



Series of the Writings of His Eminence The Shaykh (108)

Studies on The Fundamentals of Religion

Written by:

His Eminence Shaykh

Muhammad ibn Sālih Al-'Uthaymīn

May Allah forgive him, his parents, and all Muslims

Published by

Shaykh Muhammad ibn Sālih al-'Uthaymīn Charity

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Studies on the Fundamentals of Religion

***In the Name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful,
the Especially Merciful***

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and forgiveness, and repent to Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our souls and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can lead him astray, and whoever He leads astray, none can guide him. I bear witness that there is no true god but Allah. He is alone, with no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger and slave of Allah; may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family and Companions, and those who follow them properly until the Day of Judgment.

This treatise includes "Studies on the Fundamentals of Religion", according to the new curriculum approved for the second year at the academic institutes, Dār at-Tawhīd, the Islamic University, etc. I implore Allah Almighty to render this work useful and sincerely done for His sake.

Curriculum:

The new curriculum contains the following topics:

- a. Islam is a social necessity for the refinement of human life.
- b. The failure of other religions and doctrines in reforming people and attaining their happiness.
- c. The Perfection of Islam and the unity of its principles in reforming all aspects of human life:
 1. Creed.
 2. Worship.
 3. Economic affairs.
 4. Social affairs.
 5. State politics.
 6. A Muslim being proud of his religion.

Muhammad ibn Sālih al-‘Uthaymīn





Islam Is A Social Necessity For The Refinement Of Human Life

Human society is diverse in its ideas, objectives, environments, and activities. So, it necessarily needs a guide to direct it, a system to unite it, and a ruler to protect it. The noble messengers (peace be upon them) used to undertake this task with revelation from Allah Almighty. They would guide people to the path of goodness and guidance, unite them upon the divine Shariah, and judge between them with justice. Hence, people's affairs were set aright as much as they responded positively to those messengers and according to how much their era was close to the prophetic missions.

Prophetic missions before the era of Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) had a particular nature that suited the community to which the messenger was sent. Every messenger was sent to his community in particular. Allah Almighty says: {Indeed, We sent Noah to his people} [Nūh: 1] {And to 'Ād [We sent] their brother Hūd} [Hūd: 50] As such, the verses go on to relate the stories of the prophets up to the last prophet before Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him): {And [remember] when Jesus, son of Mary, said: "O children of Israel, indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of the Torah and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad."} [As-Saff: 6] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Every prophet was sent only to his people, while I have been sent to all people."

After Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), people belonged to either of two groups: the totally ignorant who were indulging in their ignorance or the people of a scripture who transgressed against their scripture with distortions and violations. People had no religion to unite them nor a system for their rulers to follow; they had corrupt beliefs, confused ideas, deviant desires, evil deeds, and unjust judgments. If a noble person amongst them committed theft, they would let him go; but if a weak person did, they would punish him.

They were, hence, in dire need for a religion to elevate them to the level of perfection in their beliefs, ideas, desires, deeds, and judgments. They – particularly, the people of the Scripture, whose prophets gave them tidings of the coming of Muhammad – were waiting for this religion that would illuminate the path for them and show them the truth in the clearest way.

It was Muhammad's message that carried this awaited religion, Islam, which Allah approved as a religion for all mankind, thereby completing His favor upon them, and opened to them the door to knowledge, goodness, and reform. That is why Islam is a social necessity for the refinement of human life, as proved by the following:

a. Allah Almighty says: {Certainly did Allah confer [great] favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they had been before in manifest error} [Āl-'Imrān:

164] Purification, knowledge, and wisdom are a foundation for the refinement and civilization of nations. There could be no civilization without knowledge, no morals without purification, and no system without wisdom.

b. The reality and system of Islam which aim at preserving people's religion, mind, life, property, and honor and then reforming and refining those matters in a way that ensures happiness in the worldly life and in the Hereafter.

c. The great impacts of this religion, the like of which has never been seen in history; whereas before Islam, humanity was far away from advancement and sublimity in terms of religion, morals, manners, governance, and politics. Yet when they adhered to Islam, this backwardness turned into advancement, and this decadence into sublimity as witnessed in the early history of Islam.





