire." (Hakim)

Freedom is often a misused word. Real freedom cannot be achieved if a man is a slave to his base desires - or a servant to the desires of others - and seeks to fulfill them by any immoral and unlawful means. The man is allured to this false freedom by the enticement of Satan, the avowed enemy of all mankind, who, in his jealous rage, hates the human race and has given his committed oath to Allah to wait with his troops in ambush to strike with their arsenal of weapons whenever, and wherever, possible. Allah, the Almighty, said:

"O children of Adam, let not Satan tempt you as he removed your parents from Paradise, stripping them of their clothing to show them their private parts. Indeed, he sees you, he and his tribe, from where you do not see them. Indeed, We have made the devils allies to those who do not believe." (7:27)



THE UNITY AND INVIOABILITY OF THE RELIGION OF ALLAH FOR ALL HUMANS

As the universal and eternal religion of Allah for all humanity, Islam aims at eliminating all aspects of tribalism, nationalism, racism and party spirit leading to conflict. Islam is the religion of Allah that was

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taught to all men in its essentials of monotheism, even though particulars of the law and guidance may vary according to man's circumstances. The same basic message was given from the Prophet Adam all the way through to the final Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ.

Allah, the Almighty, states in the Glorious Qur'an:

"[Allah] has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, [O Muhammad], and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back [to Him]." (42:13)

Allah, the Almighty, also states:

"We have sent revelation to you as We sent it to Noah and the Messengers after him. We sent revelation to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, to Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon, and to David We gave the Psalms. Of some Messengers We have already told you the story, and of others, We have not, and to Moses did Allah speak directly. The Messengers gave good news as well as warning, so that mankind - after the coming of the Messengers - should have no argument against Allah, for Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise." (4:163-165)

And Allah says:

"That was Our [conclusive] argument which We gave Abraham against his people. We raise by degrees whom We will. Indeed, your Lord is Wise and Knowing. We gave him Isaac and Jacob; all We guided. And before him We guided Noah, and among his progeny: David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses and Aaron. Thus do We reward those who do good. And Zachariah and John, and Jesus and Elias; all are in the ranks of the Righteous." (6:83-86)

The Lord of Man, Allah, sent them all with the same call:

"O my people, worship Allah. You have no other god but Him." (11:50)

Allah, the Almighty also says:

"Say [O believers], 'We have believed in Allah and what has been revealed to us and what has been revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Tribes and what was given to Moses and Jesus and what was given to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.'" (2:136)

As such, all Muslims are obligated by faith and creed to believe in all the Prophets and Messengers; to believe in the Divine Books and Scriptures revealed and sent down to



them; to respect and honor every Divine Law revealed by Allah, the Almighty, to any previous people; and to believe in the brotherhood of the previous followers of the Book who welcomed the Mission of Muhammad ﷺ. The Message of Islam, which was brought by Muhammad ﷺ, is the Final Divine Message to mankind, as Allah said: “Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah, and the Last of the Prophets. And Allah has full knowledge of all things.” (33:40)

Ability and understanding are the main criteria required for holding a leadership position in the Islamic society, as opposed to color, lineage and race, for instance.



Thus the final Divine Message of Islam as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, abrogates all previous messages. Abrogation by no means is a denial of the previous messages, but only signifies that they are no longer in effect. Henceforth, Islam is the only religion acceptable to Allah, the Supreme Lord, as He said:

“If anyone desires a religion other than Islam, never will it be accepted of him; and in the Hereafter he will be in the ranks of those who have lost.” (3:85)

Freedom is often a misused word. Real freedom cannot be achieved if a man is a slave to his base desires - or a servant to the desires of others - and seeks to fulfill them by any immoral and unlawful means.

Islam urges the followers of previous Divine Messages to believe in the Message of Islam, as revealed to Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, as Allah, the Almighty, said:

“So if they believe in the same as you believe in, then they have been [rightly] guided. But, if they turn away, they are only in dissension, and Allah will be sufficient for you against them. And He is the Hearing, the Knowing.” (2:137)

And Allah, Most Great and Majestic, said:

“Those who disbelieve in Allah and His messengers and wish to discriminate between Allah and His messengers and say, ‘We believe in some and disbelieve in others,’ and wish to adopt a way in between - those are the disbelievers, truly. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating punishment.” (4:150-151)

All forms of disbelief are categorically castigated by Allah:

“As for those who divide their religion and break up into sects, you should have no part in them in the least; their affair is with Allah. He will

in the end tell them the truth of all that they did. He that does good shall have [the reward thereof] ten times as much to his credit. He that does evil shall only be recompensed according to his evil, no wrong shall be done unto them. Say, 'Truly, my Lord has guided me to a Way that is straight, a correct religion, the Path of Abraham, the true in faith, and he did not associate other gods with Allah.' Say, 'Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are all for Allah, the Lord and Sustainer of the Worlds; He has no partner. Thus am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit to Allah [in Islam].'" (6:159-163)

Islam also urges its followers to respect the feelings of those who differ with them in religion, and it condemns offensive language against those who differ with Muslims in faith, as Allah commands:

"Do not insult those they invoke other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge. Thus We have made pleasing to every community their deeds. Then to their Lord is their return, and He will inform them about what they used to do." (6:108)

Islam, therefore, commands Muslims to attract the non-Muslims towards their Faith with the beauty of its precepts, by the guidance of comely examples and behavior, as opposed to the Guidance that only Allah bestows on whom He will. The Almighty said in the Qur'an: "Say, 'The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills - let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve.' Indeed, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose walls will surround them. And if they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like murky oil, which scalds [their] faces. Wretched is the drink, and evil is the resting place." (18:29)

Islam enunciates justice and dispenses it even to those who do not believe. Allah, the Almighty, states in the Qur'an:

"So to that [religion of Allah] invite, [O Muhammad], and remain on a right course as you are commanded and do not follow their inclinations but say, 'I have believed in what Allah has revealed of the Qur'an, and I have been commanded to do justice among you. Allah is our Lord and your Lord. For us are our deeds, and for you your deeds. There is no [need for] argument between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the [final] destination.'" (42:15)

Islam gave man the full freedom of choice in terms of faith. They may accept or reject any faith or belief. Islam gave freedom to the People of the Book and previous Scriptures to maintain their faith and practices. Islam forbids the dismantling of churches and synagogues. Islam prohibits the breaking and destruction of the cross of the Christians. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported to have said concerning the people of the previous Scriptures:

"Leave them alone in terms of faith". (Tabari)



Henceforth, Islam is the only religion acceptable to Allah, the Supreme Lord.



Islam urges the followers of previous Divine Messages to believe in the Message of Islam, as revealed to Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

Islam gave the people of the previous Scriptures the rights as their law dictates, and to eat, drink and wear what their religion permits them to do. Islam also entitles the people of the previous Scriptures to practice the rituals of their religion insofar as marriage, marital relationship, divorce and other relations are concerned.

