



ISLAM

THE LEGACY OF ABRAHAM (PEACE BE UPON HIM)

By Aftab Khan
Peace Forum Network

*In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful
There is no one worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is messenger of Allah*

“Abraham was neither a "Jew" nor a "Christian", but was one who turned away from all that is false, having surrendered himself unto God; and he was not of those who ascribe divinity to aught beside Him.”(Qur’an;3:67); “Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham.”(Glatians;3:6-7).“If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did.” (Jesus, John; 8:39).

THE LEGACY OF ABRAHAM:

(peace be upon him)

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Preface:

The religions generally emphasize the dogmas and rituals of worship, while advocating high morals; but Islam is unique, it is the complete way of life, (Din), encompassing spiritual, as well as social, political, economic and all other aspects of human life for peace and security. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did not introduce any new faith, God chose him for reviving and culminating the original faith for all the humanity till eternity. It is based upon attainment of peace through total surrender to the 'Will of God' (Islam), preached by all the previous messengers, to their respective communities. Islam is, rooted in Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), the common ancestor of Jews, Christians and Muslims.

The recent upsurge in the militancy and violence against oppression and foreign occupation in some Muslim lands has been

incorrectly labeled as 'Islamic Terrorism'. Terrorism is not restricted to any one religion. Such movements are, akin to any other armed movement like, in Spain (Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) Euzkadi Ta Askatasuna), South Africa (armed struggle by ANC during apartheid regime), Sri Lanka (Tamil Tigers), Northern Ireland (IRA), Georgia (Abkhazia & South Ossetia), India (Nagaland, Mezoram), Hutu and Tutsi conflict in Rwanda and Burundi, Mexico (EZLN: Zapatista National Liberation Army), Kurdish separatists movement in Turkey and Iraq (among Muslims). 'Ku Klux Klan' the Whites racist terrorist organizations against blacks, operating in the U.S.A since 1865. The Baader-Meinhof gang of West Germany (1968-92), the Japanese Red Army, Italy's Red Brigades, the Puerto Rican FALN, the Shining Path of Peru, France's Direct Action., Zionist Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization), Stern Gang, (Lohame Herut

Yisra'el, "Fighters for the Freedom of Israel") and Haganah, were among the most prominent terrorist groups of the later 20th century. The Christian Templars (1119-1312) of Crusaders period had religious fervor. The terrorist activities mostly target the innocent civilians: the suicide bombing by Tamil Tigers, poisonous gas attack by Japanese terrorists (Aum Shinrikyo - mixed Buddhist dominated movement) in the Tokyo subway in 1996 and deadly Oklahoma bombing in the United States in 1995 by Americans ex servicemen, 9/11 attack against Twin Towers in N.Y and London subway bombing, are some examples. The out of proportion use of brute force and firepower by Israelis against unarmed Palestinians, US and allies against civilians in Iraq, Afghanistan and killing of protesting Kashmiri civilians by Indian forces are forms of state terrorism.

Islam is misunderstood due to many fallacies, which exist among Christians, non Muslims and even amongst some Muslims about Islam. The main reasons contributing towards these delusions are; historic, geopolitical, social, cultural, economic, religious and lack of understanding of Islam, and its values due to restricted and subjective view. Attributing every wrong act performed by Muslims, to Islam is not fair. Islam is the religion of 'Peace' literally and from core, it does not preach violence or suicide, the killing of innocent people is considered as a crime against humanity.(Qur'an:4:29, 5:32, 17:33). The legitimate warfare by the state is to be conducted strictly within laid down limits.(Qur'an:2:216,190-193, 60:8-9).

A modest endeavor has been made to present the broader perspective of Islam by synthesizing the works of great scholars, published in the form of articles, compiled in the form of series of

books; “The Legacy Abraham-Islam” is part of the series: ‘The Creator’, ‘Creation’ & ‘Guidance’.

No human work can claim to be perfect, Imam Shafa’i, was very right in saying :

“I am convinced about the authenticity of my opinions, but I do consider it likely that they may turn out to be incorrect. Likewise, I am convinced about the incorrectness of the views different from mine, but I do admit the possibility that they may turn out to be correct.”

Error or omissions if any? are incidental for which forgiveness from Allah is sought:

“Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake.”(Qur’an;2:286).

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19 January, 2009

Lahore Pakistan

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ISLAM – THE LEGACY OF ABRAHAM

CHAPTER-1 :INTRODUCTION

“Abraham was neither a "Jew" nor a "Christian", but was one who turned away from all that is false, having surrendered himself unto God; and he was not of those who ascribe divinity to aught beside Him.”(Qur’an;3:67);“Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham.”(Glatians;3:6-7).“If you were Abraham's children, you would do what Abraham did.” (Jesus, John; 8:39).

Humanity has been blessed with the instincts and intellect to rationally identify and believe in the existence of a Supreme Creator and Sustainer through the signs within and all around. The man endeavors to live the life within the desired parameters to achieve His pleasure, the objective of his creation. The relation of human being to the Supreme Creator and Sustainer (commonly known as God, Allah) that which they regard as holy, sacred, spiritual, or divine, is termed as ‘Religion’.

The word 'religion' is derived from Latin '*religio*' means 'to bind'. Thus the religion is one of the ways of binding the people together through common deity worship and rituals. According to Encyclopedia Britannica; "Religion is commonly regarded as consisting of a person's relation to God or to gods or spirits. Worship is probably the most basic element of religion, but moral conduct, right belief, and participation in religious institutions are generally also constituent elements of the religious life as practiced by believers and worshipers and as commanded by religious teachers, messengers and scriptures." In Islam the worship, in its true sense is not only restricted to the rituals and dogmas, but it is the complete submission and obedience to the God, to live the life, in all aspects as desired by Him by rejecting evil temptations; a complete social system. All the religions basically have a common origin, the history of religion is summed up by Qur'an: "Mankind were one community, and Allah sent (unto them) Prophets as bearers of good tidings and as warners, and revealed therewith the Scripture with the truth that it might judge

