

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

In the name of Allah, The Compassionate, The Merciful

Islam reaffirms the same beliefs, which the previous prophets including Abraham, Moses and Jesus (peace be on all of them) propounded, namely submission to and commitment to obey commandments of the one and only God. All who accept this are Muslims. But since the advent of Islam only followers of that religion are called Muslims.

ESSENCE OF THE FUNDAMENTALS

The essence of the Fundamentals of Islam is to be God conscious in all that we do and out of His love, commit to obey His commandments in every sphere of our activity. Thus Islam is in fact as ideology, establishing a way of life that is neither capitalistic nor socialistic but contains the best of both.

BASIC BELIEFS

1. God created the universe and is the evolver, shaper, sustainer, owner and sovereign of the Universe and all that is in it.
2. The reason for the creation was to test who among the humans would prove himself to be the best as His agent on earth. An agent can only use, enjoy and improve the resources placed in his trust and under his control by God. But he has no authority to deviate from the given directives or to damage or destroy them.
3. For this purpose God among all His creations granted only the humans the faculty to learn and acquire knowledge and the power of thinking, reasoning and making decisions. All other creations are obliged to act and perform according to a set pattern and law.
4. Humans were provided guidance from time to time through god's messengers and the Books revealed through them. But humans are not forced to follow the edicts contained in these books. They are however told of the advantages that would accrue in the Hereafter and in this world to them, to the society and to the world at large if they followed these and are warned of the consequences of ignoring or violating these. The decision is left to each individual.
5. The Quran revealed through the last prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the last revelation from God and contains absolute moral commandments. These are mostly the same as contained in all other earlier revealed Books. It however also lays down principles to be observed in every day life and in all affairs, to help in establishing, preserving and maintaining an Islamic society. These principles cover all aspects of life and are stated in such universal terms that they remain valid for all time and are applicable at all stages of civilizations and for all different parts of the world.

6. Each individual will have to render account on the day of Judgement for all his actions in his worldly life. Those that believed in God and acted in their every day life according to His commandment as exemplified and amplified by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) can expect through His Grace to be granted eternal life of Bliss, Peace and Comfort. Others will have to face consequences of their disbelief and/or disobedience.

BASIC FACTS

1. It is a universally accepted fact that the Quran, 1,400 years later, still remains exactly the same as it was revealed by God to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It is the only such revealed book in existence today. It describes itself as the **BOOK OF GUIDANCE**.

It is in Arabic, which even today is the mother tongue of millions. It is a very rich language and a number of its words have no equivalent word in any other language that can fully express their meanings.

For instance, the Arabic word “Ibadat” is usually translated as Worship. The actual meaning is “to commit and act out of love for Him according to edicts laid down by Him in the Quran.” This full meaning of the word Ibadat makes every act of a Muslim in his everyday life an act of Worship provided he carries it out in the above spirit and accordance with the Quranic edicts.

2. The prescribed rituals of Prayers, Fasting, Hajj and Zakat and the ordained greetings, invocations, etc. are all important parts of worship (Ibadat) and one of their purposes is to make humans **GOD CONSCIOUS** in all their actions particularly those effecting or relating to other humans or creation. To constantly remind them that God is the creator and sovereign, while they are merely His agent authorized to act only in accordance with the directions given to them and are accountable on the Day of Judgement for their actions and deeds. A constant reminder has to have a benign influence upon the character of individuals and thus of nations. After all it is the ideals that form character. As one thinks in his heart, so is he.

3. The Islamic teachings and commandments are essentially no different from values which human beings have cherished and striven to maintain throughout history irrespective of cultural, racial, linguistic and socioeconomic differences. The success of civilizations and cultures, as study of history and of current affairs will prove conclusively, is directly related to the extent of their practicing these. The basic difference is that Muslims perform these as acts of worship and have no authority to make changes in the Commandments, while others do so to comply with the prevailing laws and conform to ever-changing values of their society.

THE OBJECTIVE OF ISLAM

The edicts contained in the Quran as amplified and exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) are meant to guide humans to develop themselves to be as perfect as possible with maximum Godly qualities so that a society is established which at the very least:

- a) Comprises of people who fully utilize the faculties of learning and reasoning by acquiring knowledge for the purpose of making the world to be a better place to live in and not for its destruction.
- b) Is peaceful, just and ensures equal justice for all.
- c) Cares for the needy and oppressed.
- d) Preserves and protects mutual rights and obligations.
- e) Ensures that there is no exploitation.
- f) Ensures equality of opportunity for all.
- g) Ensures that the resources of the universe are employed to the best advantage and well being of the society equitably and without harming or damaging the resources but in fact maintaining a perfect balance.

Such a society is and has been the cherished ideal of all civilizations and ideologies.

CURRENT SITUATION

People everywhere, under influence of the West in which these traits are most common, have tended to become materialistic and selfish. A number of them are imbued with and wedded to humanism and secularism. They solely depend on human wisdom to find ways to achieve the ideal society. Divine guidance is completely ignored.

Muslims are generally trapped into following family, cultural and sectarian practices.

In the search for the ideal society various ideologies and systems have been tried without much success. The failure of finding guidance strictly through human wisdom is manifested in a plethora of man-made laws, which concentrate authority in a few at the cost of individual freedom. The populace is caught in mis-management, high taxes, curtailed freedom, high crime rates, delayed justice which is turning it into “justice for the rich,” broken families, and, in the technologically developed societies, unfulfilled prosperity. Completely forgotten is the fact that human wisdom is not only limited but is invariably subject to the influence of self, other interests and desires. Without the Divine Guidance, establishment of an ideal society remains a mirage.

THE SOLUTION

The only way for humans, who wish to achieve an eternal life of bliss in the Hereafter and have Peace of Mind and success in this life, is to accept the existence of one and only GOD with all the attributes and implement that acceptance by being righteous in thought and deed as laid down in the Quran and amplified as well as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

In order to learn what being righteous means and how he should live his life and how he can be steadfast in the same, it is necessary to follow the following Quranic edicts.

1. To know and learn about God's guidance and commandments by personal study of the Quran and not learning it by hearsay or assuming somebody to be conveying the Truth. Any assumption without verification may lead to falsehood.

Those who do not know the Arabic language have access to many good translations and commentaries. However, no translation or commentary is perfect. Therefore, if at all possible, more than one translation or commentary should be studied. Also make use of the dictionary, "Lughat." The best way however is to learn the language of the Quran.

2. To know and learn about amplification and the principles employed for application of the Quranic edicts by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by studying authentic sayings of his (Ahadith) and books about his life (Seerah). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the role model for Islamic Way of Life.

3. In every act of everyday life, they should always bear in mind that they are doing so to please God and in obedience to His commands. This means being GOD CONSCIOUS (MUTTAQI) at all times. This would help them to steadfastly stay on the right path, in the face of stress and temptations, through God's guidance and help.

4. To excel in knowledge which includes knowledge of own profession and try to be the best and be a leader and act as a ROLE MODEL for others in their everyday way of life.