To demonstrate a practical example, Omar bin al-Khattab, the second Caliph, applied such provisions when he came to the Resurrection Church in Jerusalem when the Muslim prayer was due. Omar left the Church, went outside, and offered the prayer outside the Church, and informed the priest of the church, "Had I offered my prayer inside the Church, some Muslims could have claimed in the future that this Church is a place where Omar offered his prayer and used that as an excuse to destroy the Church, and build a Mosque, in its place."

[Reported from the *History of Imam Ibn Jareer at-Tabari*]

Similarly, Omar offered a pledge of trust as follows, "This is a pledge of security offered by Omar bin al-Khattab, the Leader of the Believers, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in terms of Peace. Omar gives them his pledge of security and peace as regards their lives, wealth, churches, crosses and all their denominations. Their churches are not to be occupied, destroyed, reduced in size, nor to limit the Christian owned properties surrounding the churches. Their crosses are not to be abused. The wealth of the Christians should not be encroached upon or possessed unlawfully, and Christians will not be forced or compelled against their own will [to accept Islam]." [Reported from the *History of Imam Ibn Jareer at-Tabari*]



ENCOURAGEMENT OF FRUITFUL COOPERATION BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK (JEWS AND CHRISTIANS)

Cooperation should always be based on mutual interest and respect, and oriented to serve the best interests of society at large. Allah, the Wise, the Almighty, states as a general rule:

"Aid one another in righteousness and piety, and do not aid one another in sin and aggression. And fear Allah, for indeed Allah is strict in punishment." (5:2)

Islam exhorts upon its followers to have a meaningful and sincere dialogue with those who differ with their religion, as Allah, Most Wise, orders:

“And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, ‘We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one; and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.’” (29:46)

In fact, the approach that Islam pursued to call people of other Faiths is a constructive and objective dialogue that brings people together to the Word of Allah and to His Divine Message and Teachings, as He said:

“Say, “O People of the Scripture, come to a word that is equitable between us and you - that we will not worship except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah.’ But if they turn away, then say, ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to Him].’” (3:64)



SINCERITY AND PURITY IN ADVISING OTHERS

All of the Messengers of Allah gave sincere advice to their communities, and sincere advice and purity of intentions are the distinguishing features of Islam. The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, as narrated by Abu Hurairah:

“Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, once inquired, ‘Who, amongst you, would carry the following words of wisdom, act upon them, and teach them to others who would also act upon them?’ Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, volunteered. Upon that Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, held the hand of Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, and counted five items, as follows:

1) Avoid all that is declared by Allah prohibited, thus you become the best worshipper of Allah; **2)** Accept what had been predestined for you by Allah, thus you would be the richest man; **3)** Be good to your neighbor, thus you would be characterized as a Believer; **4)** Like for others what you like for yourself, thus you would be characterized as a Muslim; **5)** Lessen your laughter, since too much laughter would cause the heart to die.” (Tirmidhi)

Islam calls upon all Muslims to tender meaningful and sincere advice to all people.

This point is based on a statement of Allah’s Messenger ﷺ:

“Islam is the religion of sincerity and advice.” The people inquired, “O Prophet of Allah! To whom should this be offered?” Allah’s Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said, “To Allah, to His Book, to His Prophet, to the leaders of the Muslims, and to the general body of Muslims”. (Muslim)



Islam gave the people of the previous Scriptures the rights as their law dictates, and to eat, drink and wear what their religion permits them to do.



Islam also entitles the people of the previous Scriptures to practice the rituals of their religion insofar as marriage, marital relationship, divorce and other relations are concerned.

In explanation of this tradition, we can say: Sincerity to Allah is to worship Him Alone, wholeheartedly; to reject and discard any rival set up to Allah, in idolatry; to commemorate the remembrance of Allah by His Beautiful Attributes and Blessed Names; to accept fully that Allah alone is in charge of all the affairs of all creatures; to believe that whatever Allah wills, would happen and whatever He does not, would never take place; and to follow the Commandments of Allah, and cease all actions that He forbade. Sincerity to Allah's Book is to firmly believe in the Divine Scripture revealed to His Messenger, Muhammad ﷺ, and to accept all the laws therein. Sincerity to Allah's Prophet is to obey what he enjoined, shun away from what he refrained, believe his statements, love and respect him, and respond to his call, practices and instructions, and propagate them amongst people. Sincerity and advice to the leaders is to obey the leaders as long as they do not call for, or impose, any rules that disobey the commands of Allah and His Prophet ﷺ; to assist them by guiding them to all good things; not to rebel and fight against them so long as they enjoin the prayer and do not restrict the practice of Islam throughout their government agencies; and to offer them mature and pure advice kindly and gently. Sincere advice for the general populace is to guide them to the best in both their religious and worldly affairs; to assist them to achieve their goals; to prevent any inconvenience to them; and to like for them what one likes for himself, and to hate to cause them any harm as one would hate to cause harm to his own soul.



ENJOINING THE GOOD AND FORBIDDING THE EVIL

Muslims are commanded to pursue all appropriate means that lead to enjoining good and forbidding evil, based on one's ability, knowledge, and position of authority. The ultimate goal is to secure peace, tranquility and stability in the society and to counter oppression, corruption and the spread of the "Law of the Jungle."

Allah states:

"Aid one another in righteousness and piety, and do not aid one another in sin and aggression. And fear Allah, for indeed Allah is strict in punishment." (5:2)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said,

“Whoever of you sees an evil must [try to] change it with his hand. If he is not able to do so, then [he must try to change it] with his tongue. And if he is not able to do so, then [he must change it] with his heart. And that is the slightest [effect of] faith.” (Muslim)

The Messenger ﷺ made a simile about those who do wrong and harm others by their sins: “The example of those who observe the boundaries of Allah and those who do not is like a group of people who traveled in a ship. The sailors of the ship decided to split the riders so a portion of them rode on the upper deck, while the other portion rode the lower deck. When the people of the lower deck wanted to get water from the river, they had to go to the upper deck and ask them. The occupants of the lower deck of the ship decided that it would be less hassle if they drill a hole in the wall of their portion of the ship so as to get water without disturbing the others. If the people of the upper deck permitted them to execute their plan, they would all sink and drown in the water. But if the people of the upper deck refused to let them drill a hole and restricted them, they would all be saved.” (Bukhari)

Allah, the Omnipotent and Omniscient, informs us that His Wrath descended upon previous nations as a result of their negligence to enjoin good and forbid evil:

“Nor did they forbid one another the inequities which they used to commit. Evil indeed were the deeds which they did.” (5:79)



ISLAMIC FORMS OF WORSHIP ENCOURAGE BROTHERHOOD AND EGALITARIAN VALUES

All forms of worship in Islam are egalitarian in nature and promote brotherhood and peace. The shahadah (testimony of faith), salah (prayer), zakat (alms and charity), fasting, hajj (pilgrimage), commanding the good and prohibiting the evil, and jihad (exertion and struggle) are equally obligatory upon all Muslims; those who are able to fulfill their requirements. To become a Muslim, the simple rite is to declare the testimony of faith: LA ILAHA ILLALLAH MUHAMMAD-UR-RASULULLAH (there is nothing worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah). In congregational prayer Muslims stand next to each other in rows without any distinctions between them. Zakah promotes generosity and social cohesiveness between the richer and poorer segments of society. Fasting promotes realization of the basic needs of all humans, and control of these most basic physical desires. Hajj is the grand equalizer since all clothe themselves in simple white cloth and perform the same rituals in remembrance of the Prophet Abraham, and glorification of the sacred precincts of Makkah. Commanding good, prohibiting evil and “Jihad” are for the promotion and preservation of all that is good, wholesome and decent, and for the combating of that which is evil and morally corrupt.