between mankind concerning that wherein they differed. And only those unto whom (the Scripture) was given differed concerning it, after clear proofs had come unto them, through hatred one of another. And Allah by His will guided those who believe unto the truth of that concerning which they differed. Allah guides whom He will unto a Straight path.”(Qura’n;2:213). With the passage of time the original message of guidance i.e. to worship and obey one God preached by massagers like Enoch (Idris), Noah (peace be upon them), and others got obscured. However it got revived during 18th century B.C, through Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), the forebear of the three great religions; Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Over the period, even the original faith of Abraham despite the efforts of messengers among his progeny (like Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Jesus, peace be upon them all) got obscured and corrupted, thus dividing them into sects and groups. The other major world religions like Hinduism also have monotheistic doctrines buried under the dust of polytheistic, idolatrous, mystic and other practices. The sacred Hindu scriptures,

urge: “O friends, do not worship anybody but Him, the Divine One. Praise Him alone.”(Rigveda;8:1:1). Buddhism, is considered non committal on God, historical criticism has proved that the original teachings of Buddha can never be known, because his teachings and doctrines were written down 400 years, after his death. Moreover little attention was paid to its authenticity, genuineness and purity. However prophecies of advent of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Buddhist scriptures points towards some missing links. The religions differ in their set of principles or beliefs or the body of dogmas commonly called Faith; which is the theological virtue defined as secure belief in God and a trusting acceptance of God's will. Allah says: “In fact, your religion is one religion, and I am your only Lord: so fear Me Alone. Yet people have divided themselves into factions and each faction rejoices in its own doctrines”(Qur’an;23:52-53). This original religion was revived in its unique spirit of monotheism, fourteen hundred years ago in concordance with the light of reason; exclusive of mysterious doctrines to cast a shade of sentimental ignorance

round the original truths rooted in the human intellect, representing the latest development of the religious faculties.

Faith:

The 'faith', (Greek *pistis*, Latin *fides*, Hebrew 'aman,' Arabic 'Ayman') is the inner attitude, conviction, or trust relating man to a supreme God or ultimate salvation. In religious traditions stressing divine grace, it is the inner certainty or attitude of love granted by God himself. Some inner attitude has its part in all religious traditions, but it is not always of central significance. For example, words in ancient Egypt or ancient (*Vedic*) India that can be roughly rendered by the general term "religion" do not allow for "faith" as a translation but rather connote cultic duties and acts. In Hindu and Buddhist Yoga traditions, the recommended inner attitudes are, primarily attitudes of trust in the guru, or spiritual preceptor, and not, or not primarily, in God. Hindu and Buddhist concepts of devotion (Sanskrit *bhakti*) and love or compassion (Sanskrit *karuna*) are more comparable to the

Christian notions of love (Greek *agape*, Latin *caritas*) than to faith. Devotional forms of Mahayana Buddhism and Vaisnavism show religious expressions not wholly dissimilar to faith in Christian and Jewish traditions. Notions of religious trust in India, China, and Japan are as a rule different from the notion of faith in Western religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam). The "trust" (Pali *saddha*, Sanskrit *shraddha*) described in the Buddhist Eightfold Path is comparable to the confidence with which a sick person entrusts himself to a physician. The Chinese *hsin* ("confidence, trust, sincerity") is considered to be one of the five principal virtues.

In biblical, a tradition, the faith is basically based on trust. A thing is true, and therefore worthy of trust. It admits of many degrees up to full assurance of faith, in accordance with the evidence on which it rests: "And "Which made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which keeps truth for ever:"(Psalms;146:6); "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." (Psalms;43:3) [Tabernacle: The

portable sanctuary in which the Jews carried the Ark of the Covenant through the desert]. In other words, "faith" is principally juridical; it is the faithfulness or truthfulness with which persons adhere to a treaty or promise and with which God and Israel adhere to the Covenant between them; a legacy of Abraham: "And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness."(Genesis;15:6); "And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of a multitude of nations."(Genesis;17:3-4); "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee."(Genesis;17:7);"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as justice."(Romans;4:3). The Jewish creed is monothisitic in faith: "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One" (Deuteronomy; 6:4). The nexus between faith and justice or justification was developed by Paul much later; after Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him).

The biblical traditions of the Old Testament maintained the demand of God of the covenant (Exodus;14:312, 19:9, Johua;24, Ishiaha;7:9). The faith is the pledge of salvation (Isiah;28:16, 30:15, Jermiah;17:5, Pslams;52:8-9). Some scholars think that Zoroastrianism, as well as Judaism, may have had some importance in the development of the notion of faith in Western religion. Zoroaster (628-551 B.C) is reported to have spoken of a new, conscious religious choice on the part of man for truth (*asha*).

In Christian theology, faith is considered to be, the divinely inspired human response to God's historical revelation through Jesus Christ and consequently, is of crucial significance. In the New Testament, faith is above all, faith in Jesus and his mission as perceived by Paul, stated in Nicene Creed (325 C.E): against the original preaching of all previous messengers and Jesus himself.(Mathew;5:17-20, Deuteronomy;6:4, 5:7-9, 6:13-15 & Mark 12:29-30, John; 5:30). In short, the Christian Faith is based upon the belief in; "Trinity, (God, Son and Holy Sprit as One), Jesus as the Son of God, the Lord, Savior, who died at

the cross to redeem the sins of humanity and resurrected on third day, ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father and the resurrection of the dead”. The faith is interpreted as condition for salvation (Mathew;9:28, Mark;4:36-41, Luke;8:25). Hence in Christianity, the doctrine of ‘Justification by Grace, through Faith’ was developed. It is the belief that a person can achieve salvation only through faith and reliance on God's grace, not through good deeds. The phrase is adapted from a sentence in the epistles of Paul in the Bible:” For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (Ephesians;2:8); “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”(Ephesians;2:5). ‘Justification’ is what sets a person fundamentally in friendship with God, and entitles the person to life with God in heaven after death. The passage of an individual from sin to a state of grace has been explained in different ways: Some theologians use the term to refer to the act of God in extending grace to the sinner, while others use it to define the change in the

condition of a sinner who has received grace. St. Paul used the term to explain how people moved from sin to grace through the death and resurrection of Jesus and not through any human effort. St. Augustine saw it as an act of God that makes sinners righteous. Whether human beings can contribute to this justification, in addition to God's grace, was one of the great points of division among Christians at the time of the Reformation in 16th century lead by Martin Luther (1483-1546 C.E), the German theologian. His opposition to the wealth and corruption of the papacy and his belief that salvation would be granted on the basis of faith alone rather than by works, was against the common teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that people's good works, as well as their faith, helped to save them. Two of the slogans of Luther were "Grace Alone" and "Faith Alone." Since the time of Luther, the differences between Protestant and Roman Catholic teachings on point have become hard to discern which caused excommunication of Luther from the Catholic Church in 1521 C.E. Luther confirmed the Augsburg Confession in 1530 C.E, effectively

establishing the Lutheran Church. The Protestants as they are called, also believe in the acceptance of the Bible as the sole source of revelation and; the universal priesthood of all the believers. The doctrine of Justification by Grace, through Faith' is in direct conflict to the Jewish position that justification is through good works, by perfectly fulfilling law and not the gracious and gratuitous gift of God only.

