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Islam: The Message of Peace

Prophet Muhammad's most important task was to bring peace to the world. To this end, he urged people to accept the fact that, regardless of skin color, language, lifestyle or dwelling place, they were all blood brothers and sisters. Only if they saw each other in this light could there be mutual love and respect.

He Declared a fact we all forgot when he said: *"You are all Adam's children, and Adam was made of clay"* and he asked his followers to live in peace by saying: *"A true believer is one with whom others feel secure - one who returns love for hatred."* He taught believers that returning love only when love was given was base human conduct. The true believer causes no harm to those who mistreated him, but chose rather to work for their good.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) himself led the way with his common sense, kindness, gentleness, humility, and good humor. He greatly loved all people and even animals.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was a leader, yet, believing he was no greater or better than others, he never made people feel small, unwanted or embarrassed. He urged his followers to behave kindly and humbly, to release slaves whenever possible and to give charity, espe-



cially to very poor people, orphans and prisoners - with no thought of reward.

He was the soul of goodness, so that even if people harmed him, he would pray for them, remaining unruffled, no matter how badly he was treated. In setting this example, he encouraged people to turn to God, as a Being of surpassing greatness.

He wanted all men and women to be unworldly and to have such great peace of mind that nothing could disturb them. Then, with no grudges to bear, they would seek no revenge, but would merely turn all events, whether material or spiritual, into food for thought.

Throughout the first thirteen years of his prophethood, the Prophet Mu-

hammad (peace be upon him) preached in Mecca, although the Meccans bitterly opposed this. When things became impossible, he left for Al-Madina.

Wars were waged against him, but he convinced his enemies that peace had greater power than war, as was shown by the peace treaty of Hudaibiyyah. In this the Prophet (peace be upon him) agreed to every demand of his enemies, on the assurance that, in return, peace would necessarily ensue.

His life went through various stages of well-being and extreme hardship, yet never once did he stray from the path of moderation.

At all times, and right till the end, he remained the patient and grateful servant of the Almighty, bringing His message of peace and tolerance to all mankind, and these are some of the reasons Qur'an says about him: **"And We have sent you (O Muhammad) not but as a mercy for the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinns¹ and all that exists)."**

(1) Jinns is the name of the whole category that includes the devils or the demons.

A Jinn could be Muslim, Christian, Jew, Atheist ...etc, just like human being; and they are going to be judged just like we do.

THE FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

Every action which is done with the awareness that it fulfills the will of God is considered an act of worship in Islam. Nevertheless, the specific acts of worship, termed the pillars of Islam, provide the framework of spiritual life.

The 'Five Pillars' of Islam are the foundation of Muslim life:

- 1- Testimony of Faith.
- 2- Establishment of the daily prayers.
- 3- Zakat (Obligatory Charity).
- 4- Fasting the Month of Ramadan.
- 5- The pilgrimage to Makkah for those

who are able .

1. The Meaning of the Testimony of Faith

The testimony of faith is 'ASHADO AN LA ILAHA ILLA ALLAH, WA ASHADO ANNA MUHAMMAD RASOULO ALLAH'. It means that "I testify that There Is No god but the One and Only God, and I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger", This Testimony of faith is called the Shahadah, and it is the decisive criterion by which man is judged to be a Muslim or a non-Muslim. The significance of this declaration is the belief that the only purpose of life is to serve and obey God, and this is achieved through the teachings and practices of the Last Prophet, Muhammad.

The first part of this testimony is the foundation upon which Islam is based. The concept of life, the universe and man is diffused from it, and upon it is based the message of all Messengers and Prophets beginning with Adam and ending with Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

The Testimony of faith consists of two parts. The first is:

"I testify that there is no god but Allah (the One and Only God)."

Allah (pronounced: Allaah) is the Arabic word for God. It is the same word used by Jewish and Christian Arabs to refer to God. The most literal meaning of the declaration is not the intended one, as there are many things human beings worship instead of the One God. The true meaning is: "I testify there is none worthy of worship but God." This statement combines negation and affirmation. It denies the right of anything in creation to be worshipped, and it affirms that right for the Creator. The concept of worship is probably more

comprehensive in Islam than in any other religion. It includes devotional rituals, but it also includes all transactions between individuals and groups. It includes emotional states and actions of the heart, such as love, hate, hope, fear, etc. In fact, every action that pleases God is considered an act of worship in Islam. The second part of the Testimony of faith is:

"I testify that Muhammad is the [final] Messenger of God."