08 NECESSITY OF ALL TO SEEK BENEFICIAL KNOWLEDGE

Allah states:

“Is one who worships devoutly during the hours of the night prostrating himself or standing [in prayer], who takes heed of the Hereafter, and who places his hope in the Mercy of his Lord, [like one who does not]? Say, ‘Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know?’ It is those who are endured with understanding that receive admonition.” (39:9)

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Seeking knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim.” (Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah, & Baihaqi)

09 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION

Islam commands Muslims to protect and preserve the environment and warns against wanton destruction and pollution.

The general rule is as Allah says:

“Do not commit mischief on the earth after it has been set in order, and call on Him [in prayer] with fear and longing. Indeed, the Mercy of Allah is always near to those who do good.” (7:56)

Also, Allah, the Almighty, states:

“And of the people is he whose speech pleases you in worldly life, and he calls Allah to witness as to what is in his heart, yet he is the fiercest of opponents. When he turns his back, his aim is to spread mischief everywhere through the earth and destroy crops and cattle. But Allah does not love mischief.” (2:204-205)

The most precious natural resources of pure water, air and fertile land are protected for the general good and utility. For instance, the Prophet ﷺ commanded for water conservation by asking Muslims not to waste water during washing and ablution even when one is utilizing running river water, and he forbade washing of the parts of the body while making ablutions more than three times saying:

“Whoever increases on that (more than three) does injustice and wrong.” (Nasa’ee)

Sincerity and advice to the leaders is to obey the leaders as long as they do not call for, or impose, any rules that disobey the commands of Allah and His Prophet. ﷺ



Muslims are commanded to pursue all appropriate means that lead to enjoining good and forbidding evil, based on one's ability, knowledge, and position of authority.

And Allah's Messenger ﷺ forbade people to urinate in stagnant water. (Muslim)

Islam also forbids people to place any excrement, refuse, or garbage in the middle of the public passages, or in shady places which people use for rest and recreation.

10 SOCIAL WELFARE INCLUDING SUPPORT OF ORPHANS, THE NEEDY AND DESTITUTE

Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, said:

“So as for the orphan, do not oppress [him]. And as for the petitioner, do not repel [him].” (93:9-10)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“The orphan’s sponsor and I are in Paradise like these (and he held his two fingers, the index and the middle fingers, together, indicating how close they are).” (Tirmidhi)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“By Allah! One would not become a Believer until he likes for his brother what he likes for his own self”. (Muslim)

11 PRINCIPLES OF ENDOWMENT

Endowments in Islam are of two types:

Private Endowment: This type is dedicated to the progeny of the person who offers such endowment. The progeny and family members of the grantor would be well off, and they would not need to ask others to donate to them. This type has a stipulation, however, that the funds of the endowment would be given to the public interest as a charity upon the death of the last person of the progeny of the donor.

Public and General Endowment: This type is dedicated to charitable works, such as building hospitals, schools, roads, public libraries, mosques, community centers, orphanages, elderly homes and other beneficial projects of general public interest for the community and the society at large.

قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

“Say, ‘Are they equal, those who know and those who do not know?’” (39:9)



ISLAMIC MORALS PROMOTE COMPREHENSIVE PEACE

The entire code of Islamic ethics seeks to promote and maintain peace, security and happiness in the society at large. This code enjoins brotherhood and all beneficial things that promote peace, and it forbids all types of actions that instigate evil and implant hatred in the hearts and minds of people. Accordingly, if the members of the society apply the Islamic code of ethics, they would enjoy the peace, security, tranquility and happiness for which they naturally strive and yearn. All values of the Islamic morality produce a better person with the noble traits of character admired universally: truthfulness, fairness, courage, generosity, patience, perseverance, kindness, and courteousness.

The essential objective of Islamic morality is to eradicate all harmful and immoral actions, attitudes and behaviors which displease Allah, the Almighty.



The essential objective of Islamic morality is to eradicate all harmful and immoral actions, attitudes and behaviors which displease Allah, the Almighty Creator and Sustainer of mankind, and are therefore declared unlawful. If a Muslim practices any of the forbidden acts, he would expose himself to either punishment in this world by the specified punishments of the Islamic law, or the Wrath of Allah in the Hereafter.

As the modern Arab poet, Ash-Shauki, wrote in verse, explaining that nations of people are naught but their morals and characters:

If the morals of the nation cease
the nation ceases!





ISLAM ENJOINS BELIEVERS TO OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING MORAL OBLIGATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROMOTE PEACE

01 ISLAM ENJOINS TRUTH

Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, said:

“O you who believe! Fear God and be with those who are truthful.”

(9:119)

Justice and fairness are commanded and required in all situations, when one is happy and satisfied, and when one is upset and unsatisfied, with Muslims and with non-Muslims alike.

Allah the Exalted and Almighty said:

“And he who brings the Truth and he who confirms and supports it - such are the God-fearing.” (39:33)

02 ISLAM ENJOINS JUSTICE

Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, said:

“Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and generosity to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, injustice and rebellion. He instructs you, that you may receive admonition.” (16:90)

Muslims are advised to gain good company and avoid bad company.

Justice and fairness are commanded and required in all situations, when one is happy and satisfied, and when one is upset and unsatisfied, with Muslims and with non-Muslims alike. Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, said:

“O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others cause you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just; that is next to Piety. And fear Allah. For Allah is well-aware with all that you do.” (5:8)

And He, the Exalted, says:

“O you who believe! Stand out for justice, as witnesses to Allah, and even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin...” (4:135)

03 ISLAM ENJOINS ALTRUISM

Philanthropy and benevolence are the results of sincere altruism, and the companions of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, were especially noteworthy of this trait, offering their help and assistance to others solely for the pleasure of Allah.

Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, says:

“And do good. Truly Allah loves those who do good.” (2:195)

Allah, the Exalted, said:

“But [also for] those who were settled in Medina and [adopted] the faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their chests of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in need. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.” (59:9)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“Do favors for those who deserve to have them done for them, and also for those who do not deserve to have them done. If the doer did the favor for those who deserve it, it is fine and good, and if not, the doer himself is one of those who are worthy for favors.” (Tirmidhi)



ISLAM ENJOINS BROTHERHOOD

Allah, the Exalted, says:

“Verily the believers are but brothers...” (49:10)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Do not envy one another, do not inflate prices by overbidding against one another, do not hate one another, do not harbor malice against one another, and do not enter into commercial transaction when others have entered into that (transaction), but be you, O servants of Allah, as brothers. A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim, he neither oppresses him nor does he look down upon him, nor does he humiliate him. Piety is here, (and he pointed to his chest three times). It is enough evil for a Muslim to hold his brother Muslim in contempt. All things of a Muslim are sacred for his brother-in-faith: his life, his property and his honor.” (Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“A Muslim is a brother to a Muslim. He should neither deceive him nor lie to him, nor leave him without assistance....” (Tirmidhi)



ISLAM ENJOINS THE MAINTENANCE OF RIGHTEOUS COMPANY

Muslims are advised to maintain good company and avoid bad company. The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said:

“The example of good and evil companions is like that of a person who is carrying perfume and the blacksmith who is blowing the fire of his furnace. The carrier of perfume would either give you some of it or you may buy some from him, or at least you would enjoy the



smell of perfume from him. As for the blacksmith who is blowing fire, you may either burn your clothes, be disturbed with the sparks of his fire, or the least you would receive is a bad odor coming from him and his place of work.” (Bukhari & Muslim)



ISLAM ENJOINS RECONCILIATION AND PEACE MAKING

Reconciliation is enjoined at all times and especially when there is a serious rift in a relationship that may lead to increased conflict.

Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, said:

“The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy.” (49:10)

Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, says:

“No good is there in much of their private conversation, except for those who enjoin charity or that which is right or conciliation between people. And whoever does that seeking means to the approval of Allah - then We are going to give him a great reward.” (4:114)



Good morals and virtues are essential for a better society.



Islam urges and encourages Muslims to be patient with what has been decreed for them, such as fear, poverty, hunger, lack of resources, terminal illness, etc.



ISLAM ENJOINS MAINTAINING A GOOD CHARACTER AND MORALS.

Good morals and virtues are essential for a better society. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Amongst the best Believers are the persons with the best of morals and characteristics, and those who are most kind to their families.” (Tirmidhi)

And he ﷺ said:

“I was sent only to perfect good manners”, and in another report, “to perfect conduct.” (Malik, Ahmad & al-Bazzar)



ISLAM ENJOINS GENEROSITY.

Generosity brings people closer to each other and enables the generous to gain the love and affection of others. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Allah, the Almighty, loves two traits: to be good to others and to be generous to them. Similarly, Allah hates two traits: to be mean to

others and to be a miser to people. On the other hand, if Allah favors a person, He would employ him to assist others to achieve their goals and fulfill their needs.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

The criterion of generosity in Islam is mentioned in the verse of the Qur’an:

“Do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed and insolvent.” (17:29)

The criterion is set to restrict people from exceeding limits. Allah, the Almighty, said:

“And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveler, but do not spend wastefully. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful.” (17:26-27)

09

ISLAM ENJOINS ON MUSLIMS TO HIDE MISTAKES AND OMISSIONS OF OTHERS

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ said:

“Whosoever alleviates a Believer’s hardship of this world, Allah would alleviate his hardship and difficulty on the Day of Judgment. Whosoever eases the terms on a [financially] stranded person, Allah would ease his difficulties in both this world and the Hereafter. Whosoever hides the defects of a Muslim in this world, Allah would hide the defects of that person both in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah would continue to assist a servant so long as such a person is extending his help and assistance to his Muslim brethren.” (Muslim)

10

ISLAM ENJOINS PATIENCE.

People are encouraged to be patient in order to perform their religious and mundane duties, and to avoid all evils. Allah states in the Qur’an:

“And be patient, [O Muhammad], for the decision of your Lord, for indeed, you are in Our eyes. And mention the praise of your Lord when you arise.” (52:48)

Islam also urges and encourages Muslims to be patient with what has been decreed for them, such as fear, poverty, hunger, lack of resources, terminal illness, etc. Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, said:

“We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient. Those who, when disaster strikes them, say, 'Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.' It is they upon whom (descend) blessings from their Lord, and Mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance.” (2:155-157)



Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, illustrates the reward of the patient people as follows in the Qur'an:

"Say, 'O My servants who believe! Fear your Lord. For those who do good in this world is good, and the earth of Allah is spacious. Indeed, the patient will be given their reward without account.'" (3:10)

Part of mercy and forgiveness is to control the temper and forgive others even though one is capable of taking revenge. This strengthens the relationships and ties amongst people and creates a better atmosphere within society. Allah promises a great reward for controlling one's temper. Allah, the Almighty, states in the Qur'an:

"Be quick in the race for forgiveness from your Lord, and for a Garden as wide as the heavens and earth, prepared for the righteous. Those who spend [for Allah's sake], whether in prosperity, or in adversity, who restrain anger and pardon, for Allah loves those who do good." (3:133-134)

Also, Allah, the Almighty, commands Muslims to practice righteousness at all times and in all circumstances and not to return evil when they are mistreated. Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, said:

"And not equal are the good deed and the bad one. Repel [evil] by that deed which is better, and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity will become as though he was a devoted friend." (41:34)

The above examples are mere glimpses of what Islam commands Muslims to comply with in their personal and public lives for the pleasure of Allah. The Book of Allah, the Qur'an, and the Sunnah of Allah's Messenger, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, provide additional commands and details related to these and other high and noble morals.


وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ

Allah, the Wise and Almighty, states as a general rule:
 "Aid one another in righteousness and piety, and do not aid one another in sin and aggression." (5:2)



EXAMPLES OF ACTS THAT LEAD TO DIVISION AND HATRED THAT ARE PROHIBITED IN ISLAM

Islam vehemently has denounced and condemned the following acts and strictly prohibited their practice. This is to promote peace and security in the society, and to eradicate or curtail wrath, hatred, greed, and resentment which are the root causes of conflicts and violence.

 Polytheism and idolatry inevitably cause conflict as people compete and vie for recognition, status, dominance and tribute for their idols and associated ideologies and mythologies.

POLYTHEISM AND IDOLATRY

Polytheism and idolatry inevitably cause conflict as people compete and vie for recognition, status, dominance and tribute for their idols and associated ideologies and mythologies. If all people worshipped the one and only God, then the greatest root of violence would be eradicated.

Allah said:

“And ask those We sent before you of Our messengers; have We made besides the Most Merciful deities to be worshipped?” (43:45)

Allah, the Most Glorious, said:

“And We did not send a messenger before you, except that We revealed to him that there is no god worthy of worship except Me, so worship Me.” (21:25)

Allah, the Most Almighty and Majestic, said:

“And verily, We have sent among every community a Messenger proclaiming, 'Worship Allah (alone), and avoid all false gods.'” (16:36)

SORCERY.