In Islam, it is the Faith (*Ayman*) which sets the believer apart from others, Allah says: "O you who have attained faith! Hold fast unto your belief in God and His Apostle (Muhammad, peace be upon him) and the Scripture which He hath revealed unto His messenger, and the Scripture which He revealed aforetime. Whoso disbelieves in God and His angels and His scriptures and His messengers and the Last Day, he verily hath wandered far astray."(Qur'an;4:136). It is ascertained that faith is by the grace of God for those who use their reason, God says:" It is not possible for anyone to believe except by the permission of Allah, and He throws filth (of disbelief) on those who do not use their reason. Say: "Look at whatever exists in the

heavens and the earth." Signs and warnings do not benefit those people who do not believe."(Qur'an;10:100-101). In Islam, the faith and good deeds both are required for salvation. Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful says: "Surely mankind is in loss, except those who attain Faith and do good deeds; exhort one another to the truth and exhort one another to patience."(Qur'an;103:2-3); "Say: "Shall we Tell you of those who lose Most In of their deeds?-"Those whose efforts have been wasted In This while They thought that They were acquiring good by their works? "They are those who deny the Signs of their Lord the fact of their having to meet Him (in the Hereafter): vain will be their works nor shall We, on the Day of Judgment, give them any weight. That is their reward, Hell, because They rejected and took My Signs and My Messengers by way of jest. As to those who believe and work righteous deeds, have, for their entertainment, the Gardens of Paradise,"(Qur'an;18:103-107). Not any race, or people, or community, or group, should believe that they have exclusive possession of Allah's

Grace, or that they can influence its grant or its withholding. Allah's Grace is free, and entirely controlled by Him, independently of any priests and privileged people. He dispenses it according to His own wise and holy Will and Plan; and to His Grace there is no limit. It is up to Him to bestow His Grace upon whom He likes, He says: "...the people of the Book may know that they do not have the sole right to the grace of Allah, and that His grace is entirely in His own hands, which He bestows on whomever He wills: and Allah is the Owner of mighty grace."(Qur'an;57:29); "Now those who believe in Allah and hold fast to Him, Allah will soon cover them with His mercy and grace and will show them the Right Way to Himself."(Qur'an;4:175); "He punishes whom He wills and shows mercy to whom He pleases, and to Him you shall be turned back."(Qur'an;29:21). Mere oral statement of belief is only the first stage, the truthfulness of belief is tested, Allah says: "Do the people think that they will be left alone on saying "We believe," and that they will not be tested? We did test those who have gone before them. Allah has to see (for the purpose of reward

and punishment) who are the truthful and who are the liars".(Qur'an;29:2-3). The Faith (*ayman*) is achieved through belief and practices, leading to piety (*taqwa*), Allah says: "Righteousness is not whether you turn your face towards East or West; but the righteousness is to believe in Allah, the Last Day, the Angels, the Books and the Prophets, and to spend wealth out of love for Him on relatives, orphans, helpless, needy travelers, those who ask for and on the redemption of captives; and to establish prayers (*Salah*), to pay alms (*Zakah*), to fulfill promises when made, to be steadfast in distress, in adversity, and at the time of war. These people are the truthful and these are the pious.(Qur'an;2:177). The 4th Caliph Ali (599-661 C.E) is attributed to have said; 'Faith precedes good actions and good actions point towards faith. They compliment and reciprocate each other.' The Qur'an is the final revelation in which Allah said: "ye are the best community (*Ummah*) brought forward to mankind."(Qur'an;3:110). So in order to receive His Grace, one has to submit to the Will of God to join the best community of the people of Islam.

Islam – The Perpetual Way of Life (Din):

Islam is the major world faith, foundation of the great civilization comprising over one fifth of humanity stretched all over the globe. Word “Salaam” and “Shalom” mean “peace” in Arabic and Hebrew respectively. The Hebrew word “Shalom” (שלום), and the Arabic “Salaam” (سلام) literally mean “peace” and are cognates of each other, derived from the Semitic Triconsonantal of Š-L-M (realized in Hebrew as Š-L-M and in Arabic as S-L-M). Hence the word ‘Islam’, derived from Arabic root ‘S-L-M,’ meaning ‘peace’ or ‘submission’. In a religious context it means; *‘attainment of peace through complete submission to the will of God or his laws’*. Combination of Arabic.(س ل م), Hebrew (שלום), and English ‘PEACE’ is also being used as “Symbol of Peace”.

Islam is the major world faith, foundation of the great civilization comprising over one fifth of humanity stretched all over the globe. Islam is derived from Arabic root ‘s-l-m,’ meaning ‘peace’ or ‘submission’. In a religious context it means; *‘attainment of peace through complete*

submission to the will of God or his laws'. Allah is the exclusive Arabic name for God, which is also used by Arab Christians. Allah says: Islam is as old as the humanity. Prophet Adam (peace be upon him), the first human was also the first prophet of Islam; "Mankind was once just one nation; later on they became divided through inventing different creeds. If your Lord had not already given His word (specified time for the life of mankind on Earth), the matters in which they differ would have certainly been decided."(Qur'an;10:19). Later he sent prophets like Noah, Enoch, Abraham (peace be upon them) and others to guide the humanity, they preached the 'total surrender and obedience to the will of God' (Islam). All the messengers preached and practiced the same religion 'submission to the will of God' (Islam), which is not new to the mankind. Hence all the messengers and prophets along with their followers were Muslims because their faith was based upon 'total surrender to the will God' (Islam). Allah says: "The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah-the which We have sent by inspiration to

thee (Muhammad) and that which We enjoined on Abraham Moses and Jesus:..."(Qur'an;42:13); "Behold! Abraham said to his father and his people: "I do indeed clear myself of what ye worship: "(I worship) only Him Who made me and He will certainly guide me." And he left it as a Word to endure among those who came after him that they may turn back (to Allah)."(Qur'an;43:26-28).

