

Part 2: Prophethood

Our Doctrines Concerning:

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[Prophethood](#)

We believe that prophethood is a duty commissioned by Almighty Allah and a mission decided by Him. He appoints persons that He prefers and selects from among His righteous servants and His humanly perfect saints for this mission. He then sends them to guide the people towards prosperity in this world as well as the next. These messengers purify them from immorality and crooked habits, teach them wisdom and knowledge and show them the ways of pleasure and welfare, so that they might attain appropriate perfection and raise themselves to elevated ranks in the abodes of both this world and the

Hereafter.

We believe that the Rule of Grace, which will be explained later on, necessitates that the Creator, Who is gracious to His servants, sends His messengers to guide people to the right path, undertake the reformative mission, and act as the Lord's representatives and vicegerents.

We also believe that Almighty Allah has not authorized people to appoint, elect, or choose the Prophets. "They have no choice in the matter." In fact, the whole matter is Almighty Allah's, because:

اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ

Allah knows best with whom to place His message. (6/124)

Likewise, people have nothing to do with those whom Almighty Allah sends as guides to bear good tidings for those who believe in them and warn those who disbelieve against the Lord's chastisement. They also have nothing to do with the laws, regulations, and rules that are conveyed by these messengers.

Prophethood being part of Divine Grace

Man is an eccentric creature and a complex structure in his form, nature, psychology, and intelligence. Moreover, each individual human personality has its own complex nature, in which inclinations to evil are existent and incentives to goodness and righteousness are also existent.

On the one hand, man has been fashioned on emotions and instincts, such as egoism, fancy, selfishness and submission to personal whims. He also possesses an inclination towards supremacy, dominance, prevalence over others, and a desire for the pleasures, vanities, and chattels of this world.

Describing man, Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِفِي خُسْرٍ

Lo! Man is surely the loser. (103/2)

كَأَلَّا إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لِيَطْغَىٰ أَنْ رَآهُ اسْتغْنَىٰ

Nay! Man is most surely inordinate, because he sees himself free from want. (96/6-7)

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ

Surely, the soul of man incites to evil. (12/53)

The Holy Qur'an contains many other verses clearly indicating the emotions and whims on which human beings have been fashioned.

On the other hand, Almighty Allah has created in man a guiding intellect, which leads him to prosperity and loci of goodness, and a deterrent conscience that prevents him from committing evil and wrong and blames him for doing any hideous and censured act.

Internal conflict between desires and intellect is always there inside human souls; hence, he whose intellect overcomes his desires will find himself a high-ranking place among the ones advanced in humanity and perfect in spirituality. However, those who are overcome by their whimsical desires will be with the losers and degenerate to the rank of beasts.⁽¹⁾

Unfortunately, the stronger of these two contending powers is desire. This is why we find most people plunging into deviation and detaching themselves from true guidance by acceding to their desires and responding to the calls of their passions. Referring to this fact, the Holy Qur'an reads:

وَمَا أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ وَلَوْ حَرَصْتَ بِمُؤْمِنِينَ

And though you try much, most men will not believe. (12/103)

In consequence of his imperfection and ignorance of all the facts and secrets of things that surround him and stem from his own self, man is not competent to recognize all that which harms or benefits him or brings him happiness or misery respecting his own self and his species, society, and surroundings. Furthermore, man is always ignorant of himself; and the more man advances in knowledge of natural things and material beings the more he realizes his self-ignorance.

In order to attain the highest ranks of happiness, man is consequently in the most urgent need for individuals who can show him the straight path and the clearest course that drives him into orthodoxy and true guidance. By means of such, the defence of the intellect will be strengthened and man will be able to overcome his vehement enemy when he readies himself to storm through the battlefield that decides between acting upon the intellect or following the desires.

Such need of someone to guide man to the path of prosperity and uprightness becomes imperative when man's whims make what he does seem fair to him and make his deviant acts seem alluring to him. These whims show him evil as good and good as evil and confuse the path to prosperity, uprightness, and bliss, especially when man lacks knowledge through which he can discriminate between what is good and beneficial and what is evil and harmful. Each one of us is the victim of such conflict consciously or unconsciously, except these whom Almighty Allah protects against it.

It is difficult even for an enlightened civilized man, to attain the path of prosperity and uprightness through personal competence and discriminate between what benefits him and what harms him in this world as well as the next. Concerning his own self and his species, society and surroundings, no matter how much he collaborates with his associates and reveals his ideas before them, or how many conferences, councils, and assemblies he holds he still needs spiritual guidance.

It has been thus necessary for Almighty Allah, out of His kindness and mercy to human beings, to “send a messenger from among them who recites to them His communications and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and the Wisdom.” He warns them against whatever causes them corruption and guides them towards whatever brings about prosperity and happiness to them.

Clarifying this fact, Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

He it is who sent among the unlettered ones a messenger of their own, to recite unto them His signs, and to purify them and to teach them the Book and Wisdom; although they were before certainly in clear error. (62/2)

This gracious act of Almighty Allah is necessary because His grace to His servants is part of His absolute perfection. Verily, Almighty Allah is All-gracious, All-magnanimous, and All-generous.