Without it, implementing the first part of the declaration of faith becomes very difficult. The Qur'an says: **"Indeed in the Messenger of Allâh (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) God and the Last Day and remembers God much."** Qur'an (33:21)

Following the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) has been made a litmus test for the love of God. The Qur'an says:

"Say (O Muhammad) to mankind: "If you (really) love God then follow me (i.e. accept Islam), God will love you and forgive you of your sins. And God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." Qur'an (3:31)

Accepting the rules revealed by God through Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has also been made a test of true faith. The Qur'an says:

"But no, by your Lord, they can have no Faith, until they make you (O Muhammad) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept (them) with full submission." Qur'an (4:65)

Next Month: The Prayer

Hadith¹ of this Month

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: *"Do you know what is better than fasting and prayer and charity? It is keeping peace and good relations between people, as quarrels and bad feelings destroy mankind."*

Diwan Chand Sharma wrote

"Muhammad was the soul of kindness, and his influence was felt and never forgotten by those around him."

D.C. Sharma, The Prophets of The East, Calcutta, 1935, pp. 12

(1) Hadith is anything Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said.

{We will show them Our Signs in the universe, and in their own selves, until it becomes manifest to them that this Qur'ân is the truth. Is it not sufficient in regard to your Lord that He is a Witness over all things?} Quran(41:53)

Quran on Deep Seas and Internal Waves

“Or (the state of a disbeliever) is like the darkness in a vast deep sea, overwhelmed with a great wave topped by a great wave, topped by dark clouds, darkness, one above another, if a man stretches out his hand, he can hardly see it! And he for whom God has not appointed light, for him there is no light.”
Qur'an (24:40)

“The darkness in deep seas and oceans is found around a depth of 200 meters and below. At this depth, there is almost no light. Below a depth of 1000 meters there is no light at all.”¹

Today, we know about the general structure of the sea, the characteristics of the living things in it, its salinity, as well as the amount of water it contains, its surface area and depth. Submarines and special equipment, developed with modern technology, enable scientists to obtain this information.

Human beings are not able to dive more than 40 meters down without the aid of special equipment. They cannot survive unaided in the deep, dark parts of the oceans, such as at a depth of 200 meters. For these reasons, scientists have only recently been able to discover these detailed pieces of information about seas. However, the statement of “darkness in a deep sea” was used in chapter 24 of the Qur'an 1,400 years ago. It is certainly one of the miracles of the Qur'an that such

information was given at a time where no equipment to enable man to dive into the depths of the oceans was available.

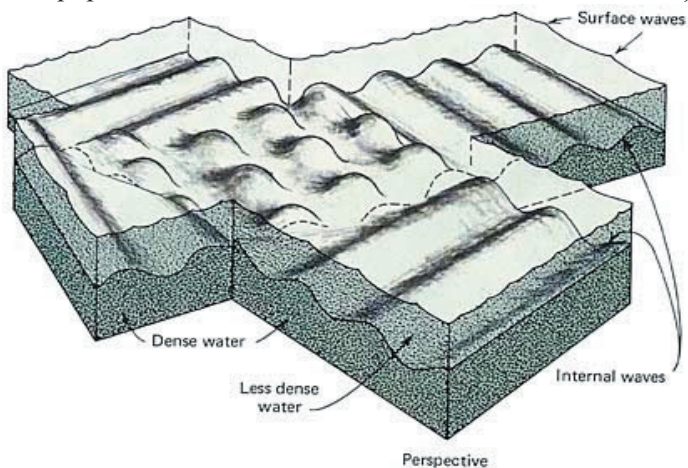
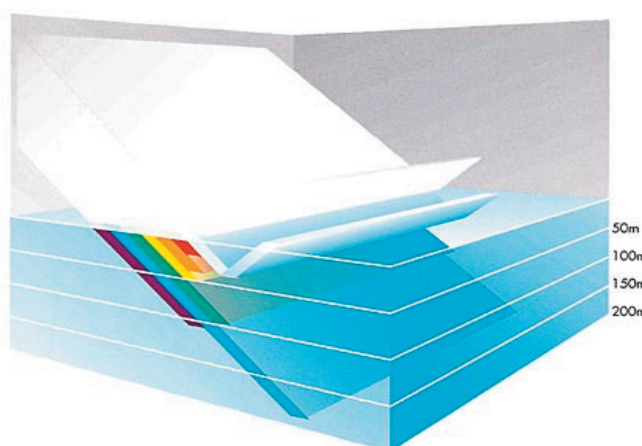
In addition, the statement in verse 40 of Chapter 24 “...like the darkness of a fathomless sea which is covered by waves above which are waves above which are clouds...” draws our attention to another miracle of the

Qur'an.

