

# ISLAM AND THE SANATAN DHARM

By  
E-Daw`ah Committee



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## The Importance of Divine Message

The divine revelation for the human mind is like the external light to eyes. The light of the eye alone is not enough in the process of vision unless it is accompanied by an outer light.



Man is always in dire need of divine guidance from Allah the Almighty, which reveals the nature of the relationship between



humankind and the Creator of the universe. Man constantly requires the divine message that explains to him who is the worshipper and who is the worshipped. If we look at the system of kings and sultans in this world, we will find ministers and deputies in their courts, who convey the laws of the kingdom to the common people and declare it to them on behalf of the kings.

# The Duty of Messengers and Prophets

In fact, the prophets and messengers are mediators between Allah and the people who deliver the message of Allah to His slaves, because every person is not prepared or ready for receiving direct message from Allah the Almighty.<sup>(1)</sup>

Prophethood from the Islamic perspective is a selection by Allah the Almighty and a special gift from Him to His selected slaves and devotees who are the most perfect individuals among people. Prophethood is not a worldly post that is gained through personal efforts or spiritual exercise.

Moreover, Allah (Glory be to Him) has granted man sense and mind to guide him to the right path and help him distinguish between right and wrong; this re-

ality has been elucidated by the Glorious Qur'an in many places. In addition, modern psychology confirms that man is equipped with an instinct that helps him differentiate between good and evil.

However, such instinct is mostly exposed to some types of pests that come between human mind and its assigned functions. They

**Divine guidance is necessary for mankind.**

disturb it so that it will not carry out its duties properly. Sometimes it is influenced by personal feelings. From time to time, it is defeated by some worldly desires and deviant ideas. At times, it is affected by anger, hostility and bigotry. Thus, the duties and functions of the human sense are interrupted and become unable to distinguish between good

Without divine revelation, the human mind is insane.



and evil. That's why Allah (Glory be to Him) has selected prophets and apostles from among His slaves to guide human mind to the right direction.

## The Mind and Revelation



As mind guides man, mind is guided by divine revelation. If a person gets deprived of his mind, he becomes insane and cra-

zy, and when the human mind is deprived of the guidance of divine revelation, the mind becomes insane. Both are necessary for each other; each of them completes the other.

Likewise, the human mind alone is not sufficient for the identification of the truth if it is not accompanied by the divine revelation. <sup>(2)</sup>The honor of a human being lies in the life and activeness of his mind; otherwise, he loses his dignity and distinction as a human being.

Moreover, Allah the Almighty has created this world as a trial and a test for mankind, ordering them to recognize their Creator and

learn about Him, His nature, His will, His orders and commands in order to adapt their lives in the



light of His guidance.

Allah the Almighty says:

**And I did not create the jinn and men except to worship Me.** (Adh-Dhariyat 51:56)

Furthermore, He (Glory be to Him) says:

**Who has created death and life that He may test you which of you is best in deed. And He is the Almighty, the Oft-Forgiving.** (Al-Mulk67:2)

Allah (Glory be to Him) wanted to help man on this mission and

assist him through His revelation to the prophets and messengers. Allah the Almighty has provided him with everything that fulfills his worldly needs and natural requirements.

Everything in this universe has been created for human beings; the sun, moon, star, and sea. The four elements: earth, water, air, fire and their derivatives have been subjected to man, but man has been created only for Allah the Almighty. These favors rep-

**The creation of universe is based upon purpose.**

resent Allah's infinite mercy and unlimited kindness for mankind. Allah the Almighty helped man through His special message and divine guidance, as man failed in using his mind and consciousness properly, being deviated



from the right path of Allah the Almighty. Thus, the chain of revelation and prophethood was established by Allah the Almighty to return man back to the right path.

Allah (Glory be to Him) says:

**Mankind were one community and Allah sent Prophets with glad tidings and warnings, and with them He sent down the Scripture in truth to judge between people in matters wherein they differed** . (Al-Baqarah 2:213)

In addition, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “The prophets are like brothers from the same father with different

mothers. Their religion is one although their Shari`ahs (rules of the Religion) differed.” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim)