This prohibition is based on the numerous evidences like the saying of Allah:

“But neither of these two taught anyone [sorcery] till they had said, ‘Truly, we are a trial, so do not disbelieve.’” (2:102)

And in the hadith of Allah's Messenger ﷺ:

“Avoid the seven destructive sins.” People inquired, “O Prophet of Allah! What are these destructive sins?” He said, “They are: associating others



 Islam urges its followers to support both the oppressed and the oppressor by stopping the source of oppression.

in the worship of Allah, sorcery, killing an innocent soul without any legitimate reason, dealing with usury, eating up the orphan's funds, fleeing from the battlefield, falsely accusing innocent female believers with fornication, adultery, or moral corruption." (Bukhari & Muslim)

03 AGGRESSION AND OPPRESSION.

Allah ﷻ said:

"The blame is only against the ones who wrong the people and tyrannize upon the earth without right. Those will have a painful punishment." (42:42)

Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, stated

"Say, 'My Lord has only forbidden immoralities - what is apparent of them and what is concealed - and sin, and oppression without right, and that you associate with Allah that for which He has not sent down authority, and that you say about Allah that which you do not know.'" (7:33)

Allah, the Almighty, also said:

"If one amongst the pagans polytheists ask you for asylum, grant it to him so that he may hear the Word of Allah, and then escort him to where he can be secure. That is because they are without knowledge." (9:6)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"Beware of injustice, for oppression will be layers of darkness on the Day of Resurrection, and beware of stinginess because it doomed those who were before you. It incited them to shed blood and treat the unlawful as lawful." (Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

"Allah inspired me, 'Be humble so that no one oppresses another, and no one brags with pride over another.'" (Muslim)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

"Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, said: 'My servants, I have made oppression unlawful for Me and unlawful for you, so do not commit oppression against one another...'" (Muslim)

Islam urges its followers to support both the oppressed and the oppressor by stopping the source of oppression.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:


"Support and come to the aid of your brother whether he is oppressed or he is the oppressor."



A man who heard this inquired, “I can understand supporting my brother if he is oppressed, but what about if he is the oppressor?” Allah’s Messenger (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) replied, “By restraining him or preventing him from committing injustice, for that is how you support him.” (Bukhari)

All lawful members of the society, regardless of creed or faith, are entitled to full protection of their rights to life, property and wealth. For instance, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“He who murders [a non-Muslim who has entered into a treaty with us] would not smell the fragrance of Paradise, though the fragrance of Paradise can be smelled at a distance of 40 years.” (Bukhari)

 All lawful members of the society, regardless of creed or faith, are entitled to full protection of their rights to life, property and wealth.



UNKIND TREATMENT TOWARDS PARENTS, CHILDREN AND KINDRED.

This is based on the verse revealed:

“Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and that you be kind to parents. And if one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them the slightest word of disrespect, nor repel them, but address them with words of honor. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say, ‘My Lord! Bestow on them Your Mercy just as they raised me when I was small.’” (17:23-24)

And the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“The happiness of Allah is from the parents’ happiness with their child, and the unhappiness and dismay of Allah is from the unhappiness and dismay of parents from their children.” (Tirmidhi)


Islam teaches benevolence towards all kindred. This is based on the verse revealed in the Qur’an,

“Then, is it to be expected of you, if you were put in authority, that you will do mischief in the land, and break your ties with kith and kin? Such are the men whom Allah has cursed for He has made them deaf and has blinded their sight.” (47:22-23)

This is also based on the tradition of the Prophet of Allah ﷺ:

“A person breaking family ties will not enter Paradise.” (Bukhari & Muslim)



 Breaking ties with family implies many things: absence of mutual exchange of visits or communication, carelessness towards the needy relatives, etc.

Breaking ties with family implies many things: absence of mutual exchange of visits or communication, carelessness towards the needy relatives, and indifference to extend financial and social assistance to the destitute family members.

Islam appreciates the charity from the rich to the destitute. A charitable donation from a rich family member to a needy family member carries a double reward since it is both charity and a type of re-establishment of bonds between family members. If a person is poor and is unable to extend financial support to relatives, Allah rewards even his visit, phone call, letter, care or affection since they are a type of charity and are good deeds. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Establish a good rapport with your family members and immediate relatives, even by as little as greeting them and asking about their affairs and health.” (Bazzar & Tabrani)

05 ADULTERY, FORNICATION, SLANDER ETC

It is a known fact that much conflict, fighting and murder takes place due to “love triangles” wherein people fight over their legal or illegal sexual partners. Islam has cut all the pathways to illegal sexual relations to preserve the chastity and purity of the people of the society, and to prevent conflict, illegitimate children and abortion.

Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, said:

“And do not approach unlawful sexual intercourse. Indeed, it is ever an immorality and is evil as a way.” (17:32)

And He said:

“Those who slander chaste women, indiscreet but believing, are cursed in this life and in the Hereafter; for them is a grievous Penalty.” (24:23)

And Allah, the Exalted and Almighty, said:

“Those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you do not know.” (24:19)



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: “A true Muslim is the person from whom other Muslims feel secure from his verbal or physical abuse and attacks, and a true immigrant is a person who forsakes what Allah the Almighty has declared unlawful.” (Bukhari & Muslim)



If a person is poor and is unable to extend financial support to relatives, Allah rewards even his visit, phone call, letter, care or affection since they are a type of charity and are good deeds.



Islam has cut all the pathways to illegal sexual relations to preserve the chastity and purity of the people of the society, and to prevent conflict, illegitimate children and abortion.

The Prophet of Allah ﷺ convinced a young man of the illegality of illicit sexual relations in the following conversation:

A young man came to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and asked: “O Messenger of Allah, permit me (with special license) to commit fornication.” The people started to rebuke him harshly, but the Prophet sat close to him and asked, “Would you like it for your mother?” He replied, “No, by Allah!” The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “And thus the people do not like it for their mothers.” He said, “Would you like it for your daughter?” “No,” he replied. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “And thus the people do not like it for their daughters.” He said, “Would you like it for your sister?” “No,” he replied. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “And thus the people do not like it for their sisters.” He said, “Would you like it for your aunt?” “No,” he replied. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “And thus the people do not like it for their aunts.” Then the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, put his hand on the youth and said, “O Allah, forgive his sins, purify his heart, and guard his chastity.” After that, the young man never again turned to anything sinful. [Reported by Imam Ahmad from the tradition narrated by Abu Umamah.]

Here we find an example of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ patiently convincing this man by analogies about the injustice of double standards. Since no one wants his own self to be exploited and abused, then how can he allow himself to exploit others? The golden rule, as it is called, is expressed in the famous tradition of the Messenger ﷺ: “None of you believes until he loves for his brother that which he loves for himself.” (Bukhari & Muslim)



INTOXICANTS AND GAMBLING

As it is well known, intoxicated individuals are more likely to commit violent crimes than sober individuals. Gambling is also the cause of much conflict. Allah, the Almighty, states:

“O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone alters, and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful. Satan only wants to cause between you animosity and hatred through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?” (5:90-91)

07 STEALING, ROBBERY, UNLAWFUL ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY AND WEALTH

Such acts are bound to create hatred and resentment, and provoke conflicts in the society, leading to insecurity and chaos.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Whoever takes a right of a Muslim, Allah would cause him to dwell in the Fire of Hell on the Day of Judgment and restrict him from entering Paradise.” One of the Companions who was present at the time inquired, “O Prophet of Allah! What if the item that a person takes was negligible?” Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “Even if the item is as insignificant as a wooden twig (from an Arak tree.” (Muslim)

08 Monopoly and hording

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Only a sinner monopolizes (the food and other items of public need).” (Muslim)

09 MISUSE OF THE WEALTH AND THE ASSETS OF AN ORPHAN.

Orphans are weak and incapable of managing their funds. An orphan’s guardian is responsible to manage wisely the finance and the affairs of the orphan under his stewardship to the best of his ability. Allah warns saying:

“Those who devour the property of orphans unjustly are only consuming into their bellies fire. And they will be burned in a Blaze.” (4:10)

10 ABUSE OF AUTHORITY

A Muslim ruler or any person in a position of authority must be just and honest with his people and must not do wrong to them or betray them in any way. As Allah said:

“Think not that Allah is heedless of the deeds of those who do wrong. He only gives them respite until a Day when the eyes will stare in horror.” (14:42)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“If Allah entrusted a person with authority, but the person entrusted did not offer his best possible advice to his constituents, such a person would not be allowed to enter Paradise.” (Bukhari)

11 TORTURE

The companion Hesham ibn Hakim ibn Hizam once passed by a group of people in the Levant who were made to stay in the sun. He said: “What’s wrong with these people?”