It is narrated in Bible at many places that, the messengers preached and submitted to the will of God; "...Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven."(Matthew;6:10, Luke;11:2); "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."(Genesis;6:22);"Thus Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham."(Glatians;3:6-7); "And the children of Israel went away, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they "(Exodus;12:28); "And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient."(Exodus;24:7); "I

have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.” (Psalms;119:106); “And they were both (Zechariah and his wife) righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”(Luke;1:6); “Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.”(Deuteronomy;13:4); “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”(Hebrews;11:6); “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:”(Exodus;19:5); “But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.”(Jeremiah;7:23);“A blessing, if ye obey the commandments of the LORD your God, which I command you this day:”(Deuteronomy;11:27);“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear

God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”(Ecclesiastes;12:13). Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) specified adherence to the Will of God being the key for the entry to heaven (Mathew;7:21); he said: “I seek not my own will but the Will of Him who sent me.”(John:5:30). It is further mentioned in Bible: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”(Romans;13:1); “Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.”(Psalms;103:20); “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.”(Acts;5:29); “Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God; and the LORD will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.”(Jeremiah;26:13); “And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,”(Deuteronomy;10:12); “As soon as they hear

of me, they shall obey me: the strangers shall submit themselves unto me.”(Psalms;18:44); “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:”(Isaiah;1:19); “And thou shall not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.”(Deuteronomy;28:14); “And a curse, if ye will not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn aside out of the way which I command you this day, to go after other gods, which ye have not known”(Deuteronomy;11:28). Those who do not submit to will of God will be subjected to Divine anger and punishment: “And that servant, which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.”(Luke;12:47).

Islam, also means ‘peace’; which has been frequently mentioned in Bible: “If it be possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all.”(Romans;12:18); “Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be

with you.”(2Corinthians;13:11, Romans;15:33); “LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.”(Isaiah;26:12); “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.”(Job;22:21);“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”(Romans;8:6); “But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.”(Psalms;37:11); “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”(Matthew;5:9). The advise of Prophet Jacob (peace be upon him) to his sons at the time of death to obey and worship One God, is mentioned in Talmud and Qur’an: “..when death came to Jacob, when he said unto his sons: What will ye worship after me? They said: We shall worship thy God, the God of thy fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, One God, and unto Him we have surrendered”(Qur’an;2:133).

Though Judaism and Christianity affirm their roots to Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) but, it is Islam alone, which can claim to be really adhering to the legacy of Abraham (peace be upon

him). Allah says in Qur'an: "..He has chosen you (Muslims) and has not laid upon you any hardship in the observance of your faith - the faith of your father Abraham. He named you Muslims before in prior scriptures and in this (The Qur'an), so that His Apostle may testify against you and you yourselves may testify against rest of the mankind..."(Qur'an;22:78); "Jews and Christians say: "Be Jews or Christians, you shall then be rightly guided." (O Muhammad), say: "By no means! We follow the faith of Abraham, the upright one; and he joined not gods with Allah."(Qur'an;2:135, similarly;3:95 & 6:161); "Say ye: "We believe in Allah and the revelation given to us and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob and the Tribes and that given to Moses and Jesus and that given to (all) Prophets from their Lord we make no difference between one and another of them and we bow to Allah (in Islam)."(Qur'an;2:136); "And I have followed the religion of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. It never was for us to attribute aught as partner to Allah. This is of the bounty of Allah unto us and unto mankind; but most men give not thanks."(Qur'an;12:38 &

similarly at 16:123); “O people of the Book! Why do you argue with us about Abraham, as to whether he was a Jew or a Christian? You know, that the Torah and the Gospel were revealed long after him? Will you then not, then, use your reason? So far you have been arguing about things of which you had some knowledge! Must you now argue about that of which you know nothing at all? Allah knows while you do not. Abraham was neither a “Jew” nor a “Christian”, but was one who turned away from all that is false, having surrendered himself unto God, true in faith, and he was not of those who ascribe divinity to aught beside Him.”(Qur’an;3:65-67). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the last messenger of God, said: “..you (Muslims) are an heir to the heritage of Abraham”(Sunan Abu Dawood;770).

Islam is not only confined to some beliefs, rituals and dogmas. Islam is a *Din* (complete way of life; social system). *Din* is the root of Arabic term used for ‘habit’, ‘way’, ‘account’, ‘obedience’, ‘judgment’ and ‘reward’. It implies that living in obedience to God is an obligation owed to Him, for which

people will be taken in to account, judged and recompensed. *Din* can generally refer to any path that a human follows for their lives :(Qur'an;2:256, 16:9) or more specifically to Islam as the comprehensive way of life chosen by God for humanity's temporal and eternal benefit. *Din* encompasses beliefs, thoughts, character, behavior and deeds. Thus if these aspects of life are derived from God's guidance as originally taught by prophets, they comprise Islam. Islam has its own political, social, economic, legal (*Shari'a*) and other philosophies covering every sphere of spiritual and non-spiritual (secular) aspects of human life, with methodologies for their practical implementation. However if the way of life in a society is based upon human innovations in deviation from what the messengers of God taught, they are only generally considered as the different ways that groups or individuals have chosen for themselves. *Din* is also used in different contexts as; 'faith', 'religious law', 'moral law' or 'way of life'. All previous messengers and scriptures were meant for specific people and for specific period; hence with due reverence to all of

them, the *Din* for the humanity now is Islam, the legacy of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), as preached and practiced by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah says: “And afterward We inspired thee (Muhammad, saying): Follow the religion of Abraham, as one by nature upright. He was not of the idolaters.”(Qur’an;16:123); “It is He Who has sent His Apostle with Guidance and the Religion of Truth that he may proclaim it over all (false) religions even though the idolaters may detest it”(Qur’an;61:9); “The religion with God (is) The Surrender (to His will and guidance i.e. Islam). Those who (formerly) received the Scripture differed only after knowledge came unto them, through transgression among themselves. They should know that Allah is swift in calling to account those who deny His revelations.” (Qur’an;3:19). “If anyone is looking for a religion other than Islam, then let it be known that it will not be accepted from him; and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers.”(Qur’an;3:85). Therefore Islam or peaceful submission to God, in beliefs, rituals, character and sociopolitical and economic interaction is termed as “Way of the Truth” (*din ul*