The Failure Of Other Religions And Doctrines In Reforming People And Fulfilling Their Happiness

The heavenly religions that were destined to survive until the present are three: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Judaism and Christianity each fall short in reforming people and fulfilling their happiness for the following reasons:

a. Both religions were limited to the people of Moses and Jesus. Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Every prophet was sent only to his people, while I have been sent to all mankind." [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

b. They are marked by restrictions and strictness. The wisdom of Allah dictates that the Shariah prescribed for a certain community is suitable for them and not for others. Allah Almighty placed shackles and burdens on the Children of Israel, which suited their nature and situation. He says in the Qur'an: {Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel, who enjoins upon them what is right and forbids them what is wrong and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the evil and relieves them of their burden and the shackles which were upon them} [Al-A'rāf: 157]

Here are some examples:

1. Prayer can only be offered in specific places, such as monasteries and churches.

2. If water is unavailable, one cannot purify himself with dust (dry ablution); rather, prayer remains due on him until he finds water and makes up for it.

3. The spoils of war gained by fighters are not lawful for them.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "I have been given five things which were not given to anyone else before me: I have been supported with fear (cast into the hearts of my enemies) for a distance of one month's travel; the earth has been made for me a place for praying and a means for purification, so when the time of prayer comes for anyone of my followers, he can pray (wherever he is); war booty has been made lawful for me, and it was not lawful for anyone else before me..." [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

5. Some good things were made unlawful for the Jews due to their wrongdoing and transgression. Allah Almighty says: [{For wrongdoing on the part of the Jews, We made unlawful for them \[certain\] good things which had been lawful to them}](#) [An-Nisā': 160]

c. These two Shariahs – Judaism and Christianity – were subjected to distortions and alterations that render them unfit for reforming people, were they to continue as religions. That they were superseded by the Islamic Shariah makes them both more unfit.

If it is not possible to bring about happiness for mankind through Judaism and Christianity, though both are heavenly religions, it is even more so in the case of man-made religions.





***The Perfection Of Islam And The Unity Of
Its Principles For Reforming All Aspects
Of Human Life***

Islam is a complete and comprehensive religion, which can reform all aspects of human life:

a. Allah Almighty says: {This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.} [Al-Mā'idah: 3]

b. It is the religion of Allah Who is All-Knowing of what reforms His creation and All-Wise in what He has legislated for them.

c. Its teachings attest to this. The Qur'an, the constitution of Islam, does not disregard anything that may benefit people, even the etiquette governing sitting together, entering houses, and so on. {O you who believe, when you are told to make room in the assemblies, (spread out and) make room. Allah will give you (ample) room (from His mercy)} [Al-Mujādilah: 11] {O you who believe, do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission} [An-Nūr: 27]

The Prophetic Sunnah – the second source of Islamic legislation – does not disregard such delicate matters; the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) taught his Ummah how to eat, drink, sleep, and answer the call of nature, though these are simple matters compared to prayer, fasting, Zakah, Hajj, etc.

Islam is complete in terms of creed, worship, economic and social affairs, state politics, and the pride that a Muslim takes in his religion.

It is complete in terms of creed because it is a firmly-established creed based upon the requirements of untainted human nature and sound reasoning.

It is belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and destiny, the pleasant and unpleasant aspects thereof.

Allah Almighty says: {The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say: "We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination."} [Al-Baqarah: 285]

Belief in Allah as a glorious Lord and true God, with no partner in this, nor in His Names and Attributes.

Belief in Allah as Sovereign and Lawgiver. No rabbi, monk, Emir, or Sultan can change any of the rulings of Allah Almighty. The lawful is what Allah has declared as lawful, and the same holds true for the unlawful and the obligations. No one can reverse His rulings or change His judgments.

Belief in the start of the creation and the Day of Judgment. Creation belongs to Allah and shall return to Him. Mankind's

existence and fate shall not come to nothing, without a purpose behind it. Rather, they shall return to their Lord, and they should work and prepare for that return. {And they say: “We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination.”} [Al-Baqarah: 285] {So whoever does an atom’s weight of good shall see it. And whoever does an atom’s weight of evil shall see it.} [Az-Zalzalah: 7-8]

Such a creed that accompanies man in all his states must necessarily give him sound guidance in all affairs of his life, thus keeping him steadfast in his abidance with the commands of Allah Almighty.