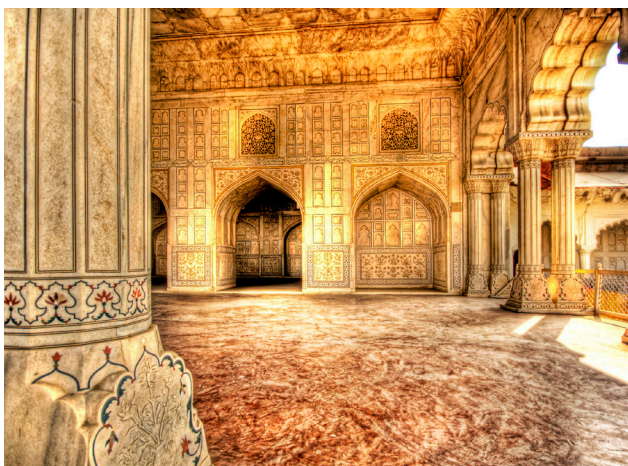
The noble prophets and messengers delivered the message of Allah the Almighty to His slaves,

**Faith remained similar in all true divine revelations.**

educated them according to the will of Allah the Almighty, taught them the principles of faith and the values of ethics, and guided them to the right path in every aspect of life.



The personalities of the prophets and messengers were adorned with all kinds of perfection, sublimity and loftiness by the grace of Allah the Almighty; they are role model sand best examples for all humanity in every walk of life. Their biographies denote that they were on the top of all sorts of humanistic perfection. They were unique and match-



less in their morals, behavior and conduct with every person; with their opponents and supporters, with humans and animals, rather, with the whole universe.

The prophets and messengers had all elements of guidance and

## The Messengers are representatives of God.

instruction for mankind. These qualities were available in their personalities so perfectly that they never could be found in any common person. They were a pure fountain of knowledge about Allah the Almighty.

We need them in every step in our life. If a person does not know his Lord, he could not be able to conceive the nature of the relationship between him and his Creator. Without the help of divine guidance, the quality of relationship between him and the universe around him and the relationship of the universe with him could not be truly understood. Without divine message, man could not worship His Lord

as He wills and orders, without whose guidance, it is too difficult to lead our life in a balanced way.

Allah (Glory be to Him) says:

**Indeed Allah conferred a great favor on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger (Muhammad) from among themselves, reciting unto them His Verses (the Glorious Qur'an), and purifying them, and instructing them (in) the Book (the Qur'an) and Al-Hikmah [the wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet], while before that they had been in manifest error. (Aal `Imran 3:164)**

The prophets and messengers are the ones who teach how a person can become a true, perfect and beneficial individual in his society. However, in the absence of the prophets and messengers (peace be upon them), man has lost his honor of humanity. The prophets and messengers introduce the Will of Allah the Almighty to people. They convey and explain the orders and commandments of Allah the Almighty to mankind. They inform people what Allah the Almighty wants from His slaves, and how they can achieve their goal in this world and the Hereafter.

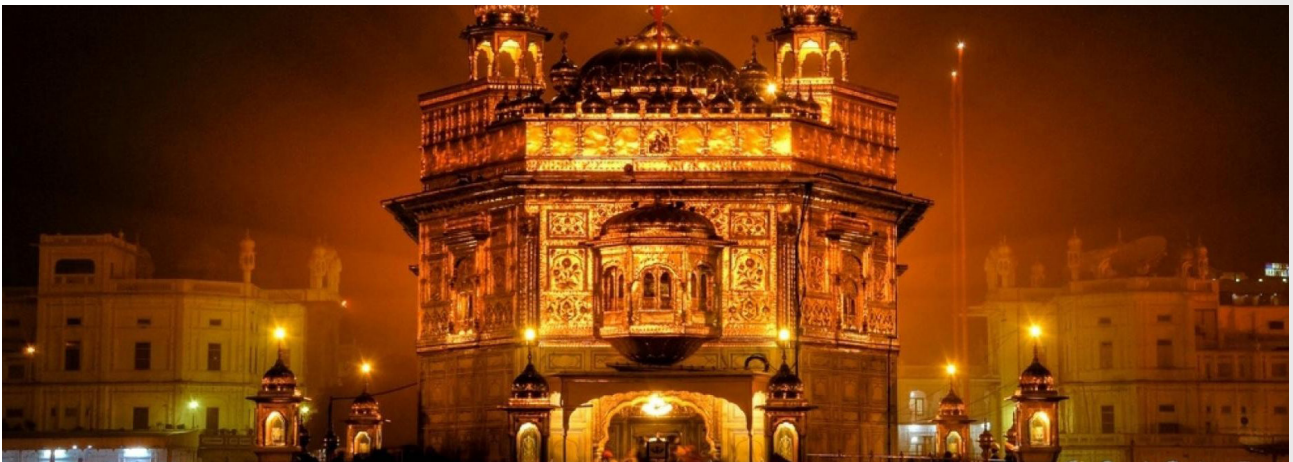


## Hindus are away from the Divine Guidance

Mankind has misunderstood these ideas when they deviated from the path of the prophets and messengers. In our time, there are people in our society who worship sex organs and who adore the statue and the snake. There are people who be-

lieve that the dung and urine of a cow are pure and they cure the diseases and remove ills and misfortunes; not only this, but there are people who believe that putting a widow on fire with her deceased husband's funeral is a form of worship that pleases Allah the Almighty.