haqq) which is accepted by God. The sincere worship of none but 'Him' is the 'straight path' established for the mankind (*ad-den al-qayyim*). Islam is the 'primordial religion' (*din-al-hanif*), it seeks to return man to his original, true nature in which he is in harmony with creation, inspired to do good, and confirming the Oneness of God. Allah says: "Therefore, stand firm in your devotion to the upright faith - the nature made by Allah, the one on which mankind is created - and the laws of Nature ordained by Allah cannot be changed. That is the standard of true faith (*ad-den al-qayyim*), but most among mankind do not know".(Qur'an;30:30 similarly 6:161 & 4:125). Narrated Tamim ad-Dari: The Apostle of Allah (peace be upon him) observed: "*Ad-Din* is a name of sincerity and well-wishing. Upon this we said: For whom? He replied: for Allah, His Book, His Messenger and for the leaders and the common Muslims."(Sahih Muslim Hadith:21).

The Faith of Abraham and Judaism:

Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) totally surrendered to the Will of God, a true Muslim by

definition (flourished 18th century B.C). His two sons Ishmael and Isaac are well known in the biblical history. The monotheistic faith of Prophet Abraham [worship and obedience to One God] was followed by his decedents i.e. Children of Israel (Jacob, son of Prophet Isaac, peace be upon him) and the Children of Prophet Ishmael (peace be upon him).Initially the children of Israel (Jacob) were known as Hebrews. The word "Hebrew" (in Hebrew, "Ivri") is first used in the Torah to describe Abraham (Genesis;14:13). The word is apparently derived from the name Eber, one of Abraham's ancestors. Another tradition mentions that the word comes from the word "eyver," which means "the other side," referring to the fact that Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) came from the other side of the Euphrates, or referring to the fact, Abraham was separated from the other nations morally and spiritually. The word "Jew" (in Hebrew, "Yehudi") is derived from the name Judah, which was the name of one of Jacob's twelve sons. Judah was the ancestor of one of the tribes of Israel, which was named after him. Likewise, the word Judaism literally means

"Judah-ism," that is, the religion of the Yehudim. Originally, the term Yehudi referred specifically to members of the tribe of Judah, as distinguished from the other tribes of Israel. However, after the death of King and Prophet Solomon (peace be upon him) , the nation of Israel was split into two kingdoms: the (Southern) kingdom of Judah and the (Northern) kingdom of Israel (I Kings 12; II Chronicles 10). After that time, the word Yehudi could properly be used to describe anyone from the kingdom of Judah, which included the tribes of Judah, Benjamin and Levi, as well as scattered settlements from other tribes. The most obvious biblical example of this usage is found in Esther;2:5, where Mordecai is referred to as both a Yehudi and a member of the tribe of Benjamin. The ten tribes were exiled from the land (II Kings;17), in the 6th century B.C, once the kingdom of Israel was conquered by Assyria (721 B.C) leaving only the tribes in the kingdom of Judah remaining to carry on Abraham's heritage. These people of the kingdom of Judah were generally known to themselves and to other nations as Yehudim (Jews), and that name

continues to be used ever since for the children of Israel as their religious peculiarities and traditions were developed. The 19th-century biblical scholars moved the decisive division back into the period of the Babylonian Exile and restoration of the Jews to Judah (6th-5th centuries B.C). They asserted that after the first fall of Jerusalem (586 BC) the ancient "Israelitic" religion gave way to a new form of the "Jewish" faith, or Judaism, as formulated by Ezra (5th century BCE), the scribe and his school (Ishaq Ibn Bishr reported, on the authority of Ibn Abbas and others, that Ezra was an Israeli saint and a wise man). A German historian, Eduard Meyer, in 1896 published *Die Entstehung des Judentums* ("The Origin of Judaism"), in which he placed the origins of Judaism in the Persian period or the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (5th century B.C). and actually attributed to Persian imperialism for playing an important role in shaping the new emergent Judaism. Cyrus the Great the king of Persia (559-530 BC), is highly respected by Jews. He conquered Asia Minor, Babylonia, Syria, Palestine, and most of the Iranian plateau. He is

known to have ruled his empire with wisdom and moderation, maintaining good relations with the Jews, whom he freed from the Babylonian Captivity and allowed the construction of 2nd Temple (520-515 B.C).Some Muslim commentators presume him to be the *Zulqarnain* (Two Horned), the king and conqueror mentioned in Qur'an (*Surah Kahaf Chapter.18*), Allah knows the best.

The Jews are obsessed with the covenant of God with their ancestors Prophet Abraham and Jacob (Israel), (peace be upon them), for special favors and their status as superior nation being chosen race of God. Islam in fact does not subscribe to the existence of the concept of a chosen race for all times, which is well understood from the Qur'an: "Remember that when Abraham was tested by his Lord with certain commands, he fulfilled them. God said: "Surely, I will make you the leader of mankind." "What about my offspring?" Asked Abraham. "My Covenant," said Allah, "will not apply to the evil doers."(Qur'an;2:124). Here the claim of the children of Israel as "Chosen People of God" by only virtue of their decent has been

negated. Even according to Bible, this Covenant is conditional, with the obedience of God and not applicable to evil doers: “Now therefore, If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, Then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:”(Exodus;19:5); “And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the LORD destroyed before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.”(Deuteronomy;8:19-20). Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) also dispelled the wrong notion of Israelites, while saying: “And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”(Matthew;3:9). Allah says: “Have you not seen the behavior of those (Jews) who have been given a portion of the Book? When they are invited to settle their disputes according to the Book of Allah, some of them turn back and

decline. This is because they say: "The fire of Hell shall not touch us; even if it does, it will be for a few days." In their religion they are deceived by their own self-invented beliefs. What will they do when We will gather them together on the Day which is sure to come, when every soul will be given what it has earned and there shall be no injustice?" (Qur'an;3:23-25). The Israelites became unfaithful to covenant engagements (Jeremiah;3:6-8, 31:32; Ezekiel ;16:59), became rebellious against God (Deuteronomy; 32:15; 9:7; Isaiah;1:2, Exodus;32:9); often displeased God by their sins (Numbers;25:3; Deuteronomy;32:16; 1Kings;16:2; Isaiah;1:4; 5:24-25). They were punished by God for; Idolatry (Psalms;78:58-64; Isaiah;65:3-7), Unbelief (Romans;11:20), Breaking covenant (Isaiah;24:5; Jeremiah; 11:10), Transgressing the law (Isaiah;1:4; 24:5-6), Changing the ordinances (Isaiah;24:5) and Killing the prophets (Mathew;23:37-38, 27:25). They were scattered among the nations (Deuteronomy; 28:64; Ezekiel; 6:8; 36:19), despised by the nations (Ezekiel;36:3), their country trodden under foot by the Gentiles (Deuteronomy;28:49-

