

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

Introduction to Islam

By Qazi Fazlullah

Allah (SWT) says in the Holy Quran Surah Al-Baqarah 2:208, “Indeed religion in the sight of Allah is Islam (only) and he who seek a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him and he is the loser in the day of resurrection.”

Preface:

God almighty (Allah) has given respect and honor to human beings as His agent in the universe. He sent Messengers to guide them to the right path and to receive prosperity in this life and in the hereafter. Muhammad (SAS) is the last and final Prophet of God Almighty, and the Holy Quran is the last and final message of God Almighty and it is fundamental source for all Islamic laws.

Islam – The most liked and chosen religion:

“Islam” is an Arabic word derived from another Arabic word known as “silm” or “salm” which means peace, conciliation and reconciliation. While Islam means to avail this peace for you through submission to God almighty and to provide peace to others, it also means surrender, submission, and obedience.

As a “Deen” and as a religion, this is the one most liked and chosen for mankind by Allah (SWT). As stated in the Holy Quran Surah Al-Maidah 5:3, **“And I have chosen for you Islam as a Deen (religion).”**

Islam is the Deen (religion) of all the Messengers as Allah (SWT) said in Surah Ash-Shuraa 42:13, **“He has ordained for you the same religion (Islam) which he ordained for Nuh (Noah) and that which we inspired in you, and that which we ordained for Ibrahim (Abraham), Moses, and Jesus, saying you should establish Deen and make no division.”**

The basic, original and common call for every Messenger was “Tauheed,” which is to convince people that there is no God but Allah (God) Almighty.

Surah Al Anbiya 21:25, “And we have not sent any messenger before you, but we have revealed to him that there is no God, but Me, so do worship Me alone.”

Surah Al-Imran 3:84, “Say; we believe in God and in what has been revealed to us, and what was revealed to Abraham, Ismael, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes, and in that which is given to Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets of their Lord, we make no distinction between one and another among them, and to God do we submit.”

Surat At-Tawbah 9:33, “It is He who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the religion of truth, to proclaim it, over all religions even though the pagans may detest (it).”

Basic beliefs in Islam:

Islam has seven fundamental beliefs, which are called “Eiman.” The success in the hereafter depends upon Eiman. The word Eiman is derived from the word “Aman” which means peace. So Eiman means to avail peace by being a believer and to provide peace to others by convincing them to be a believer.

The seven fundamental faiths in Islam:

1. To believe in Allah (God), and to believe in His oneness that He is the only One, He has no partner, no son, no daughter, no father, no mother, and He has no need for anyone. He is the creator, King, Lord, and sustainer.
2. To believe in Allah (SWT)’s Angels. That there is a specific type of His creation known as Angels. These Angels do whatever has been assigned to them by Allah. They are arranged in the light of Allah’s commands and they never disobey Him.
3. To believe in His books (revealed) and scriptures. There were 104 books and scriptures revealed by Allah (SWT), and amongst these the famous ones are the Taurat (Talmud) revealed to Moses, Dhabor (Psalms) revealed to Dawood (David), Enjeel (Gospel) revealed to Eisa (Jesus), and the Holy Quran revealed to Muhammad (Peace be upon all of them)

as the last and final message of God. All of the previous books and its disfigured scriptures have been rectified in the Holy Quran; therefore, every human being is now bound to obey this book and the last and final Prophet of Allah, Muhammad (SAS).

4. To believe in His Prophets since Adam up to Muhammad (SAS), that they were all true and right, and they all came from Allah (SWT) and were guided towards Him. There have been more than one hundred thousand Prophets sent by Allah, but their call has always been the same, and Muhammad (SAS) is the last and final Prophet of Allah. All these Messengers were sent to specific regions of the world and to specific people, which were usually the Prophets own people, and also their message spanned in a specific time period, while Allah's last Prophet, Muhammad (SAS) has been sent to all of mankind, carrying Allah's message for the entire world, and for all times; so he is a universal Prophet.
5. To believe in the last day, that it will be the end to this world as we know it, and the day that all things herein will be destroyed.
6. To believe in "Taqdeer," which means that everything has been created by Allah (SWT) and He has all control over all things and affairs, and

everything has been put on record with Him and is pre-destined and pre-ordained by God Almighty.

7. To believe in the life of the hereafter for accountability of all, where we will be either rewarded or punished for our deeds. Deeds even to the extent of an atoms weight of good or an atoms weight of bad shall be accounted for on the day of accountability.