There are people who believe that being a person totally naked before people is an act of worship

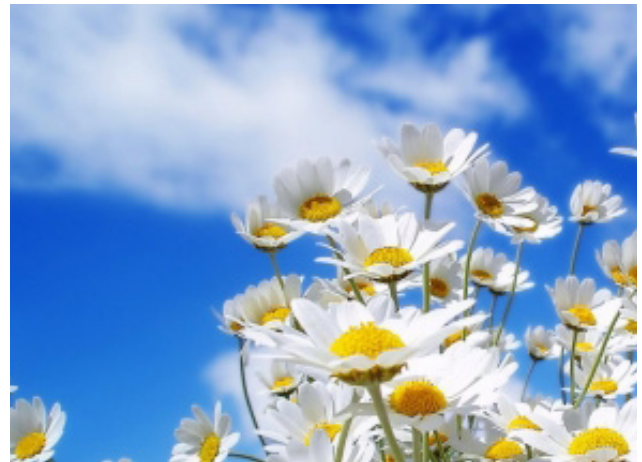


as is in the case of Naga Babas in the Hindu society. And there are people who believe that the soul of a dead person is transformed into an animal body according to his Karma (or doings), just as the soul of an animal, rat, cat, or ant is transformed into the human being as is the goal of the concept

of Rebirth in Hinduism. Even some people worship their leaders and spiritual mentors who are human beings like them.

My respected brother! Don't you feel that these actions and ideas defy clear reasoning and pure logic, yet they have become a part of social and religious life in

## Social fear prevents from accepting the truth.



India? Don't you think that Indian non-Muslims are in dire need of Islamic monotheism and divine revelation and message?

I am sure that a lot of people know the truth, but the family customs and social rituals hinder



them from declaring the truth. In fact, imitation and blind following constitute an obstacle for the human mind that distracts it

from its duty and proper thinking. Some people say: we are satisfied and convinced that Islam is the true religion of Allah and that the message of Islam is a rational way of life and Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the true Messenger and final Prophet of Allah the Almighty, but we can't abandon the religion of our ancestors and forefathers. Actually, such people do not use their own minds and prefer to follow their predecessors blindly. Allah the Almighty has praised the people who are devoted to the truth and reality and who distinguish between right and wrong, and differentiate between what is true and what is false. Allah the

Almighty commended the people who examine, investigate and search then accept the truth:

(3)

In this context, the Glorious Qur'an says:

**Those who avoid false deities, by not worshipping them and turn to Allah (in repentance), for them are glad tidings; so announce the good news to My slaves. Those who listen to the Word [good advice and Islamic Monotheism] and follow the best thereof (i.e. worship Allah Alone, repent to Him), those are (the ones) whom Allah has guided and those are men of understanding.** (Az-Zumar 39:17-18)

Allah the Almighty condemns the imitators who do not think by their own minds and remain clinging to the old, unreasonable

and destructive faiths. Allah (Glory be to Him) says:

**When it is said to them: "Follow what Allah has sent down." They say: "Nay! We shall follow what we found our fathers following." (Would they do that!) even though their fathers did not understand anything nor were they guided?**

(Al-Baqarah 2:170)

# Islam: A Religion for Mankind

Islam is not a new religion or new faith.

The religion of every prophet before Muhammad (peace be upon him) was Islam and the ir followers were Muslims

The word 'Islam' in the Arabic dictionary has two meanings:

one of them denotes peace and security, and the other refers to submission and surrendering to the will of Allah the Almighty. Whoever apprehends the will of Allah (Glory be to Him), submits his will to the will of Allah and surrenders himself totally to the orders of Allah the Almighty is called 'Muslim', regardless of his place of birth, racial affiliation or ethnic association. Whoever does not observe what pleases Allah, the Almighty, does not rec-



ognize what leads to His pleasure or does not submit his desire to the will of the Almighty, such a person could not be a true Muslim, even if he is born in a Muslim family. It is not necessary that whoever is born in a Muslim family would be a Muslim<sup>4</sup>.