52; Luke;21:24). Their house was desolated (Mathew;24:38) and were deprived of civil and religious privileges (Hosea;3:4). The divine punishment was in the form of destruction of the northern kingdom of Israel by Assyrians in 721 B.C; the ten Israeli tribes were scattered. The southern Kingdom of Judah thrived until 587-586 BC, when it was overrun by the Babylonians, who destroyed the 1st Temple and carried off many of the inhabitants into exile, it was beginning of 'Diaspora'. When the Persians conquered Babylonia in 538 BC, Cyrus the Great allowed the Jews to return to their homeland and the 2nd Temple was rebuilt during 520-515 B.C. In 331 BC, Greek culture was introduced with the conquests of Alexander the Great. The Greek and Roman rule continued intermittently. Romans granted religious freedom to the Jews. Under the influence of surrounding cultures, gradually the original message of Abraham was distorted and Judaism emerged.

Refutation of Prophet Jesus Christ (PBUH)& Evolution of Christianity:

Finally God sent Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), the last messenger of God for the Israelites. Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) called them to the way of Lord and with the authority of God, performed miracles, relaxed some of the restriction imposed upon Jews due to the hardness of their hearts: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:”(Acts;2:22). Allah says: “And will make him (Jesus) a messenger unto the children of Israel, (saying): Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it and it is a bird, by Allah's leave. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah's leave. And I announce unto you what ye eat and what ye store up in your houses. Lo! herein verily is a portent for you, if ye are believers. And (I come) confirming that which was before me of

the Torah, and to make lawful some of that which was forbidden unto you. I come unto you with a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to Allah and obey me. Lo! Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path”(Qur’an;3:49). Similarly it is also mentioned in Bible (Mathew;4:23,9:35, Luke; 4:22, 9:11, 3:8 and Acts:4:16). Once an adulteress was brought to Prophet Jesus Christ, the son of Mary (peace be upon him), she was to be stoned to death according to Mosaics Law, Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), said: “Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.”(John;8:7). His voice rose in the middle of the Temple, relaxing the law on adultery, for the sinless to judge sin. There was none eligible; Jesus asked her not to do it again. No mortal can judge sin, only Allah the Most Merciful. Hence Prophet Jesus Christ, the son of Mary (peace be upon him), relaxed the Law of stoning to death for adultery.(Jhon;8:1-12). Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was sent for the guidance of Israelites (Matthew; 10:5-7 & 15:24). The Jews rejected Jesus and arranged to kill him on false charges

(Luke 22:63-71, 23:1-56, John;19-42), though his innocence was also acknowledged by Pilate, the Roman ruler (John;19:4). Their plot was foiled by God, *he was neither killed nor crucified but it was made to appear to them as such* and God raised him to Himself. Christianity in the beginning was developed as a sect of Judaism. Much later, Paul, who never met Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), declared himself as the 13th disciple. Paul deviated from the mission and teaching of Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him), who had said: “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them.”(Mathew;5:17). Paul systematically canceled the Law of Moses, by declaring: “*But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we serve not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.*”(Romans;7:6). The rite of Circumcision was established, as a national ordinance in compliance with the divine command to Prophet Abraham (Genesis;17:10-11). In the Old Testament a spiritual idea is also attached to circumcision; it was the symbol of purity (Isaiah;52:1). Prophet

Abraham (peace be upon him), though ninety-nine years of age, along with Ishmael, who was thirteen years old were circumcised on the same day (Genesis;17:24-27). The slaves (Genesis;17:12-13), sons and grandsons of Abraham were circumcised (Acts;7:8). All foreigners males had to be circumcised before they could enjoy the privileges of Hebrew citizenship (Exodus;12:48). The Jews prided in this covenant of distinction (Judges;14:3;15:18; 1Samuel;14:6;17:26; 2Samuel;1:20; Ezekhiel;31:18). Circumcision is part of the Law of Moses (Exodus;4:24-26); accordingly Jesus was circumcised, on the 8th day of his birth (Luke;2:21). To facilitate the free admission of uncircumcised Gentiles into the Christianity; the conference of the disciples at Jerusalem in 50 C.E, decreed that Gentile Christians did not have to observe the Mosaic law of the Jews, hence circumcision was abolished, separating early Christianity from Judaism (Acts 15, Glatians;6:15; Colossians; 3:11). Although the Christians have abandoned this tradition, Muslims being the true followers of the legacy of Abraham,

strictly adhere to the practice of circumcision (Sahih Bukhari Hadith;7.777).

Under European influence, more pagan beliefs and rituals were added in Christianity, thus totally altering the original teachings of Prophet Jesus Christ, the son of Mary (peace be upon him). Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) preached and worshiped one God: “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: (Mark;12:29).The Christian faith is totally different from the faith of Prophet Abraham, Jacob, Moses and Jesus (peace be upon them all). Christianity is based upon the belief in; ‘Trinity’, (God, Son and Holy Sprit as One), Jesus as the Son of God, the Lord, Savior, who died at the cross to redeem the Original Sin (disobedience of Adam and Eve, who were seduced by Satan, to eat the fruit of forbidden tree, thus making all humanity as born sinners) and resurrected on third day, ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father and the resurrection of the dead. Thus neither the Children of Israel as a community, in general nor the Christians adhere