Islam is complete in terms of worship, as it has legislated for Muslims what makes them reach complete humility and servitude to their Lord; laws and teachings that are varied in their manners and times, so that the purpose for which they were created can be achieved. {I have not created jinn and men except to worship Me} [Adh-Dhāriyāt: 56]

Prayer is a purely religious act of worship, to be offered either at appointed times, such as the five obligatory prayers and Witr prayer, or at unspecified times, such as the general supererogatory prayers. Through prayer, a one communicates with his Lord in the most proper condition; purified, decently dressed, and facing the Qiblah (direction of prayer towards Makkah) in humility to Allah Almighty. He seeks closeness to Him by standing, bowing, prostrating, sitting, and reciting Qur’an, Dhikr, and supplications in those movements and

positions. Thus, he exits the prayer with a heart filled with light and faith.

Zakah is a financial act of worship in which a Muslim pays part of his wealth in order to draw close to his Lord, purify himself from sins and miserliness, cleanse his wealth, and render benefit to Islam and Muslims.

Fasting is a physical act of worship, but of a different type. A fasting person abstains from the desires of eating, drinking, and copulation in order to draw near his Lord by giving up what he desires, to remember the favor of Allah Almighty as He enables him to afford the breakfast, and to be mindful of the conditions of the very poor.

Hajj (pilgrimage) is a physical and financial act of worship in which a Muslim leaves his homeland and family and heads for the House of Allah, seeking closeness to his Lord, extolling His sanctities, and gathering with fellow Muslims from all over the world. {That they may witness benefits for themselves and mention the name of Allah on known days over which He has provided for them of [sacrificial] animals} [Al-Hajj: 28]

Jihad is a physical and financial act of worship in which a Muslim sacrifices his life and wealth to draw close to Allah, defend His religion, make His word uppermost, and as mercy towards people perchance they would embrace the religion of Allah or pay the tribute to enjoy the protection of Islam.

These various acts of worship combine for worshipers the loftiest forms of servitude to their Lord, as they boost their

faith, deepen their creed, refine their souls, reform their societies, and elevate their ranks in the worldly life and in the Hereafter.

Islam is complete in terms of economy. It offers the best system for earning, preserving, and spending money, and it allows people to make money through contract and labor.

Examples of earning money through contract include the following:

1. Sale: Islam permitted it in a way that involves no injustice or usury. Allah Almighty says: {[And Allah has permitted trade and has forbidden usury](#)} [Al-Baqarah: 275] Indeed, people need to trade money amongst themselves.

2. Partnership: Islam permitted it as long as it is based on justice and equality among partners in terms of gains and losses, for partnerships involve cooperation and mutual help. In a Hadīth, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said that Allah Almighty said: "I am the third of two partners as long as neither of them cheats the other." [Abu Dāwūd]

3. Donation: Islam permitted it given that it inspires love and benefits the recipients. Allah Almighty says: {[But if they give up willingly to you anything of it, then take it in satisfaction and ease](#)} [An-Nisā': 4]

Examples of earning money through labor include the following:

1. Cultivation: Islam permitted it as it develops the land, grows food, and benefits those who work in it. Allah Almighty says: {It is He who made the earth subservient for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection.} [Al-Mulk: 15] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "No one has ever eaten food better than what his own hands have earned. Indeed, the Prophet of Allah, David, used to eat from the earnings of his own hands." [Al-Bukhāri] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) also said: "No Muslim plants a plant or sows a crop, so a person, a bird, or an animal eats from it except that he will have the reward of charity for it." [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

2. Hunting, collecting grass, and extracting pearls and the like from the sea. Allah Almighty says: {Lawful to you is game from the sea and its food as provision for you and the travelers, but forbidden to you is game from the land so long as you are on pilgrimage} [Al-Mā'idah: 96] He also says: {And it is He who subjected for you the sea to eat from it tender meat and extract from it ornaments which you wear} [An-Nahl: 14]

Islam regulated the preservation of wealth by a variety of means, for money is a means of sustenance for people and it serves both their worldly and religious interests.