They said, “They are imprisoned because they did not pay the jizya.” Hesham said, “I witness that I have heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saying:

‘Allah tortures those who torture people in this lifetime.’” (Muslim)

12 FALSE TESTIMONIES AND OATHS

False testimonies are major sins. In fact, if a person intentionally insists on false testimonies on a regular basis, he would not be considered a Muslim. Allah states:

“Those who do not testify to falsehood, and when they pass near ill speech, they pass by with dignity.” (25:72)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“Should I inform you about the most abhorrent sins? The Companions said yes. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, ‘To associate others in worshipping Allah, and to be rude and disobedient to your parents.’ Allah's Messenger ﷺ was leaning on the wall, then he sat up straight and said, ‘...and to give false testimony’. Allah's Messenger kept repeating the last statement until the Companions wished that he would stop repeating it.” (Bukhari)

This type of oath is intentional and made to secure some unlawful gains. This oath is called ghamoos (immersing) since it immerses the oath taker in the Fire of Hell. Allah, the Almighty states:

“As for those who exchange the covenant of Allah and their [own] oaths for a small price will have no share in the Hereafter, and Allah will not speak to them or look at them on the Day of Resurrection, nor will He purify them, and they will have a painful punishment.” (3:77)

This is also based on the tradition of Allah's Messenger ﷺ:

“Whoever takes a right of a Muslim, Allah would cause him to dwell in the Fire of Hell on the Day of Judgment and restrict him from entering Paradise.” One of the Companions who was present at the time inquired, “O Prophet of Allah! What if the item that a person takes was negligible?” Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, “Even if the item is as insignificant as a wooden twig (from an Arak tree).” (Muslim)

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13 BETRAYAL AND BREACH OF TRUST IN CONTRACTS.

Islam enjoins upon Muslims to be truthful. Islam commands us to fulfill promises and warns against breaking promises and dishonoring contracts. Islam stresses on fulfilling all trusts to the right people and warns against denying even an insignificant amount entrusted to a person as a trust. Allah the Almighty states:

“O you who have believed, do not betray Allah and the Messenger or betray your trusts while you know [the consequence].” (8:27)

Islam declares keeping secrets as one of the acts of trust. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said: “If a person said something to another person, then turned away, such a statement becomes a trust to the listener.” (Tirmidhi & Abu Dawood)

Similarly, Islam categorized seeking a consultation as a trust as well. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“A consulted person is entrusted (with whatever he hears from the person seeking his consultation and advice).” (Tirmidhi & Abu Dawood)

Islam also promotes trustworthiness. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“There is no faith for a person who is untrustworthy. There is no religion for a person who breaches his pledge of allegiance.” (Ahmed & Baihaqi)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“If a person possesses four vices, he would be categorized as a full hypocrite. And if he possesses any one vice of the four, he would be partially a hypocrite unless he cures himself from the vice: to lie when he speaks, to break the promise, to betray the trust and to breach a covenant.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

In another narration reported by Muslim, it adds:

“A person would be categorized as such even if he maintains his daily prayers, observes the fast of Ramadan, and claims that he is a Muslim.”

14 SLANDER AND BACKBITING

Backbiting is to mention things about people that they hate to be known, even though such facts are true. This kind of act jeopardizes the honor and dignity of the person attacked, breeds hatred and disdain among people, and may even lead to violence. Slander, on the other hand, involves spreading false news and libel by any means.

Allah the Almighty states:

“Woe to every scandal-monger and backbiter.” (104:1)



The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“Do you know what is backbiting?” The Companions present at the time said, “Allah and His Messenger know best!” Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “It is to mention something behind the back of a person, which he despises for others to know about him.” One of the companions inquired, “O Prophet of Allah! What if the trait raised behind his back truly exists in him, would this still be categorized as an act of backbiting?” Allah’s Messenger ﷺ replied, “Backbiting is to mention a vice that exists in him whereas if he doesn’t have such a vice, then it is slandering.” (Muslim)

False testimonies are major sins. In fact, if a person intentionally insists on false testimonies on a regular basis, he would not be considered a Muslim.



Islam enjoins upon Muslims to be truthful. Islam commands us to fulfill promises and warns against breaking promises and dishonoring contracts.

15 NAME-CALLING AND MOCKING OTHERS

Allah said in the Glorious Qur’an:

“O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them. Nor let women ridicule [other] women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call each other by [offensive] nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after [one's] faith. And whoever does not repent - then it is those who are the wrongdoers.” (49:11)

16 HATRED, CONTEMPT AND RESENTMENT AGAINST OTHERS.

Such vices provoke acting in revenge in many possible ways. Allah’s Messenger ﷺ was asked:

“O Prophet of Allah! Who is the best type of person?” Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “Every warm-hearted person, and every sincere person.” The Companions who were present raised a question to Allah’s Messenger ﷺ saying, “O Prophet of Allah! We know the sincere person, but what about the warm-hearted person?” Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “He is the pious, pure person, the sinless one, with no oppression or transgression on the rights of others, a person who possesses no hatred or envy in his heart for others.” (Tirmidhi)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ illustrated the results of envy as follows:

“Envy and jealousy eat up the good deeds just as fire eats up wood.”

(Abu Dawood)

17 SOCIAL BOYCOTT (UNLESS UNDER STRICT CONDITIONS)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“Do not boycott one another, do not turn your backs on each other, do not hate one another, do not envy one another. All of you should be (true) servants of Allah like brothers. A Muslim is not allowed to boycott his Muslim brother for more than three (days).” (Bukhari & Muslim)

And in another version of the narration:

“A Muslim is not permitted to boycott his Muslim brother for a period exceeding three nights, upon meeting one another, each one swerving to a different direction and shunning each other. The best of the two is the one who initiates the greeting to the other.”