to the Covenant by transgressing the bounds. Allah says: "Remember Allah's favor to you and the Covenant by which He bound you to Himself when you said: "We hear and we obey." Have fear of God; surely God knows the secrets of your hearts."(Qur'an;5:7). "God accepted a Covenant from the Children of Israel and appointed twelve chieftains from among them and said: "I am with you; if you establish Prayers (*Salah*) pay Alms (*Zakah*), believe in My Apostles, support them and give a generous loan to Allah (spend in charity), I will certainly forgive your sins and surely I shall bring you into gardens underneath which rivers flow. However, if any one of you, after this, violates this Covenant, he will indeed go astray from the Right Way. Even after that, they broke their Covenant; as a result, We laid on them Our curse and hardened their hearts. *They tempered with words out of their context and neglected much of what they were enjoined.* You will always find most of them deceitful except for a few of them. Yet forgive them and overlook their misdeeds. Allah loves those who are kind to others. Likewise We also made a Covenant with

those who call themselves Christians, but they too have neglected much of what they were enjoined. As a result, We stirred among them enmity and hatred, which will last till the Day of Resurrection and soon God will inform them all of what they have done.” (Qur’an;5:12-14). After their denial of Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), the divine punishment continued. In 70 C.E with the suppression of Jewish revolt by Romans; the 2nd temple was also destroyed, the city became the permanent garrison town of a Roman legion. Jews were scattered all over the world. They were hated and ill-treated by Christians in Europe (but well treated in Muslim Spain and Ottomans). During 2nd World War, Hitler killed around six million Jews in the holocaust. They have been resettled through establishment of illegitimate state of Israel at Palestine in 1948 with the support of Christian world (Britain, USA and Europeans).

CHAPTER-2: THE REVIVAL OF LEGACY OF ABRAHAM (PBUH)

The Children of Prophet Ishmael (Isma'il, peace be upon him), the eldest son of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), flourished in Arabia around Makka where he was left along with mother Hager by his father (18th century B.C). Their decedents continued to obey and worship one God (in Islam), the faith of their ancestor Abraham for long time. However the idol worship was also introduced somewhere around 5th and 6th century BC by Umru bin Luheyye, the chief of Banu Khuz'a tribe. He brought an idol named Huble from Ma'rib area. They mixed up the paganism with the faith of Abraham and added blasphemous rituals in the worship and pilgrimage (Hajj) instituted by Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). Among the children of Israel the scriptures and teachings of their previous prophets including prophet Moses and Jesus Christ (peace be upon them) got distorted. The Children of Israel persistently violated their Covenant resulting to anger and retribution by God: "Moreover I swore unto them

in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the nations, and disperse them through the countries; because they had not executed mine ordinances, but had rejected my statutes, and had profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols."(Ezakeil;20:23-24). The Jews were hampered by many restrictions, due to their disobedience, God says: "Moreover I gave them statutes that were not good and ordinances by which they could not have life;"(Ezkaeil;20:26), furthermore their religion was racial. Christianity, as originally preached, was a hermit religion: "sell whatsoever thou hast" (Mark;10:21); "take no thought for the morrow" (Mathew;6:34).The Jews & Christians despite having been given clear guidance deviated from true path. Allah says: "And they have been commanded no more than this: to worship Allah offering Him sincere devotion being True (in faith); to establish regular Prayer; and to practice regular Charity; and that is the Religion Right and Straight."(Qur'an;98:5); "The Jews and the Christians say: "We are the children of God and His beloved ones." Ask them, "Why then does He punish you for your sins? Nay! In fact you are

human beings like others which He has created. He forgives whom He pleases and He punishes whom He pleases. To Allah belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, and to Him is the final refuge.”(Qur’an;5:18). Consequently the responsibility and privilege of leadership of humanity was shifted and bestowed upon Arabs, the Children of Prophet Isma'il (peace be upon him) the eldest son of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). Allah appointed Muhammad (571-632 C.E), peace be upon him the descendent of Prophet Ishmael (peace be upon him) as His last Messenger for the humanity to preach the original faith of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). This was fulfillment of biblical prophecies. Jews and Christians were commanded to follow Qur’an, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah says: “O people of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Now Our Messenger (Muhammad) has come to you to reveal much of what you have concealed from the Holy Books and to pass over much which is no longer necessary. There has come to you from God a new Light and a clear

Book (Qur'an), with which God will guide to the ways of peace all those who seek His good pleasure and bring them out of the depth of darkness into the light of His grace and guide them to the Right Way.”(Qur'an;5:15-16).

Prophet Muhammad, (peace be upon him) was assigned the mission to deliver the Message of Islam ('Peace and total Surrender to the Will of Allah') to the humanity as mercy for the all. Allah says: “(O Muhammad), We have not sent you but as a mercy for all the worlds.”(Qur'an;21:107). He was born in 571 C.E at Makka, southern Arabia in a tribal society among the decedents of Prophet Ishmael (peace be upon him). The sixth century Makka was a backward area of the world, far from the main centers of trade, art, and learning, heavily infected by polytheism and paganism. At the age of forty (610 C.E) Muhammad (peace be upon him) was entrusted with the deliverance of the Message of Islam to the mankind; “Obey and worship only One God (Allah)”, hence became the 'unlettered' last and final Messenger of God as prophesied in Bible (Deuteronomy;18:18 & 19, Song of Solomon; 5:16, John; 16:12-14, 14:16, 16:7,

15:26, and 16:7). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the witness and the culmination of all the prophets and messengers that came before him (some mentioned by name in Qur'an & Bible (Qur'an:48:8, 2:143 & 33:40). The Qur'an, is the book of revelations from God, which, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) received through archangel Gabriel at various occasions during 23 years of his prophetic mission; accurately recorded by his companions in his lifetime. Allah purified the previous messages, through Qur'an and unlike previous scriptures has Himself taken over the responsibility to guard it against corruption (Qur'an;15:9). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was responsible for preaching both the theology of Islam and its main ethical, moral, political, social, economic and other principles encompassing all aspect of spiritual and worldly affairs. He was entrusted with the power of explaining, interpreting and demonstrating the life according to Qur'an. His life, preserved in the form of his Traditions (*Sunnah*) is a role model of a perfect leader in all aspects of human life; available to the humanity till the end of this world.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) invited the Jews and Christians to Islam, politely and rationally with the spirit of reconciliation. Allah says: "The people did not become divided into sects until after knowledge had come to them out of envy among themselves. Had your Lord not issued the word to defer their punishment till an appointed time, the matter would have already been settled between them. The fact is that those who were made to inherit the Book (Jews and Christians) after them, are surely in disquieting doubt concerning it." Therefore, (O' Muhammad) call (them to the Faith) and, stay firm on the Right Way as you are commanded and do not follow their vain desires. Tell them: *"I believe in whatever Allah has revealed from the Book and I am commanded to do justice between you. Allah is Our Lord and your Lord. We are responsible for Our deeds and you for yours. Let there be no dispute among us. Allah will bring us all together (on the Day of Judgment) and decide as to who is right and who is wrong and to Him is (Our) final goal."*(Qur'an;42:14-15). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) successfully completed the

prophetic mission in his life time and established the first model Islamic state based on the principles of Qur'an and his Sunnah, thus Arabia was purged of polytheism and paganism. However the sovereignty of God had to be established in the world by the believers so that, humanity is free to receive and accept the message of Islam without coercion and those who do not, live peacefully as good citizens in the Islamic state under the sovereignty of God.