We would like to make it clear that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) declared his prophethood about 1434 years ago, but he was neither the founder of a new doctrine, nor an initiator of a new faith. Rather, he was the final

Prophet who reestablished the true Abrahamic religion that was distorted by the priests. If Islam was a new religion, then what about the fate of those people who preceded Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and could not follow his religion? In fact, religion existed since mankind set foot on this earth. That religion was Islam.<sup>(5)</sup>

## The True Sanatan Dharm

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the last Messenger of Allah, the Almighty, and the Glorious Qur'an is the last book of Allah. Islam is more deserving of the name of Sanatan Dharm. Its core message remained the same in every nation and period, though there were many scriptures that preceded the Glorious Qur'an.

It is noteworthy that every religion of the world has been

named either after the name of its founder or after the community and nation in which that religion emerged. For instance, Christianity takes its title from the name of its prophet Jesus Christ, Buddhism from its initiator Buddha, Jainism from its originator Jain, Zoroastrianism from its founder Zoroaster; and Judaism, the religion of the Jews, from the name of the tribe named Judah. Similar

**Islam is free from all kinds of human affiliation.**

is the case with other religions, but not so with Islam. This religion enjoys the unique distinction of having no such association with any particular person, people or place. The word 'Islam' does not have any such relationship; it does not belong to any particular person, people, or country, it is neither the product of human

## All Prophets and Messengers were Muslims.



mind nor confined to any particular community. It is a universal religion and its objective is to instill the quality of submission and surrender to the will of Allah the Almighty. The word 'Islam' is an attributive title. Whosoever possesses this characteristic, re-



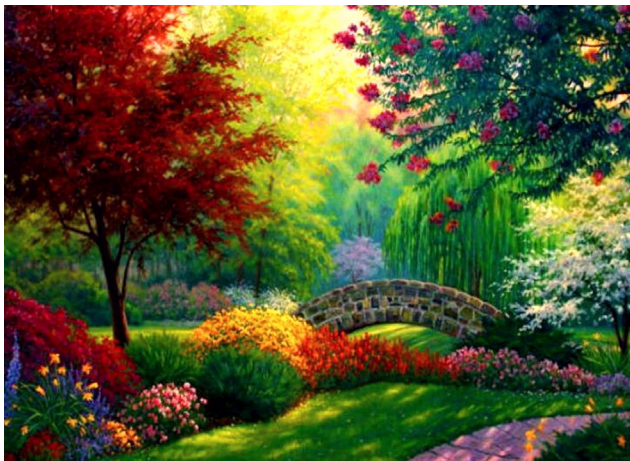
gardless of his race, community, country, or clan is a Muslim.<sup>(6)</sup>

According to the Glorious Qur'an,

among every people and in all ages there have been good and righteous people who submitted their will to the will of Allah and surrendered to the commandments of Allah, such people were and are Muslims. Even the religion of Prophet Adam (Peace be upon him), the first man and the first prophet of Allah for mankind, was Islam and his followers were Muslims. The religion of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) also was Islam and his followers were Muslims. The religion of the Prophet Abraham and Jacob (peace be upon them) was Islam and their followers were Muslims. The religion of every prophet before Prophet Muhammad



(peace be upon him) was Islam and their followers were Muslims. About Prophet Sulayman



(Solomon, peace be upon him), Allah the Almighty says:

**O chiefs! Which of you can bring me her throne before they come to me, Muslims (submissive to Allah)?** (An-Naml27:38)

Moreover, about both; Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and his son, Prophet Isma`il (Ishmael, peace be upon them), Allah the Almighty says:

**Our Lord! And make us (Muslims) submissive**

**unto You and of our offspring a nation (Muslims) submissive unto You.** (Al-Baqrah2:128)

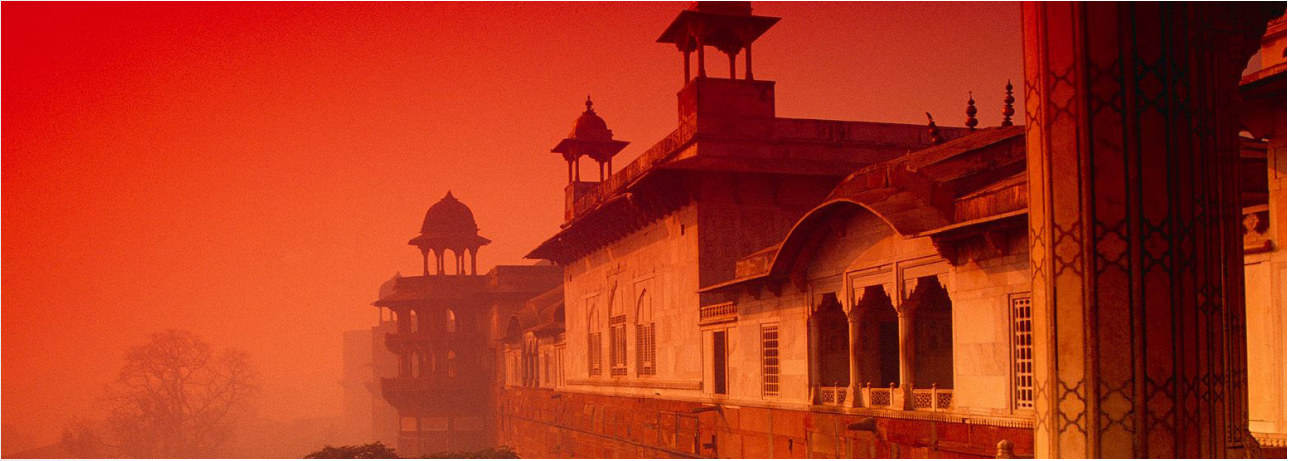
Furthermore, about Prophet Ya`qub (Jacob, peace be upon him), Allah (Glory be to Him) says:

**And this (submission to Allah, Islam) was en-**

**The true Rishis and Munis of India were Muslims.**

**joined by Ibrahim (Abraham) upon his sons and by Ya`qub (Jacob) (saying), "O my sons! Allah has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except in the Faith of Islam (as Muslims – Islamic Mono – theism)** (Al-Baqrah2:132)

The above-mentioned blessed verses in the Glorious Qur'an



generally indicate that the Indian sub-continent also was honored with some prophets. In this context, Allah (Glory be to Him) says:

**And there never was a nation but a warner had passed among them.** (Fatir35: 24)

In another verse, Allah the Almighty says:

**And We sent not a Messenger except with the language of his people, in order that he might make (the message) clear for them.** (Ibrahim14:4)

Islam has been the religion of humanity since the beginning of the human history and will be the religion of entire humanity until the Day of Resurrection.

Also, it is a religion for all people. Every person on this globe has the right to follow this religion and embrace it. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) says: "Every child is born with the Fitrah (natural disposition to Islam), it is only his parents who turn him into a Jew, a Christian or a Zoroastrian." (Muslim)

As every one of us searches for his livelihood and tries to get it, every one of us must look for his religion. Religion is even more

deserving of such efforts and endeavors. This is because if an individual misses his livelihood, his physical existence only would be harmed, but if a person fails to recognize the religion which has been chosen for him by Allah, then his spiritual and eternal existence would be lost forever.



## Was Any Prophet or Messenger Sent to the Ancient India?

If we suppose that India also has been honored with some Prophets and Apostles without specifying their names and dates, then it is natural that their religion also

People deviated from the divine message over ages.

would have been Islam, which is the religion of all prophets and messengers since the earth has been populated by humankind. Yet, their followers have deviated from the true religion of Islam and divine message as happened with many nations across the human history. Therefore, Hindus are ordered by Allah the Almighty to return to the original divine message, the message of Islam, the religion of monotheism, which was revealed by our Lord to the final Messenger of Allah, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).<sup>(7)</sup>

It was elucidated in a Hadith Qudsi (or Divine Hadith), Allah, the Almighty says: "I created My servants 'Hunafa' (monotheists), but the devils turned them away from their religion." (Muslim)

# The Message of Islam and the Ancient Messengers

The essence of first and last divine message is the same.

In the previous pages, we talked about the word Islam, its meaning and origin, and we talked about the Glorious Qur'an, the last message to the last Prophet. Now, we are going to give an example that will be helpful in understanding the true nature of Islam, divine scriptures, Prophets, Messengers and their followers.



Islam is like an educational center that has teachers and professors of different nationalities. The founder of this center makes amendments in its prospectus



frequently, in line with the developments that occur to the minds of students as a result of changes in societies. The Glorious Qur'an is actually the last book of this syllabus; the students are the peoples and tribes of the world who were addressed by the divine revelation.

