

THE INCLUSIVENESS OF ISLAM (PART 2 OF 3): A RELIGION FOR ALL HUMANITY

Rating: 4.0

Description: An explanation of the reasons why obedience to a new prophet of God is always binding, and a look at the specific traits which make Islam a religion for all peoples and times.

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Obedience to Prophet Muhammad a Must for All

Before discussing how the laws of Islam are universal, it is important to briefly discuss the issue of those who are following earlier confirmed prophets of God. These people may argue that the Prophet Muhammad may have been truthful, but that it is sufficient for them to follow the Prophet that they have been following.

In reality, no one has the right to accept the other prophets while rejecting the Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him. No one has the right to say that Muhammad was truthful but, "I chose to still follow Jesus or Moses instead."

Logically speaking, one should not expect this to be acceptable to God. God has sent His final messenger to be believed in and followed, superseding and canceling what is left of the teachings of earlier prophets. In the Quran, God describes such an attitude:

"And when it is said to them, 'Believe in what God has sent down,' they say, 'We believe in what was sent down to us.' And they disbelieve in that which came after it, while it is the truth confirming what is with them..." (Quran 2:91)

God has further declared people of this nature to be disbelievers. He has said:

"Verily, those who disbelieve in God and His Messengers and wish to make distinction between God and His Messengers (by believing in God and disbelieving in His Messengers) saying, 'We believe in some but reject others,' and wish to adopt a way in between. They are in truth disbelievers. And We have prepared for the disbelievers a humiliating torment. And those who believe in God and His Messengers and make no distinction between any of them, We shall give them their rewards, and God is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Quran 4:150-152)

The Prophet said:

“[I swear] by [God], the One in whose hand is my soul, there will be none of my addressed people, be he Jew or Christian, who hears of me and dies without believing in that with which I was sent except that he will be from the inhabitants of the Hellfire.”
(Saheeh Muslim)

The Prophet even told one of his companions:

“If my brother Moses were alive today, he would have no option but to follow me.” (**Ahmad and al-Daarimi**)

Hence, the universality of Islam applies to all who were following any of the previous prophets as well. They have no logical option except to accept and follow Prophet Muhammad.

The Universality of Islam and Its Timelessness

As noted above, Prophet Muhammad declared that he was the final prophet sent for humankind. At the same time, it is inconceivable knowing the mercy of the merciful that He would leave humans without any form of clear guidance. In other words, what He gave this final messenger must be suitable to guide all of humankind after him after him until the Day of Judgment. In fact, the Prophet himself made this very same point in essence when he said:

“I have left with you two things that if you cling to them you will never be misguided after me: The Book of God and the Sunnah of His Messenger.” (**Saheeh Muslim**)

God has also said:

“...This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion...” (**Quran 5:3**)

Thus, the religion is completed and perfected and there is no need for any alteration or change. The message has come and shall suffice until the Day of Judgment. The Prophet sent for all peoples has already come.

This implies that the Prophet’s teachings are valid and obligatory upon all of humankind. That is, his example and teaching was not simply for the people of Arabia at his time. Rather, it is just as valid and just as important for each and every Muslim today, whether he be in New York or Malaysia.

At this point, someone may logically ask: How is it that this Law is able to fulfill the needs for all of mankind until the Day of Judgment? Human society is changing day to day. How is it that one “law” can provide guidance for everyone at all times? The answer to this question has to do with the beauty of the Law. When one studies the law promulgated by Prophet Muhammad, one finds that it has the needed elements of

flexibility that allow it to be just as practicable today as it was during time of the Prophet. In essence, those issues that need to be fixed and permanent are made such by the Islamic Law. Those that need to be flexible so that different peoples at different times may apply them differently are left flexible in the Islamic Law. Hence, it is a Divinely guided way of life that is suitable and practical for all humans until the Day of Judgment.

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