18 Cursing and abusive language

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“People who curse would not be permitted to be witnesses or intercessors on the Day of Judgment.” (Muslim)

Islam prohibits even cursing enemies and encourages a Muslim to pray for the guidance of such people to the Right and Straight Path. This is based on Allah's Messenger ﷺ who was once asked, “O Prophet of Allah! Shouldn't you pray against pagans and idol worshippers?” He said:

“I am only commissioned as a mercy (for mankind) and I was not commissioned to curse others.” [Reported by Muslim]

19 STINGINESS AND MISERLINESS

Islam considers wealth as a trust that Allah granted to people for a specific period of his lifetime to be used wisely and spent in accordance with Allah's commands, for living expenses and essential needs, for charity and for righteous deeds. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“A treacherous, stingy person who brags time and again about his donation and assistance to other needy and poor individuals would never enter Paradise.” (Tirmidhi)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ is also reported to have warned about the disastrous consequences of a society where miserliness becomes a common practice, saying, “Beware of oppression. Oppression is layers of darkness on the Day of Judgment¹. Beware of

¹ The Day of Judgment will be a dark day wherein people will be guided only by the light of their good works in this life.



greed and miserliness, as it destroyed people before you. Greed and miserliness compelled people (before you) to shed the blood of their own people and pushed them to make lawful what was unlawful and forbidden.” (Muslim)

20 EXTRAVAGANCE AND LAVISH SPENDING.

Allah has commanded Muslims to abstain from excesses.

“Eat and drink, but waste not by excess, Verily, He loves not the excessive.” (7:31)

Allah the Almighty states:

“And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveler, but do not spend wastefully. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful.” (17:26-27)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“Allah prohibits you from being disobedient to your mothers, from declining to give to the poor and needy for the cause of Allah, from asking people charity if you do not truly need it, and from burying girls alive. Allah also dislikes for you to be rumor mongering, to often ask people to give you, and to waste funds foolishly.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

21 EXAGGERATION AND EXTREMISM

Allah the Almighty states:

“Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship and [wants] for you to complete the period and to glorify Allah for that [to] which He has guided you; and perhaps you will be grateful.” (2:185)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“Offer glad tidings and do not push people away. Ease the life of people and do not make it difficult and unbearable for them.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“Beware of going beyond the bounds of the religion. The people before you were destroyed by going to extremes in the religion.” (Nisaa' e, Ibn Maajah, Ibn Khuzaimah & al-Haakim)

“Offer glad tidings and do not push people away. Ease the life of people and do not make it difficult and unbearable for them.”



“Arrogance is to deny the truth and to have contempt towards others.”

22 ARROGANCE AND FALSE PRIDE.

Allah the Almighty said:

“And do not turn your cheek [in contempt] toward people and do not walk through the earth exultantly. Indeed, Allah does not like everyone self-deluded and boastful. And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice. Indeed, the most disagreeable of sounds is the braying of donkeys.” (31:18-19)

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“A person whose heart contains an atom’s weight of arrogance would not enter Paradise.” One of the Companions, who was present at the time, asked Allah’s Messenger ﷺ: “O Prophet of Allah! One of us likes to wear good clothes and good shoes [so is that arrogance?]” Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said, “Arrogance is to deny the truth and to have contempt towards others.” (Muslim)

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ also said:

“Allah would not look on the Day of Judgment at the one who drags his clothes in arrogance.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

23 ALL UNJUST ACTS LEADING TO DISPUTES, QUARRELS AND FEUDS AMONG PEOPLE.

Allah the Almighty states:

“And hold fast, all together, by the Rope of Allah², and be not divided among yourselves. And remember with gratitude Allah’s favor on you, for before you were enemies and He joined your hearts in love so that by His Grace you became brothers. And you were on the brink of the Pit of Fire, and He saved you from it. Thus Allah makes His Signs clear to you so that you may be guided.” (3:103)

Similarly, Islam bans all forms of suspicion and evil thoughts about others. Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, states:

“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.” (49:12)

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Avoid suspicion as suspicion [leads to] the most untruthful speech one could ever make.” (Bukhari)

² The rope of Allah - His guidance; specifically the revelation of the Quran.



24 MISREPRESENTATION OF FACTS AND FALSE REPORTING

Allah, the Almighty, said:

“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.” (49:6)

25 FITS OF RAGE, TEMPER TANTRUMS, AND USE OF OFFENSIVE AND ABUSIVE LANGUAGE.

Thus a Muslim is ordered to always control anger. Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, states:

“Those who avoid the major sins and immoralities, and when they are angry, they forgive.” (42:37)

The Messenger of Allah said ﷺ:

“The strong man is not the one who defeats others in wrestling, but the strong man is the one who controls himself in a fit of rage.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“A Believer is not a person who attacks the integrity of others, curses others, uses foul language or is unpleasant in his speech with others.” (Tirmidhi)

Abu Hurairah, may Allah be pleased with him, reported:

A man asked the Prophet ﷺ to give him advice, and he said to him, “Do not get angry.” The man repeated his request several times and was told every time, “Do not get angry.” (Bukhari)

26 MALICIOUS JOY OVER THE SUFFERINGS OF OTHERS.

Allah’s Messenger ﷺ said:

“Do not demonstrate any happiness upon seeing your brother’s tragedy. Allah would be Merciful to the latter and afflict you with such problems.” (Tirmidhi)

The Day of Judgment will be a dark day wherein people will be guided only by the light of their good works in this life.



Islam bans all forms of suspicion and evil thoughts about others.

27 UNDUE INTERFERENCE WITH THINGS THAT DO NOT CONCERN HIM

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“One of the signs of being a good Muslim is to leave that which does not concern you.”

[Reported by Tirmidhi]

28 UNJUST RULING AND SENTENCES

Laws are derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah and thus there are no legislators except Allah in Islam. Therefore, a judge is entrusted with interpreting the law and applying it justly in all individual cases. If he becomes unjust in his verdicts, he is betraying the sacred trust. Allah states,

“And whoever does not judge by what Allah has revealed - then it is those who are the disbelievers.” (5:44)

This is also based on the Hadith of Allah's Messenger ﷺ:

“The judges are three, two of which are the dwellers of the Hellfire and one who is in Paradise. A judge who knows the truth and judges accordingly would be dwelling in Paradise. A judge who knows the truth but purposely deviates from it would be dwelling in the Hellfire. The judge who passes his sentence without possessing appropriate knowledge would also be dwelling in the Hellfire.” One of the Companions, who was present at the time raised the following question, “What is the sin of the judge who didn't possess the appropriate knowledge of the case?” Allah's Messenger ﷺ commented, “His sin is that he should not function as a judge until he is knowledgeable.” (Hakim)

29 SPYING ON OTHERS

Islam bans spying on others by all means as mentioned by Allah:

“O you who have believed, avoid much [negative] assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother when dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.” (49:12)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said:

“A person who listens in to the conversation of others who hate him to listen in would have molten lead poured into his ears on the Day of Judgment.” (Bukhari)



30 SPREADING THE MISTAKES OF OTHERS AND SLANDERING

A gossip breaks up amiable relationships, between people, breeds animosity, and creates a situation of chaos in society. Allah, the Almighty, states

“And do not obey every worthless habitual swearer, a scorner, going about with malicious gossip.” (68:10-11)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

“A slanderer would not be allowed to enter Paradise.” (Bukhari & Muslim)

One of the sure results of slander is the spread of rumors, hatred and anger among members of the community. As such, this may lead to murders or a disorder in the community. Islam neither accepts nor condones such behavior.