Important deeds in Islam:

Islam is like a canopy, which has five supporting pillars. Each of these pillars is a fundamental tenant and deed that every Muslim must fulfill. These are:

1. To declare, testify, and bear witness that there is no God but Allah (SWT), and that Muhammad (SAS) is the Messenger of Allah.
2. To pray five times a day. These are called "Salat" and they are:
 - a. Fajr (Morning Prayer) after dawn break and before sunrise.
 - b. Dhuhr (noon) prayer after the sun declines to the west.
 - c. Asr (afternoon) prayer before sunset.
 - d. Maghrib (after sunset) prayer.

- e. Isha (bedtime) prayer.
- 3. Fasting in the month of Ramadan. A lunar month which is the 9th month of the lunar calendar.
- 4. Zakat or alms giving which is a mandatory charity payable every year. Every Muslim must pay 2.5 percent of his or her wealth to the needy Muslims.
- 5. Hajj or pilgrimage to the house of Allah, which is in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. To be performed at least once in a lifetime by every Muslim who can afford it. The Hajj is performed in the 12th lunar month called Dhul-Hijjah.

The status of human beings in Islam:

Human beings as a whole are a dignified, respectable and honorable creation of Allah (SWT), as the Holy Quran says 17:70, **“Indeed we have given respect to the human beings and we carried them on earth and sea and provided them with good things and preferred them above many of those whom we created with marked preference.”**

Human beings are the highest and finest creation of Allah (SWT). Allah has empowered human beings to not only be able to choose between the right and

wrong path through their own will and free choice, but has also taught humans the right path through Messengers.

Islam does not allow any form of discrimination either on a regional basis or on race, color, sex, and even religion. It teaches human respect, dignity, and equality for all. Islam ensures justice, freedom, and peace to all with dignity.

Allah (SWT) said in the Holy Quran 49:13, **“O mankind we created you from one (couple), man and woman (Adam and Eve), and made you into tribes and clans so that you may know (cooperate) with one another. Verily the noblest one of you in the sight of Allah is the one who is the most pious (deeply conscious of Allah and doing goodness to His creations). Behold, Allah is all knowing and all aware.”**

In regard to sex (gender), Allah (SWT) said in the Holy Quran 16:97, **“Whosoever does good deeds, maybe a male or a female, we will give them a satisfactory life here, and we will give them the best reward of what he or she used to do.”**

And Prophet Muhammad (SAS) in his last address said, **“Be afraid of Allah in regards to your women (respect them and give them their due rights, and do not deny them their status and do not disgrace them).”**

In reference to other religions and its followers the non-Muslims living in Islamic States and abiding by the laws of the land must be given their due status, preserving their rights, and be given respect and protection to their places of worship and their right to worship. The Holy Prophet (SAS) said, **“Let them do what their religion is, and for them is that (right) which is for us, and upon them is that (duty) which is upon us, and their blood is (as sacred) as ours, and their wealthy is (as safe) as ours.”** And even in reference to wine and pork, two things that are very disliked in Islam, the Holy Prophet (SAS) said, **“Wine for them is like vinegar for us, and pork for them is like lamb for us.”**

Status of women in Islam:

When the Prophet of Allah came, the Arabic society was a rusted society. The women were considered as a utility or treated like a tissue paper, use it and throw it away. Therefore, the wealthy and powerful people used to,

- i. Have as many wives as they wished and to desert from any one of them they liked, keeping her in a hung condition.
- ii. Putting his hand over a woman and claiming it without her consent or even the consent of her family if she was not from a powerful family, which means that might was right.

- iii. Marrying the widow of his father, brother, uncle, etc, without her consent as a type of inheritance, without giving her share of inheritance.
- iv. Stopping the widow of their kith and kin unless someone paid a specific amount to claim them, and that is why Allah said in the Holy Quran Surah An Nisa 4:19, **“O you who believed! It is not lawful for you that you should take women as a heritage against their will, or you stop them (to marry), so that you may take (back) some of what you have given them (the bridal money or gifts).”**

When the Prophet (SASA) came he told them that women are human as we are. In the Holy Quran in more than one place it is said “Ba’dukum Min Ba’din,” which means equal to one another. Also, Allah said, **“O mankind, verily we created you from one male and one female (Adam and Eve, or by everyone’s own father and own mother),”** which means equality – yes, different structure, different features, and different qualities are needed for the smooth running of this worldly system in individuals as well as in gender and sex, as Allah said in the Holy Quran Surah An Nisa 4:32, **“And covet not by which Allah has made some of you excel others, man will have a lot of what they have availed (naturally), and women will have a lot of what they have availed, and ask Allah for his grace, verily Allah is the all knower of everything.”** This verse means that qualities to every gender is natural and each

gender has its rights and duties based on that, so every gender may stay in its own limits of their rights and duties, because interference in the field of the opposite gender will create a mess.