Therefore, when an object is worthy of and ready to receive His magnanimity and grace, then it is necessary for Him to shower His magnanimity on it since His mercy is free from miserliness and His magnanimity and generosity are seamless.

“Necessity” in this course does not mean that it is incumbent upon Almighty Allah to obey the command of someone, since He is too Exalted to receive any command from any being; rather, “necessity” in this respect bears the same sense of necessity in our saying, “the Necessity Existent”, which means coexistence and inseparability.

Miracles of the Prophets

We believe that when Almighty Allah inducts a person into the position of guiding His creatures to the right path and appoints him as a messenger, He introduces him to the creatures and guides them to him in person. The one and only way of such introduction is that Almighty Allah presents a proof and evidence(2) on the truth of His messengers' claims so that His grace to His creatures is perfect and His mercy to them complete.

It is also necessary that such evidence be of a special kind that no one can produce save the Creator of

all beings and the Fashioner of all things. That is to say, such evidence must be supernatural and beyond the capabilities of human beings. Hence, as Almighty Allah grants His guiding messengers the power to manage such supernatural phenomena, these miracles act as introducers of and indicators of the messengers. Such paranormal phenomena are called 'miracles' because human beings are unable to manage or do the like of them.

Since it is necessary that each prophet come with a miracle through which he can prove being a prophet before the people to substantiate the Lord's argument against them, his miracle must be inimitably manifest so that men of knowledge and experts of that age, aside from ordinary people, cannot bring the like of it. Associated with such a miracle, a prophet must declare himself as the messenger of the Lord so that his miracle would act as evidence on his claim and as proof of the truth of his declaration.

Hence, when distinguished individuals will not be able to bring the like of the miracle, everybody will know that the miracle is beyond the scope of human power and is extraordinary. This would definitely prove that the owner of the miracle, namely the prophet, is an extraordinary person, because he has a special spiritual contact with the Maker of all beings. These two factors—manifestation of the miracle and claim of prophethood—would make people believe and consequently have faith in his mission, submit to his instructions, and acknowledge his deeds. After that, some would believe in him as prophet and others would disbelieve.

In view of that, we notice that the miracle of each prophet was in accordance with the arts and sciences that were prevalent during his age. For instance, the miracle of Prophet Moses (ʿa) was the rod that devoured the falsities of the enchanters of that time, since the art of enchantment was the most widespread art at that time. Therefore, when the rod of Prophet Moses (ʿa) came, the very art of enchantment was proven false and the enchanters knew for sure that the rod could do things beyond their competence and over all their art, since the art produced by that rod was paranormal and beyond man's ability.(3)

Similarly, the miracle of Prophet Jesus (ʿa), which was the healing of the blind and the leprous and bringing the dead to life, took this form because medication was the most widespread art of that time in which physicians and healers enjoyed the highest rank in society. Hence, when Prophet Jesus (ʿa) came with an extraordinary medicine, the sciences of these physicians and healers could not compete with him.(4)

As for our Prophet, Muhammad, peace be upon him and his Household, his immortal miracle is the Holy Qur'an that came with miraculous eloquence and articulacy in an age when rhetoric was the most widespread art and orators were in the fore of everyone else due to their excellent diction and lofty purity of language. Like a thunderbolt, the Holy Qur'an came to humiliate and astound these eloquent people and to convey to them the message whose eloquence they would never be able to resist; they therefore cringed before it as they were convinced that they would never have the power to challenge it.(5)

The occasion for their inability is that the Holy Qur'an challenged them to produce ten comparable chapters (*surah*), but they could not;(6) it then challenged them to produce one such *surah*, but they could not.(7)

Because they were unable to compete with this challenge, they used their swords rather than their words. Thus we understand that the Holy Qur'an is a miracle with which the Holy Prophet, Muhammad (s), came as evidence of his claim to prophethood and bearer of the Lord's message.

We have thus realized that he—peace be upon him and his Household—is truly the messenger of Almighty Allah and he came with the truth and verified it.

Infallibility of the Prophets

We believe that the prophets, all without exception, are infallible.(8) So are the Holy Imams (ʿa), the successors to the Holy Prophet (s); pure blessings be upon them all. However, some Muslim sects have disagreed with us on this doctrine, as they do not deem necessary the infallibility of the prophets (ʿa), let alone the Holy Imams (ʿa).

Infallibility (*ʿismah*) means to avoid committing sins and acts of disobedience to Almighty Allah, be they major or trivial. It also includes refraining from committing errors and expressing unawareness, even if such things are rationally not impossible for the prophets. Nevertheless, a Prophet is required to be far above even slight defects that may injure his personality, such as eating like ordinary people and laughing loudly, as well as every act that is crude.

It is necessary to prove the infallibility of the prophets (ʿa),(9) because if a prophet commits a sin, an act of disobedience to Almighty Allah, an error, or any similar act, then the matter will be restricted to one of the following probabilities:

- (1) it is still obligatory to follow him in such an act, or
- (2) it is not obligatory.