31 EXPLOITATION OF OTHERS, ESPECIALLY THE EASILY VICTIMIZED, LIKE THE DESTITUTE OR ELDERLY.

Islam aims to establish a well-integrated society with solid fraternal bonds. Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, said:

“Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbor farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful.” (4:36)

32 INCONVENIENCES TO OTHERS, ESPECIALLY NEIGHBORS

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

“By Allah! A person would not become a full Believer! By Allah! A person would not become a full Believer! [Repeating the same phrase twice] The Companions asked, ‘O Prophet of Allah! Who is this person?’ Allah’s Messenger ﷺ commented, ‘He is the one whose neighbor is neither safe, nor secure, against his harms and evils.’” (Bukhari & Muslim)

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

THE MESSENGER OF GOD MUHAMMAD

An account of the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The book introduces us to the Prophet's noble character, his humble life and his conduct with his family at home, his companions and all people in society. It tells us how he strove to fulfill the task God assigned to him and contemplates how he dealt with his enemies, the exceptional magnanimity he showed to all and his simple, but highly effective, method of advocating his message.



THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING ISLAM

This book explains how Islam is a code of living that covers all aspects of life. It comprises a set of acts of worship which play important roles in placing morality on a solid foundation and strengthening good qualities in people so that they are keen to follow the right path. The book cites many examples and speaks about the importance Islam attaches to knowledge. It mentions a number of recent scientific discoveries that the Qur'an has referred to 14 centuries ago.



MESSAGE OF ISLAM

The Message of Islam begins by reminding the reader that Islam, its worship, the rules governing people's transactions and all its teachings have always remained the same as they were taught by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). No change or alteration has been introduced into the religion, though some Muslims have changed. The book discusses and sheds light on a number of rights to which Islam attaches great importance.



ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF PEACE

Islam is the Religion of Peace, shows with perfect clarity that Islam is the religion of peace and that the spread of Islam means the spread of peace throughout the world. Muslims must always be true to their promises and covenants and treat others with justice and compassion.



EASE AND TOLERANCE IN ISLAM

This book explains that Islam admits no rigidity and making things easy is a general feature of all aspects of the Islamic faith. It is a religion God revealed that can be implemented by people with different failings, feelings and abilities. Islamic law takes all this into account and addresses human nature and appeals to it. God says: "He has laid no hardship on you in anything that pertains to religion." (22: 78)



HUMAN RIGHTS IN ISLAM

Human rights in Islam are outlined in the Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). They aim to make man lead a life of compassion and dignity, so that he acquires all good qualities and deals with others in the best manner. The book clarifies the misconceptions that are often expressed regarding the different aspects of freedom and responds to criticism in a calm and objective way.



BILAL THE ABYSSINIAN

This book tells the history of Bilal ibn Rabah, a former slave who became a companion of the Prophet. The book expounds Islam's attitude to racial discrimination, highlighting significant events that show the Prophet took care of many of those who were persecuted, protected them and gave them their rightful status in the Muslim community.



THE PATH TO HAPPINESS

The Path to Happiness explains that the way of life Islam provides for its followers is divine and intended to ensure that people enjoy real happiness in this present life and in the life to come. Islam establishes the concept of true and everlasting happiness, which makes Muslims aspire to the sublime through obedience of God and earning His pleasure.



WOMEN IN ISLAM

This book discusses the status of women prior to Islam and how women were ill-treated and humiliated in many cultures. It explains how Islam put an end to all this injustice, established women's rights and gave women their rightful status.



ROMANCE IN ISLAM

This book highlights the great importance Islam attaches to love. It shows that the love of God is the best and the most noble love. When it is rooted in a person's heart, it sets that person's behaviour on the right footing, elevates his emotions and feelings and removes selfishness. A person who truly loves God extends feelings of love and compassion to all creatures.



ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE ON SEX

This book discusses the Islamic approach to sex and how to satisfy the sexual desire in the proper and beneficial way. The proper way to satisfy sexual desire is within marriage and according to Islam, marriage is a necessity for the individual to achieve personal fulfillment. For society, marriage is the way to progress, development and stability.



JESUS IN THE QURAN

After first discussing people's need to receive the divine message through prophets, this book relates the story of Jesus, son of Mary (peace be upon him). It starts well before his birth, then goes on to discuss his message and the opposition he had to endure. The book also discusses the Qur'anic account of Jesus, which makes clear that he enjoys a very high position with God Almighty.



GLAD TIDINGS

Glad Tidings explains the nature of Islam and clarifies the error of people who rely for information on suspect sources. The book highlights the main features of Islam and tells everyone who embraces Islam that God erases all their past sins and errors. As the Prophet makes clear: "Islam wipes away all past sins."



MY FIRST STEPS IN ISLAM

This book explains for non-Muslim readers how to embrace Islam and shows that this does not require much effort. To new Muslims, the book explains the essential elements of Islam and outlines the character of Prophet Muhammad, his qualities and the message he delivered to mankind. It goes on to discuss the various acts of worship Muslims are required to offer, as well as their purposes and significance.



THE PURITY

Under Islam, the concept of purification is not limited to personal and physical purity; it includes purifying oneself of sin and all disobedience of God. This book discusses the detailed rules of physical purification, including ablution, grand ablution, the removal of impurity, dry ablution, etc.



HISN AI-MU'MIN

Hisn Al-Mu'min speaks of the causes of reversals and misfortunes that people encounter. It highlights how one can ensure the protection and preservation of God's favours and blessings, as well as preventing harm and reducing the effects of personal tragedies and calamities. The book teaches the ways and means to fortify oneself against the effect of such tragedies, the most important being remembrance of God and glorifying Him at all times. This book explains the best forms of such remembrance and glorification.



THE BEGINNING AND THE END

Questions of the creation, existence and progress of the universe have been raised by communities throughout the ages. Yet from its earliest days, Islam addressed these questions in a most direct and clear way. This book explains that the ultimate objective of creation is for all creatures to submit themselves to God and worship Him alone. All aspects of life in the universe inevitably end in death then will be brought back to life on the Day of Resurrection when they receive due recompense for their actions.



EVERY RELIGIOUS INNOVATION

This book defines and explains the various types of deviation from the essence of Islam and its true teachings. It reveals the negative consequences of deviation on Muslims and their life and how deviation is bound to give non-Muslims a distorted view of Islam. Finally, the book describes the role of Muslims in discarding all deviation, according to their abilities.





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ISLAM IS THE RELIGION OF PEACE

Islam is the Religion of Peace shows with clarity that Islam is the religion of perfect peace, and that the spread of Islam means the spread of peace throughout the world. Muslims must always be true to their promises and covenants, and must treat others with justice and compassion, particularly those who are weak and vulnerable.

The book makes clear that when the early Muslims overpowered major empires and took over vast areas, their motives were not to subjugate people or to enrich themselves. Indeed Islam stands firmly against injustice, tyranny and corruption, and builds a state where all people, Muslims and non-Muslims, can enjoy full justice and true compassion. Islam helps people to discard the worship of other beings so that they worship God alone.

We trust that you will enjoy reading this book, and we will be happy to receive your comments and observations.

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