Based on that Allah has placed the duties of earning and protection on the male gender, as Allah said in the Holy Quran Surah An Nisa 4:34, **“Men are “Qawwam” (responsible of affairs) of women, since Allah has made them excel one another, and as they (the men) spend their wealth. So the righteous women are obedient, guarding in absence as Allah have made them guard.”** So there is no earning and defense responsibility on women, they have to take care and guard the house, property, children, and their own chastity in the absence of their husband.

The Shariah has given due importance to women in marriage; for their consent to accept, and fixing bridal money as a gift and mark of respect. The Prophet (SAS) said regarding women that, **“Paradise is beneath the feet of mothers.”** He also said, **“The best one in the eyes of Allah is one who is good for his family.”** He also said that **“In daughters there is blessing, they beautify and adorn the happiness, they are the supporters in difficulties, and they are the nurses in times of sickness.”**

Basic sources of Islam:

The basic sources of Islam are the Holy Quran, and the sayings, practices, and its interpretation from the Holy Prophet (SAS); as the Holy Prophet (SAS) was a perfect role model for human beings in every walk of life and he is the last and final Prophet of God Almighty.

Islam is a complete system of life and it contains creeds, deeds, ways of worship, ways of family life, and the best structure that ensures its proper functioning. Islam also governs the ways of contracts and transactions, the establishment of a State and Government, courts and procedural systems to deal with crime and torts, and ways for an international system that governs its affairs with other states in the most humane manner.

Concept of Dawah and Jihad:

The idea that Islam was spread by the sword and by force is a very wrong and prejudicial concept. This notion is absolutely false. Islam is a religion of “Dawah,” which is a call and an invitation towards Islam, to convince people to accept and follow Islam through reason and by way of example. Dawah is the only means through which Islam has ever spread. For example, had it been through force or coercion, there would not have been a single non-Muslim

remaining in India, where the Muslims ruled for more than a thousand years and yet non-Muslims are still in majority. And in Spain where the Muslims ruled for over eight hundred years but the vast majority of the people remained non-Muslims. Allah (SWT) said 2-256; **“There is no compulsion in religion.”** However, when a person becomes a Muslim then he or she will be ordered to fulfill what is mandatory and to abstain from what is forbidden and wrong.

Jihad is a form of “Dawah.” It is a form of struggle and an effort to strive hard to uplift you personally, spiritually, and intellectually to become a better Muslim, and this struggle is not just an individual struggle but a collective one. A Muslim must strive hard to improve society by purifying it from ills and evils. When a Muslim finds himself, his colleagues in faith, his State or Government facing challenges and conspiracies that can harm the Muslim community, then it is incumbent upon him as a Muslim to defend against these factors with any means at his disposal. These challenges and conspiracies can be internal or external; they can physically, mentally, spiritually, and financially harm the Muslim community. They can harm the self-respect, the dignity, and challenge the very existence and status of the Muslim people, depriving them of their very basic humanitarian rights. To defend oneself and the Muslim nation against such challenges is not just a responsibility but also a right of every Muslim. And if the conspirators are inclined towards reconciliation, a Muslim is bound to do the

same, for Allah (SWT) is with those who show restraint. And sometimes Islam even orders to do Jihad against those Muslims who have rebelled against the Islamic Government and State. This sort of action is reasonable, logical, and is recognized globally at times when it becomes imperative to cut-off the power of the enemies.

The Holy Prophet (SAS) was born in 570 after Jesus in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and was sent as a Messenger in 610 after Jesus. He completed his mission in 23 years and passed away in 632 after Jesus at the age of 63 years old. He is buried in Medina in Saudi Arabia. He gave all of mankind a complete code of life in the name of Islam, which should be adopted and practiced to gain prosperity here and in the hereafter.