As for the first probability, if it is obligatory to follow him in such acts, this will definitely mean that it is permissible, and even obligatory, to commit acts of disobedience to Almighty Allah by His permission; and this is absolutely invalid on account of religious and reason-based necessities.

If we decide that it is not obligatory to follow the prophet, this will definitely be in violation of the essential principle of belief in Prophethood. Obedience to the Prophets is an obligation once they have been recognised.(10) Such being the case, each and every act of a prophet would be exposed to the probability that it was an act of disobedience to Almighty Allah or a mistake; hence, we would have the pretext not to follow the prophets in any of their words and deeds. The inevitable result would be the loss of the benefit of sending messengers and prophets by Almighty Allah. Moreover, a prophet would no

longer be an extraordinary person and his words, deeds, and knowledge would no longer have such precious value that is always reliable; and it would no longer be imperative to obey or trust the instructions and words of the prophets.

This very proof is applicable to the infallibility of the Holy Imams, because we believe that Almighty Allah selects an Imam for this position to guide human beings and represent prophets.

Attributes of the Prophets

We believe that a prophet, just as he must be infallible, must be characterized by the most excellent and most favorable attributes of morality and rationality, such as courage, patience, shrewdness, intelligence plus administrative and managerial capabilities, so that no other human being can match him in these attributes. Without such high moral and rational standards a prophet would not be worthy of holding the position of general headship over all human beings and general authority over the whole world.

Furthermore, a prophet must be of legitimate birth, honest, trustworthy, and far above all vices before appointed as prophet, so that hearts feel inclined towards him and souls have confidence in him and, over and above, he should deserve such a great Divine position. Furthermore, a prophet must be of legitimate birth, honest, trustworthy, and far above all vices before appointed as prophet, so that hearts feel inclined towards him and souls have confidence in him and, over and above, he should deserve such a great Divine position.

Prophets and their Books

We believe that all the Prophets (ʿa) are on the truth;⁽¹¹⁾ and they are infallible and immaculate. To deny their prophethood, to revile and deride them are parts of disbelief and atheism, since such acts result in the denial of our Prophet, Muhammad (s), who has apprised us of them and declared their honesty.

It is however expressly obligatory to acquaint oneself with their names and codes of law, such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, Solomon, Moses, and Jesus (ʿa) as well as the other prophets whose names have been cited in the Holy Qur'an. Thus, to deny any of them is to deny all of them in general and the prophethood of our Prophet Muhammad (s) in particular.

It is also obligatory to believe in their Books and in whatever has been revealed to them from the Lord.

However, it has been proven that the current Torah and Gospel (i.e. the Old and New Testaments) have been distorted and their contents are not the identical revelations of the Lord. Many alterations, modifications, additions, and deletions, have been made to these two Divine Books since the times of Prophet Moses (ʿa) and Prophet Jesus (ʿa). Moreover, the majority, if not the entire, contents of these Books were written by the followers and disciples of these two Prophets a long time after their death. majority, if not the entire, contents of these Books were written by the followers and disciples of

these two Prophets a long time after their death.

Islam

We believe that “The true religion with Allah is Islam.”(12) It is indeed the true, Divine code of law that is the last and most perfect of all Divine codes of law. It also accomplishes the greatest human happiness and achieves the most comprehensive benefits in this world as well as in the hereafter. Unchangeable and unmodified, Islam is valid for all ages and times, since it comprises all individual, social, and political systems of life that are needed by the human race.

Islam being the seal of all codes of law with no other law being expected to reform the conditions of human beings who are unfortunately plunging into wrong and corruption, there must come a day when Islam becomes most powerful and its justice and laws spread all over this globe.

If the laws of Islam are applied to the entire world completely and properly, peace will reach all human beings and pleasure will find its way to each one of them, and they will attain the utmost of their dreams of luxury, dignity, opulence, meekness, and virtuous morality. Besides, clouds of persecution will be driven away from the horizons, amicability and fraternity will prevail among people, and poverty and dearth will be extinct.

It is noticeable, in the present day, that those who claim being Muslims are experiencing shameful and derogatory conditions. The reason for this is that the religion of Islam with its laws and spirit was not implemented since the first century of its advent. It was certainly not their obedience to the precepts of Islam that caused such disgraceful retardation. Quite the reverse, it was their disobedience to the precepts of Islam, their underestimation of its regulations, and the spread of oppression and aggression among all their social classes, beginning with their kings and retinues down to the paupers and ordinary subjects. All these have been the factors that crippled the movements of Muslims, enfeebled their powers, destroyed their spirituality and caused them affliction and distress. As a result, Almighty Allah has destroyed them on account of their faults:

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُغَيِّرًا نِعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَى قَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

That is because Allah never changes the Grace He has bestowed on any people until they first change what is in themselves. (8:53)

Thus does Allah treat His creatures:

إِنَّهُ لَا يُفْلِحُ الْمُجْرِمُونَ

Lo! The guilty are never successful. (10/17)

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلِهَا مُصْلِحُونَ

In truth, their Lord would never destroy their cities unjustly till their folk were doing right. (11/117)

وَكَذَٰلِكَ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ إِذَا أَخَذَ الْقُرَىٰ وَهِيَ ظَالِمَةٌ ۖ إِنَّ أَخَذَهُ أَلِيمٌ شَدِيدٌ

Even thus is the grasp of the Lord when He grasps the cities while they are doing evil. Lo! His grasp is painful, terrible. (11/102)

How do they expect that the religion of Islam will extricate this nation from its abyss while the religion in the view of the members of this nation is mere ink on paper! They do not carry out even the least amount of its instructions.

