

Preface

In our era we witness a great deal of changes that are caused by Islam, which is the greatest of all the Divine Religions. It has obtained a new birth. Muslims have woken up and are returning to their origin. They are now seeking to remove their difficulties through the Islamic commandments, for they do not find the solutions elsewhere. As for the reason for these changes, one needs to discuss that separately. It is important to know that the traces of these great changes are seen throughout the Islamic world, and also in the non-Islamic countries. Now, the world wants to know what Islam says and what new message it has for people.

In such a critical condition, it is our duty to present Islam as it really is, without any embellishment and by way of clear and plain language, so we are understood by all, and to quench the thirst of those who need to know more about Islam. We as Muslims ought to speak for ourselves, and not allow anybody else to speak or decide on our behalf.

It cannot be denied that Islam, just like other major religions, consists of different sects. Each sect has its own peculiarities and yet, the differences are not such as to prevent cooperation and joint ventures among the groups. On the contrary, they may protect themselves through such mutual aids and co-operations, and stand firmly against the storms that are blown from the West and East, preventing their enemies from succeeding at their tricks and accomplishing their purposes.

Developing such a mutual understanding and co-operation needs to be based on special guidelines. The most important of these guidelines is that; different sects should know each other well, so as to remove suspicions and prepare the path for collective actions. The best way for the sects to know each other, is to know the root and branches of their faith, and to obtain the knowledge first hand from the well-versed and learned that are known and accepted by all among the sects. If we take our knowledge about one sect from someone who is not learned enough, or from someone who is an enemy, love for one sect and hatred for another will prevent our truthful understanding.

Owing to the two above-mentioned points, we have decided to summarize the Islamic principles and commandments with our stress on some specialties on the Shia sect; to provide writing with the following objectives:

1. That it may consist of a concise of the whole, so as to save readers from being forced to read voluminous books;
2. The discussions be clear cut, and void of difficult technical words used by the experts without diminishing the main subjects;
3. Our main object is to mention the beliefs but not to ignore providing reasons where necessary;
4. Our proofs are taken from the Holy Qur'an, traditions and logical reasoning;
5. The book may be free of concealments, flattery courtesies and pre-judgments;
6. Modesty and the rules of etiquette be observed in relation to all religions and sects.

I wrote this text during my pilgrimage to Mecca, in which the spirit has more purity and pleasantness. It was discussed in several meetings with the scholars and learned and after much investigation it was finalized for publication.

We hope to reach the goals mentioned above and have this book a protection on the day of resurrection.

"Our lord! We have heard the call of one calling us to faith 'Believe you in the lord' and we have believed. Our lord! Forgive us our sins. Blot out from us our iniquities, and take to yourself our souls in the company of the righteous." (Holy Qur'an, 3:193).

Qum, School of Imam 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib
Nasir Makarim Shirazi

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