Examples of this include the following:

1. It prevents people from giving money to the feeble-minded who cannot spend it properly. Allah Almighty says:

{And do not give the weak-minded your property, which Allah has made a means of sustenance for you.} [An-Nisā': 5] If it is given to them, it will be tampered with and lost.

2. People are commanded to bring witnesses to their transactions. Allah Almighty says: {And take witnesses when you conclude a contract} [Al-Baqarah: 282] Failure to bring witnesses would likely cause the loss of money of either partner in case of the other partner's denial.

Islam regulated the spending of money and gave great care to it, prohibiting people from wastefulness. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Allah dislikes three things for you: idle talk, wasting money, and persistent questioning." [Al-Bukhārī]

And it prohibited both wastefulness and stinginess. Allah Almighty says: {And do not make your hand [as] chained to your neck or extend it completely and [thereby] become blamed and insolvent} [Al-Isrā': 29]

Islam laid down two types of spending: obligatory and recommended.

Examples of obligatory spending include the following:

1. Zakah (alms): It is a fixed share in assets on which Zakah is payable, to be given to those who are entitled to receive Zakah. Allah Almighty says: {And establish prayer and give Zakah} [Al-Baqarah: 43] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Islam was built on five pillars:

testifying that there is no true god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, performing Hajj, and fasting Ramadan.” [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim] We have previously pointed out the wisdom behind Zakah.

2. Spending on oneself, one’s wife, and one’s kin. The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: “Your self has a right upon you.” About spending on one’s wife, Allah Almighty says: {Upon the father is their provision and clothing according to what is acceptable} [Al-Baqarah: 233] Regarding spending on one’s kin, He says: {And give the relative his right, and [also] the poor and the traveler, and do not spend wastefully. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and Satan has ever been ungrateful to his Lord} [Al-Isrā’: 26-27]

The wisdom behind making spending obligatory is to preserve lives and console those who are needy.

3. Obligatory Spending rendered due to an emergency to ward off harm, such as feeding a hungry person and clothing a person who has no clothes. The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: “Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and arrange for the release of captives.” [Al-Bukhāri]

The wisdom behind the obligation of spending here is to save the distressed, address his need, and to have a sense of responsibility towards helpless fellow Muslims.

Examples of the recommended spending include the following:

1. Charity to the poor other than Zakah. Allah Almighty says: {Indeed, the men who give in charity and the women who give in charity and [they who] have loaned Allah a goodly loan - it will be multiplied for them, and they will have a noble reward} [Al-Hadīd: 18] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "He who gives in charity the value of a date which was lawfully earned – and Allah only accepts that which has been lawfully earned – Allah will accept it with His right hand and nurture it for him, just as one of you nurtures his foal, until it becomes like a mountain." [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

2. Spending on public interests, like building mosques and schools and maintaining roads. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqās (may Allah be pleased with him): "You will be rewarded for whatever you spend for Allah's sake even if it were a morsel which you put in your wife's mouth." [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

The wisdom behind such recommended spending is that a Muslim draws close to Allah, purifies himself and his wealth, and fulfill the needs of Muslims.

Islam is complete in terms of social affairs, as it regulates society in a manner that guarantees the wellbeing of the Muslim nation. It regulates both family and public relations.

Examples of the regulation of family relations include the following:

1. The duty of being kind to one's parents in words and deeds, and being patient with the hardship of taking care of them. Allah Almighty says: {And your Lord has decreed that you do not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them [so much as], "ugh," and do not repel them, but speak to them a noble word. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say: "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small."} [Al-Isrā': 23-24]

In addition, Islam prohibited undutiful treatment of parents by failing to fulfill the duty of kindness to them. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Shall I inform you of the gravest of the major sins?" He repeated this three times. They said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." He said: "Ascribing partners to Allah and unkindness to parents." He was reclining so he sat up and said: "I warn you of false statements and false testimony." He kept repeating this so many times that they wished he would stop. [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

2. The duty of upholding kinship ties. Allah Almighty says: {And give the relative his right} [Al-Isrā': 26] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should uphold his ties of kinship." [Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

In addition, Islam prohibited the severing of kinship ties. Allah Almighty says: {So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your ties of kinship? Those

[who do so] are the ones that Allah has cursed, so He deafened them and blinded their vision.] [Muhammad: 22-23]



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