Although the prime foundations of Islam are faith, honesty, truthfulness, sincerity, good behavior, altruism, loving for one's brother-in-faith whatever one loves for oneself, and the like moral standards, Muslims have left these morals far behind since ages up to the present day.

With the progress of time, we find Muslims increasingly separating into scattered fragments, sects, and parties, rushing madly upon the transient pleasures of this world, crushing each other for fancies, and accusing each other of atheism through incomprehensible notions or affairs that are not their concern.

Such matters have distracted them from the essence of religion and from pursuing the interests of their communities and their own. Useless questions like:

- whether the Holy Qur'an is eternal or was created afterwards;
- whether it is correct to believe in the Divine menace and the Final Return or not; or
- whether Heaven and Hell have already been created, or will be created in future.

Such disputatious issues cause them to wrangle against each other and accuse each other of atheism.

If such disputations carry an indication, they certainly indicate the deviation of these polemical individuals from the norms that were drawn up to take them to the right path after it had been already paved for them. They also indicate that they are following the other crooked paths that bring about nothing but perdition and extinction.

With the passage of time, Muslims' departure from the right increased until ignorance and deviation surrounded them as they engaged themselves with worthless and trivial affairs and concentrated on

tiring matters, myths, illusions, wars, disputes, and vainglory that finally led them to bottomless abysses. While they were diving in inadvertence and carelessness, the West, the vigilant yet bitter enemy of Islam, colonized their territories and threw them into an unending abyss whose extent and bottom no one knows except Almighty Allah:

وَمَا كَانَ رَبُّكَ لِيُهْلِكَ الْقُرَىٰ بِظُلْمٍ وَأَهْلِهَا مُصْلِحُونَ

In truth, the Lord would never destroy their cities unjustly while their folk were still doing right.
(11/117)

There is no alternative for Muslims today except that they gather their parts and settle an account with themselves for their past negligence. They must then start with disciplining themselves and their coming generations through the orthodox precepts of their religion to eradicate all traces of oppression and injustice among them. Only by doing so can they escape the current catastrophic calamity. The next step must be that they fill the earth with justice and fairness after it has been filled with injustice and oppression. This is the promise of Almighty Allah and His Messenger to them and this is exactly what is expected from their religion since it is the sealing of all religions without which there is no hope to set this world right.

To achieve this, it is inevitable that a leader (imam) shall come out to erase all delusions, innovations, and aberrations that have been imputed to Islam, save people from the wide-ranging corruption and incessant oppression they are experiencing, and redeem them from the current underestimation of moral standards and disparagement of human souls. May Allah hasten his reappearance and make easy his advent.(13)

The Lawgiver of Islam

We believe that the message of Islam is contained in the person of Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (s), the seal of the prophets, the chief of all Messengers, and the best of them. He is the master of all human beings; no virtuous one can ever match him in virtue, no one can ever approach him in nobility, no rational person can ever be equivalent to him in rationality, and no civil person can ever resemble him in courtesy. He is verily on an exalted standard of character and the most excellent in all these characters from the beginning of the human race up to the Day of Resurrection.(14)

The Holy Qur'an

We believe that the Holy Qur'an is the Divine revelation that was revealed by Almighty Allah to His honorable Prophet, making everything clear. It is also the Holy Prophet's immortal miracle that challenges all human beings to bring the like of its eloquence together with the elevated facts and knowledge it comprises. Therefore, no modification, change, or distortion can ever come upon the Holy

Qur'an.(15)

The Book that we are currently holding and reciting is the very Qur'an that was revealed to the Holy Prophet. Whoever claims any statement opposite to this belief is definitely fabricating, erroneous, or dubious. All these categories are devoid of true guidance, since the Holy Qur'an is verily the word of Almighty Allah Who describes it as:

لَا يَأْتِيهِ الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ ۚ تَنْزِيلٌ مِنْ حَكِيمٍ حَمِيدٍ

Falsehood cannot come at it from before it or from behind. It is sent down by One Full of Wisdom, Worthy of all Praise. (41/42)

One of the testimonies to the miraculous nature of the Holy Qur'an is that with the progress of time and evolution of science and art, the Holy Qur'an has always kept its freshness and beauty as well as its supreme objectives and notions. It never contradicts a fixed scientific theory nor does it disagree with a positive philosophical fact.