The center is so permanent that never changes, but the professors, teachers, students and books are altered from time to time. Our Prophet Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, (peace be upon him) is the last Prophet

and final Messenger of Allah the Almighty. There is no Prophet or Messenger after him.

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) has explained this reality with an example, as he said: "I and the Prophets before me are like someone who constructed a beautiful building but in a corner there was a gap for a brick. People would roam around this building and express their wonder at it and would ask: "Why was this brick not placed at its place?" He said: "I am that brick and I am the seal of the Prophets." (Al-Bukhari)

Some Hindu brothers make mistake when they ask, "Were the previous scriptures incomplete? Or was the knowledge of Allah imperfect so He (Glory be to Him) has revealed the Glorious Qur'an to correct the previous sacred books?"

In fact, the changes made in the syllabus of a school from time to

time according to the developments of the community do not mean the lack of knowledge or experience in the author of the curriculum. Rather, they clarify his wisdom, awareness and wide-ness of his knowledge. Furthermore, they refer to his mercy on his pupils, because he chooses for them the most appropriate and comprehensive curriculum. Like-

**Rulings of permission and prohibition change over ages.**

wise, Allah the Almighty develops the curriculum of His slaves according to the circumstances and situations. However, when human beings reached their highest level of perfection, Allah (Glory be to Him) gave them the last and final curriculum, which is represented in the Glorious

Qur'an and Prophetic hadiths. In addition, there are always sincere reformers and highly knowledgeable and righteous persons who understand religion in depth, and extract the rulings of new issues and latest subjects from the texts of the Glorious

Qur'an and blessed Sunnah in the light of Islamic jurisprudential principles. They are neither Prophets nor Messengers but they are merely the successors of the Messengers and their heirs in the religious knowledge and divine guidance.



# Islamic Faith and Shari`ah

It is noteworthy that Islam has two types of principles. The first type includes the principles related to the faith and doctrine that includes the faith in monotheism, Allah, His attributes, angels, Messengers and Prophets, death and Hereafter, paradise and hell, fate and destiny, moral values, etiquette and ethics. These principles remained almost the same in all divine messages from Adam (peace be upon him) to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah the Almighty says:

**Truly, the religion with Allah is Islam. Those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) did not differ except, out of mutual jealousy, after**

**knowledge had come to them. And whoever disbelieves in the proofs of Allah, then surely, Allah is Swift in calling to account.** (Aal-`Imran3:19)

Moreover, Allah (Glory be to Him) says:

**The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah –which We have sent by inspiration to thee – and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that ye should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein: to those who worship other things than Allah, hard**

**is the (way) to which thou callest them. Allah chooses to Himself those whom He pleases, and guides to Himself those who turn (to Him).** (Ash-Shura 42:13)  
(8)

The second type includes the principles of Islam that are represented in the rulings on different social matters, such as purification of body, prayers, marriage, divorce, foods, drinks etc, that are called Shari`ah.



The difference between the messages of Prophets was only in jurisprudential and practical matters not in doctrine or faith. This type of differences is not

considered a difference in true sense, but it is a sort of diversity in rulings according to the social diversities. Anyhow, it has be-



**Jurisprudential rulings guarantee human wellbeing.**

come clear that the matters of faith were the same in the messages of all Prophets and Messengers all over the world. The difference was limited to the field of jurisprudence that denotes the wisdom, mercy and kindness of Allah Who introduced His legislation according to the needs of His slaves and their social abilities.






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[1] Khawajah Hasan Nizami, *Islami Rasul*, Shahjahani Press Delhi, India, 1924, p. 3.

[2] Al-Ghazali, *al-Iqtisad-Fil-I'tiqad*, al-Hikmah, Damascus, Syria, 1994, p. 3.

[3] Sayyid Sabiq, *al-'Aqa'id al-Islamiyyah*, al-Fath Lil 'lam al-'Arabi, Cairo, Egypt, 2002, p. 20.

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Council for Islamic Affairs, Arab Republic of Egypt, 2009.

[5] Debate of `Abdullah Tariq, February 8, 2008, Bulandshahar, U.P. India.

[6] Syed Abul A'la Al-Maududi, *Towards Understanding Islam*. (U.K.I.M. Dawah Centre, Alum Rock Road, Birmingham) p. 5.

[7] Sa`eed Hawa, *Al-Islam*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Cairo: Dar Assalam, 2000, pp. 7-9.

[8] Ibid.

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