Scientists have recently discovered that there are internal waves, which “occur on density interfaces between layers of different densities.” These internal waves cover the deep waters of seas and oceans because deep water has a higher density than the water above it. Internal waves act like surface waves. They can break, just like surface waves. Internal waves cannot be seen by the human eye, but they can be detected by studying temperature or salinity changes at a given location.¹

The statements in the Qur'an run absolutely parallel to the above explanation. Without research, one can only see the waves on the surface of the sea. It is impossible for one to know about the internal waves beneath the sea. Yet, in Qur'an (24:40),

God draws our attention to another type of wave that occurs in the depths of the oceans. Certainly, this fact, which scientists have discovered very recently, shows once again that the Qur'an is the word of God.



Reference : The Miracles of the Qur'an : by Harun Yahya

(1) Oceans: by Danny Elder and John Pernetta, 1991, London, Mitchell Beazley Publishers. P 27

(1) Oceanography, A view of earth 6th Edition: by M. Grant Gross and Elizabeth Gross. Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall Inc, P 205

“There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in Evil and believes in God, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And God is All-Hearer, All-Knower” Qur’an (2:256)

For hundreds of years, this verse has led to a misconception that is now widespread today about Islam. A lot of people in the west and many parts of the world think that Islam had spread from Arabia to where present day Muslims are now living, by force.

Unfortunately this is not even close to the truth and in this article; we’ll take a closer look on this topic. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) started in Mecca where he received the early revealed parts of the Qur’an and where he spent thirteen years trying to convince the people of Mecca to worship the one and only God. He was then ordered by God to migrate to Al-Madina, with most of his followers leaving behind their wealth and properties, sometimes even leaving some of their family members, after suffering from the worst torture from the pagans of Mecca, including physical and spiritual torture.

One fact Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) never forgot is the fact declared to him in the Qur’an (88:21-22) **“So remind them (O Muhammad), you are only a one who reminds (21) You are not a dictator over them (22)”**, Qur’an is telling him that your job is to remind people and teach them, and then it’s their choice to accept Islam or not, and it’s even their choice to listen to you or not, and that’s why the Qur’an continues to say in the same chapter **“Save the one who turns away and disbelieves (23) Then God will punish him with the greatest punishment (24) Verily, to Us will be their return (25) Then verily, for Us will be their reckoning (26)”**.

They used to offer him power and wealth so that he might stop calling for submission to God, and he would reply to them *“I didn’t ask you your money, God made me His messenger, and revealed a book to me and I’m reciting it to you, if you believe then that’s all we need from each other, and if you don’t I’ll stay patient until God solves this issue”*.

So, where is the force?!!!

In Al-Madina, the first thing he did was sign an agreement with all people in Al-Madina that they must support each other, most of them being disbelievers. Based on the Qur’an (60:8) **“God does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of religion and did not drive**

you out of your homes. Verily, God loves those who deal with equity”.

And after the death of the Prophet, Islam was threatened by being perished by the Persian and Roman Empires; moreover, they prevented Muslims from doing their job in spreading the knowledge about Islam, and they left them no choice except to fight, not to mention that in all the battles, Muslims were fewer in number and weapons. This is not the case of one who wants to take over lands and spread his ideas by force. The proof of that is this: after they conquered the Persians and the Romans they didn’t force any single person to embrace Islam, otherwise, how can we explain the existence of Christians, Jews and even Pagans in Muslim countries today? These Muslims kept in mind what Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had said: *“If a single person embraces Islam through you, that will be better for you than red camels”*⁽¹⁾

Whoever still has doubts about what I just said, he owes himself to answer these questions: since Muslim armies never reached China and Indonesia, how has Islam spread in China and why is Indonesia the largest Muslim country in population? Why is Islam the fastest growing religion in the world especially in the West?

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Edited By: Kate Isham

(1) This is an idiom that was used in Arabia at that time to say “the most precious thing.”

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