On the contrary, with the development of scientific researches and the presentation of modern theories, we notice that some books of scholars and master philosophers seem to be trivial, repugnant, or fallacious, irrespective of what elevated scientific rank or intellectual level their writers might have attained. Such fallacies are visible in the works of even the greatest Greek scholars and philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle who have been recognized as fathers of knowledge and intellectual excellence.

We also believe that it is obligatory to respect and esteem the Holy Qur'an in words and deeds; it is therefore impermissible to defile even a single word of it intentionally, as the Holy Qur'an states:

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ

None shall touch it save the purified ones. (56/79)

It is also impermissible for those who are ceremonially impure, whether by major impurity(16)—such as *janabah*,(17) menstruation, puerperium, and the like—or minor impurity(18) including sleeping unless ritual bathing or ritual ablution has been performed. The details of these laws are mentioned in the books of Shi`ite jurisprudence.

Furthermore, it is impermissible to destroy the books of the Holy Qur'an by fire or to offend them by any deed that is conventionally considered a sort of insult, such as throwing them away, staining them, or putting them under one's feet or in a despised place. Whoever intentionally insults or despises the Holy Qur'an through any of these deeds or their likes is decided as having reneged faith and disbelieved in

the Lord of the Worlds.

Proving The Divine Status Of Islam And Past Religious Laws

If a non-Muslim needs reasons to demonstrate the truth of Islam, we can prove it through its immortal miracle, namely the Holy Qur'an and by reference to its miraculous nature, as we have explained earlier. This is our way of convincing ourselves when suspicion and curiosity confronts men of free thinking at the onset of the establishment of their beliefs.

However, before we believe in the Holy Qur'an or accept the faith of Islam as our one and only belief, we need evidence to convince ourselves with the validity of past religious laws contained within Judaism and Christianity. Unfortunately, we lack evidence to convince one who doubts or wonders about these religions, because they do not hold an immortal miracle like the Holy Qur'an. The followers of these religions, who recount marvelous miracles of the past prophets, are in reality suspected in their recounting and judging of these miracles. Moreover, the currently available books that are attributed to the past prophets (ʿa), such as the Old and New Testaments, are devoid of any proof that can verify the immortal miracle. However, Islam verifies them with decisive and convincing testimonies through the Holy Qur'an.

We, Muslims, are required to testify to and believe in the past religious laws just because we are required to believe in whatever has been conveyed to us by this religion, such as its information about the authenticity of the prophethood of a number of previous prophets, as has been previously discussed.

It therefore follows that a Muslim, after he has accepted the teachings of Islam, is not required to evaluate the truth of Christianity or Judaism or such religions, because belief in Islam necessarily entails belief in the past messengers and prophets (ʿa). It is consequently unnecessary for Muslims to investigate and inspect the truth of the miracles of the prophets of these religions, because a Muslim is supposed to believe in these religions and prophets once he believes in Islam.

However, if one investigates the religion of Islam but is not convinced of its truth by the evidence provided, it becomes obligatory upon one, on the grounds of reason and necessity of knowledge and inspection, to investigate the truth of Christianity, because it is the last religion before Islam. If one, after investigation, does not reach certitude, then he is required to investigate the last religion before Christianity, which is supposedly Judaism, until one reaches conviction of a religion, or reject them all.

The issue is contrary for those who have grown up believing in Judaism or Christianity; a Jew's belief in his religion does not release him from the liability of investigating the truth of Christianity and Islam; rather, it is obligatory upon him to inspect and have knowledge of the other religions according to reason. Similarly, it is not correct for a Christian to satisfy himself with his belief in Jesus Christ (ʿa); rather it becomes obligatory upon him to investigate and evaluate the truth of Islam, because both Christianity and Judaism do not deny the coming of a new religion that would abrogate the laws of these

two religions. Moreover, neither Prophet Moses (ʿa) nor Prophet Jesus (ʿa) claimed that no prophet would come after them.

How is it then acceptable for Jews and Christians to rest on their beliefs and lean on their religions before they investigate the religion that is next to theirs, namely Christianity and Islam for the Jews and Islam for the Christians. By virtue of reason, it is also obligatory upon the followers of these religions to investigate the authenticity of the subsequent claim of prophethood so that they might follow it if proven true; otherwise, it would be wise for them, by virtue of reason too, to abide by their current beliefs and religions.

As has been previously cited, a Muslim, when accepting the belief of Islam, is not required to investigate the other religions, including the past ones and the coming ones that claim coming with a new religion, because:

As regarding the past religions, a Muslim is supposed to believe in these religions; therefore, he is not required to ask for proofs on them. The matter is predetermined for him. The laws of Islam abrogate all laws of previous religions. As a result, a Muslim must not act upon those laws.

As regarding future religions,(19) a Muslim is also exempted from investigating and evaluating them, because the Holy Prophet, Muhammad (s), has confirmed:

لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي.

No prophet will come after me.(20)

In the view of Muslims, the Holy Prophet, Muhammad (s), is unquestionably the most honest and most truthful of all. He is as exactly as described by Almighty Allah in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۖ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ

Nor does he (the Holy Prophet) speak from his own desire. This is naught but a revelation from Us. (53/3-4)

A Muslim is thus not required to inquire a proof on the authenticity of a later prophethood.

On account of the long period between us and the age of Prophet Muhammad (s), the bearer of the message of Islam, a great variety of schools of law and opinions, a divergence of sects and creeds has mushroomed. It is a must upon a Muslim to take the path that he trusts will lead him to an acquaintance with the laws revealed to the bearer of the message, because every Muslim individual is under the duty of acting upon the laws of Islam as exactly as they command.

However, a question arises in the minds in this respect: How can a Muslim recognize the laws of Islam as exactly as they command while they are at variance following divergent sects? The methods of performing the obligatory prayers are not the same! Acts of worship are not alike! Laws of transactions are not similar! What then should a Muslim do? According to which method should he perform the prayers? Which opinions should he follow in order to act upon the laws of Islam in all acts of worship and transactions, such as matrimony, divorce, inheritance, merchandising, establishing of religious provisions, blood money, and the like issues?

Of course, it is not permissible to follow one's fathers or to submit to the practise of one's folks and companions. Rather, it is necessary to go through self-conviction in the issue of one's doctrine and to build a doctrinal relationship with one's God, because comity, flattery, partiality or fanaticism must not play any role in doctrinal issues.

The one and only conviction that one must attain is that one has pursued the best of all ways that is believed to release one from responsibilities and duties towards Almighty Allah and to approach the conviction that one is not liable for any duty before the Lord and is released from the Lord's punishment or reproach since one has followed the most favorable sect and acted upon its laws. Such being the case, one must never be influenced by any factor as long as one has followed the right path that achieves the pleasure of the Lord. The Holy Qur'an reads:

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى

Does man think that he is to be left aimless? (75/36)

بَلِ الْإِنْسَانُ عَلَىٰ نَفْسِهِ بَصِيرَةٌ

Nay! Man shall be proof against himself. (75/14)

إِنَّ هَذِهِ تَذْكِرَةٌ ۖ فَمَنْ شَاءَ اتَّخَذَ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِ سَبِيلًا

Lo! This is a rejoinder, that whosoever will, may choose a way unto his Lord. (76/29)

The first question that comes to one's mind is whether one should follow the way of the Prophet's Household (i.e. the Ahl al-Bayt) or the ways headed by others. If one follows the way of the Ahl al-Bayt (a), one would also wonder whether the most accurate way is that of the *Imamiyyah* Twelvers' or the ways adopted by the other followers of the Ahl al-Bayt (a).

If one, on the other hand, follows the way of the Ahl al-Sunnah (i.e. Sunnis), one will then wonder which of the four major schools or the other schools he should follow. This must be the way of thinking adopted

by those enjoying free minds and choice until they resort to a true, firm side.

In view of the above, it seems necessary to investigate the doctrine of Imamate (*al-imamah*) and its appendages in the belief of the Twelver *Imamiyyah Shi'ah*..

1. () Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur'an:

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

And [I swear by] the soul and Him Who made it perfect; then He inspired it to understand what is right and wrong for it. He will indeed be successful who purifies it, and he will indeed fail who corrupts it. (91/7-10)

2. () Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا

(We sent) messengers as the givers of good news and as warners, so that people should not have a plea against Allah after the (coming of) messengers; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. (4/165)

3. () Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَجَاءَ السَّحَرَةُ فِرْعَوْنَ قَالُوا إِنَّ لَنَا لَأَجْرًا إِن كُنَّا نَحْنُ الْغَالِبِينَ قَالَ نَعَمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَمِنَ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ قَالُوا يَا مُوسَى إِمَّا أَنْ تُلْقِيَ وَإِمَّا أَنْ نَكُونَ نَحْنُ الْمُلْقِينَ قَالَ أَلْقُوا ۗ فَلَمَّا أَلْقَوْا سَحَرُوا أَعْيُنَ النَّاسِ وَاسْتَرْهَبُوهُمْ وَجَاءُوا بِسِحْرٍ عَظِيمٍ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَىٰ مُوسَىٰ أَنْ أَلْقِ عَصَاكَ ۗ فَإِذَا هِيَ تَلْقَفُ مَا يَأْفِكُونَ فَوَقَعَ الْحَقُّ وَبَطَلَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ فَغُلِبُوا هُنَالِكَ وَانْقَلَبُوا صَاغِرِينَ وَأَلْقَى السَّحَرَةُ سَوَاجِدِينَ

And the enchanters came to Pharaoh (and) said, 'We must surely have a reward if we are the prevailing ones.' He said, 'Yes, and you shall certainly be of those who are near to me.' They said, 'O Musa! Will you cast, or shall we be the first to cast?' He said, 'Cast.' So, when they cast, they deceived the people's eyes and frightened them, and they produced a mighty enchantment. And We revealed to Musa, saying: 'Cast your rod.' Then, lo! It devoured the lies they told. So the truth was established, and what they did became null. Thus, they were vanquished there, and they went back abased. And the enchanters were thrown down, prostrating themselves. (7/113-120)

4. () Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُمْ بِآيَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ ۗ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُمْ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنْفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۗ وَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

And (make him) a messenger to the children of Israel: that I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I mould for you out of dust the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allah's permission. And I heal the blind and the leprous, and bring the dead to life with Allah's permission. And, I inform you of what you should eat and what you should store in your houses. Most surely, there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers. (3/49)

5. () The Holy Qur'an reads in this respect:

قُلْ لَئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنْسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا

Say: If men and jinn should unite to bring the like of this Qur'an, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them be aides of others. (17/88)

6.

() The Holy Qur'an reads:

يَقُولُونَ افْتَرَاهُ ۗ قُلْ فَأْتُوا بِعَشْرِ سُوْرٍ مِثْلِهِ مُفْتَرَيَاتٍ وَادْعُوا مَنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

Or, do they say, 'He has forged it?' Say: 'Then bring ten forged chapters like it and call upon whom you can besides Allah, if you are truthful.' (11/13)

7.

() This is an indication to the following holy verse:

وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your witnesses besides Allah if you are truthful. (2/23)

8. () For more details on this topic and for removing any spurious argument about it, the reader is advised to refer to the book of *Tanzih al-Anbiya'* by al-Sharif al-Murtadha; `Ali ibn al-Husayn al-Musawi (AH 436); Beirut: Dar al-Adhwa' Publishers, Second Edition, 1409 AH/AD 1989.

9. () Among the proofs of the infallibility of the prophets (a), scholars have cited the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۗ قَالَ وَمِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي ۗ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ

And when his Lord tried Abraham with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said, 'Surely, I will make you an Imam of men.' Abraham said, 'And of my offspring?' 'My covenant does not include the unjust,' said He. (2/124)

This holy verse confirms that Almighty Allah has not allowed one who acts unjustly to hold a high position like Prophethood or Imamate.

Another proof is the following holy verse:

قَالَ فَبِعِزَّتِكَ لَأُغْوِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ إِلَّا عِبَادَكَ مِنْهُمُ الْمُخْلَصِينَ

He (Satan) said: 'Then, by Thy Might (I swear), I will surely beguile all of them except Thy servants from among them, the purified ones.' (38/82-83)

This holy verse demonstrates Satan's inability to beguile those whom Almighty Allah has purified from sinning and guarded against wrongdoing and transgression.

10. () The Holy Qur'an has stated:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

And We did not send any messenger but that he should be obeyed by Allah's permission. (4/64)

11. () The Holy Qur'an teaches us, saying:

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

Say: We believe in Allah and in that which had been revealed to us, and in that which was revealed to Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isma`il (Ishmael) and Ishaq (Isaac) and Ya`qub (Jacob) and the tribes, and in that which was given to Musa (Moses) and `sa (Jesus), and in that which was given to the prophets from their Lord. We do not make any distinction between any of them; and to Him do we submit. (2/136)

12. () This is part of a Qur'anic verse that reads:

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

Surely, the true religion with Allah is Islam, and those to whom the Book had been given did not show opposition but after knowledge had come to them, out of envy among themselves; and whoever disbelieves in the communications of Allah

then surely Allah is quick in reckoning. (3/19)

13. () Imam al-Mahdi—may Allah hasten his reappearance—is reported to have said:

وَأَكْثِرُوا الدُّعَاءَ بِتَعْجِيلِ الْفَرَجِ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ فَرَجُكُمْ.

“Pray to Almighty Allah frequently to hasten my Relief, for it shall in reality carry relief for you.”

See al-Ghaybah by Shaykh al-Tusi (AH 460), pp. 293, H. 247; al-Ihtijaj by al-Tabrisi (AH 560), 2:284; al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih by al-Rawandi (AH 573), 3:1115, H. 30.

14. () This indicates the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

And most surely you conform yourself to sublime morality. (68/4)

15. () This is because Almighty Allah has guaranteed its preservation against any sort of distortion, saying:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ

Surely, We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian. (15/9)

16. () Major impurity (al-hadath al-akbar) is every matter that makes it obligatory to perform the ritual bathing (ghusl) or invalidates it. [translator]

17. () Janabah, in the terminology of Muslim jurisprudence, stands for the state of deprivation of ritual purity due to sexual intercourse or ejaculation of semen or the semi-semen wetness that comes out after the ejaculation of semen and before urination that is intended to cut off the ejaculation of semen. (Quoted from Mu`jam Alfaz al-Fiqh al-Ja`fari by Ahmad Fathullah, pp. 143. [translator]

18. () Minor impurity (al-hadath al-asghar) is every matter that makes it obligatory to perform the ritual ablution (wudhu') or invalidates it. [translator]

19. () The Holy Qur'an has confirmed that prophethood is sealed by the prophethood of Muhammad—peace be upon him and his Household:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا

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 is cognizant of all things. (33/40)

20. () The Holy Prophet, Muhammad (a), is reported to have said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي، وَلَا سُنَّةَ بَعْدَ سُنَّتِي؛ فَمَنْ ادَّعَىٰ ذَلِكَ فَدَعَاؤُهُ وَبِدْعَتُهُ فِي النَّارِ. وَمَنْ ادَّعَىٰ ذَلِكَ فَاقْتُلُوهُ وَمَنْ اتَّبَعَهُ، فَإِنَّهُمْ فِي النَّارِ.

“O People! Indeed, there shall not come a prophet after me and there shall not come a Sunnah (a body of traditions and practices) after my Sunnah. If one claims the opposite, then his claim and heresy shall be in Hellfire. Hence, you may kill anyone who claims it and kill his followers, for they shall verily be in Hellfire.”

See al-Amali by Shaykh al-Mufid (AH 413), pp. 53; Wasa'il al-Shi'ah by al-Hurr al-Amili (AH 1104), 28:337, H. 34900, 3rd hadith in Section: bab hukm man shatama al-nabiyya aw idda'a al-nubuwwata kadhiban (Rulings Appertained to One Who Insults the Holy Prophet Or Claims Being Prophet Falsely).

The Holy Prophet (s) is also reported as saying:

فِي أُمَّتِي كَذَّابُونَ وَدَجَّالُونَ، سَبْعَةٌ وَعِشْرُونَ؛ مِنْهُمْ أَرْبَعٌ نِسْوَةٌ. وَإِنِّي خَاتَمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي.

“There shall be twenty-seven liars and impostors in my nation. Four of them shall be women. I am verily the Seal of the Prophets. No prophet shall come after me.”

See Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal (AH 241), 5:396; Majma` al-Zawa'id by al-Haythami (AH 807), 7:332, Section: bab ma ja'a fi al-kadhdhabin (Traditions Concerning the Liars).

The Holy Prophet (s) is also reported as saying:

كَانَتْ بَنُو إِسْرَائِيلَ تَسُوسُهُمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ؛ كُلَّمَا هَلَكَ نَبِيٌّ خَلَفَهُ نَبِيٌّ. وَإِنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي.

“The Children of Israel (i.e. the Israelis) used to be headed by the prophets; therefore, when a prophet died, another prophet would succeed him. Verily, there shall not be a prophet coming after me.”

See Sahih al-Bukhari (AH 256), 4: 144; al-Sunan al-Kubra by al-Bayhaqi (AH 458), 8: 144; Sahih Muslim (AH 261), 6: 17.

Through his famous discourse with `Ali ibn Abi-Talib, the Holy Prophet (s) confirmed that he would be the last of the prophets. So, he is reported to have said in the uninterruptedly reported hadith known as ‘hadith al-manzilah’:

أَنْتَ مِنِّي بِمَنْزِلَةِ هَارُونَ مِنْ مُوسَى؛ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي.

“In relation to me, you occupy the same position that (Prophet) Aaron occupied in relation to (Prophet) Moses except that (you are not a prophet because) there shall not be a prophet coming after me.”

See al-Mahasin by al-Barqi (AH 274 or 280), 1:259, Chapter: kitab al-safwah (Book of the Elite), Section: bab al-infirad (Peculiarity), H. 99; al-Gharat by al-Thaqafi al-Kufi (AH 283), 1:62; al-Kafi by al-Kulayni (AH 329), 8:107; Ma`ani al-Akhbar by Shaykh al-Saduq (AH 381), pp. 74–79, Section: bab ma`na qawl al-nabiyy li-`aliyyin: anta minni bimanzilati haruna min musa illa annahu la nabiyya ba`di (The Significance of the Holy Prophet’s Saying to `Ali: “For me, you occupy the same position that (Prophet) Aaron enjoyed with (Prophet) Moses. Yet, there shall not be a prophet coming after me.”), H. 1&2; al-Amali by Shaykh al-Tusi (AH 465), pp. 171, 253, 307, 342, 548, 555, 558, 566, 598, 599; Musnad Abi-Dawud al-Tayalisi (AH 204), pp. 29; al-Musannaf by `Abd al-Razzaq al-San`ani (AH 211), 11:226, H. 20390; Musnad Ahmad ibn Hanbal (AH 241), 1:184, 3:23; Sahih Muslim (AH 261), 7:120; Sunan Ibn Majah (AH 273), 1:45, H. 121; Sunan al-Tirmidhi (AH 279), 5:304, H. 3814; al-Sunan al-Kubra by al-Nassa’i (AH 303), 5:44, 45, 108, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 144, 240, H. 8138, 8141, 8143, 8399, 8429, 8433, 8435, 8438, 8441, 8442, 8444, 8446, 8447, 8511, 8780; Sunan al-Bayhaqi (AH 458), 9:40. Commenting on this hadith, al-Bayhaqi says, “This hadith has been mentioned by al-Bukhari and Muslim in their books of al-Sahih on the authority of Shu`bah. Thus did tens of other reference books of hadith.

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