The adherents of Islam are called Muslims, while 'Momin' (faithful, believer) is also used synonymously. It is not correct to address them by any other name like Mohammedans, which is a misnomer because it appears to suggest that Muslims worship Muhammad (peace be upon him) rather than Allah. 'Islam' (total surrender, obedience to the will of God, in peace) as mentioned above is the name of 'True Faith' which God has sent for the benefit of humanity, it encompasses both 'Belief' (*Aymean*) and submission to the Divine Commands (Islam)'. The 'Muslim' is a person who believes truly in heart and practically obeys the Divine

Commands.(Qur'an;51;35-36, 3:19, 3:85, 5:3, 6:125, 3:20, 3:102, 22:78, 3:67, 2:128, 2:132). It may also be kept in view that the term ' *Momi'n*, (faithful or believer), derived from ' *Ayman*', the 'Faith', does not necessarily mean 'True Believer or Faithful', though mostly used to mean the same, but at many places in Qur'an the terms ' *Momi'n and Muslim* have been used for those who apparently declare to be the followers of Islam, i.e. all believers, weather of strong faith, weak faith or may be hypocrites, all addressed as ' *yaa 'ayy-u-haa'alla dena 'aamano*', (O you believe):(Qur'an;3:156, 4:136, 5:54, 8:20, 8:27, 57:28, 61:2). It may be held that while the Faith (*Ayman*) is the name of inner state, Islam is its outward display by the 'faithful', as evident from the Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah: One day while the Prophet (peace be upon him) was sitting in the company of some people, angel Gabriel came and asked, "What is faith?" Allah's Apostle replied, 'Faith is to believe in Allah, His angels, (the) meeting with Him, His Apostles, and to believe in Resurrection.'" Then he further asked, "What is Islam?" Allah's Apostle replied, "To

worship Allah Alone and none else, to offer prayers perfectly to pay the compulsory charity (*Zakat*) and to observe fasts during the month of Ramadan..."(Sahih Al Bukhari Hadith; 1:47). Performance of Hajj is mentioned in Qur'an;2:196. Hence the man who possesses belief with certainty in his heart and displays obedience to Islam, may be called a *Momin* or *Muslim*, the synonymous terms. There is an exception, where Islam and *Ayman* has been used distinctively (Qur'an;49:114-5), to distinguish between the true believers and those who orally profess Islam as a favor. In the Islamic state, the citizenship is based upon declaration of acceptance of Islam, and not upon the Faith (*Ayman*) which, being inner state (hidden) can not form the basis for legal discussion and quantification. It is Narrated by Usama bin Zaid: Allah's Apostle sent us towards Al-Huruqa, and in the morning we attacked them and defeated them. I and an Ansari man followed a man from among them and when we took him over, he said, "*La ilaha illal-Lah*" ('None has the right to be worshipped but Allah). On hearing that, the Ansari man stopped, but I killed him by

stabbing him with my spear. When we returned, the Prophet came to know about that and he said, "O Usama! Did you kill him after he had said "*La ilaha ilal-Lah*?" I said, "But he said so only to save himself." The Prophet kept on repeating that so often that I wished I had not embraced Islam before that day.(Sahih Al Bukhari Hadith:5.568, 9.11). Therefore mere oral confession of faith is enough to be known as Muslim in the society, only God knows the secret matters of heart.

The Prevailing Din (Way of Life):

Islam has been declared as prevailing *Din* (way of life) for humanity. Allah says; "...This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you, and have chosen for you as religion AL-ISLAM....(Self surrender unto Allah)" (Qur'an;5:3); "Surely, the true religion in Allah's sight is Islam" (Qur'an;3:19) and "Whoever desires a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from Him, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers" (Qur'an;3:85). Besides Arabs, Muslims are found among all the nations of the world. It is the opinion of Muslim scholars that

whoever accepts any religion other than Islam, is a non believer. Moreover whoever rejects the universal message of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), rejects the message of all messengers, even if he claims that he believes and follows a particular Messenger. Rejecting one messenger is like rejecting all the messengers of God (Qur'an;26:105). Allah says; "Those who disbelieve in Allah and His Messengers, and wish to make division between Allah and His Messengers, and say: 'We believe in some and disbelieve in others,' wishing to take a midway course. Those indeed are the unbelievers, and We have prepared for the unbelievers a humiliating punishment" (Qur'an;4:150-51). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets (Qur'an;33:40). No prophet will come after him, thus whoever claims prophethood after him, or believes in anyone claiming it, is a disbeliever, who rejects Allah, His Messenger, and the Muslims' consensus.

The Doctrine and Practices:

Doctrine in religion is a principle or body of principles relating to matters such as morality and faith, set forth in an authoritative manner by religious authority presented for acceptance or belief. In religions of the East, doctrines are usually designed to serve as catalytic clues to religious insight. The functions of doctrines and dogmas vary in the several religious traditions according to the stress each puts on the importance of the rational conceptualization of religious truth first glimpsed in images, symbols, and parables. In the religions of the West, doctrines and dogmas tend to function as aids to theological reflection (the concept of God's unity in Islam, Judaism and also claimed by Christians despite the intricacy of doctrine of Trinity). In all the higher religions, doctrines and dogmas emerge and develop in the service of instruction for the faithful: interpreting their sacred scriptures, understanding their obligations and duties, safeguarding the lines between allowable diversity and actual error, all of which help to chart the religious pathway to wisdom, rectitude, and

fulfillment, theology, which utilizes doctrines and dogmas in the study of the nature of God and religious truth; rational inquiry into religious questions may be termed as "faith seeking rational self-understanding." The other function of doctrine is refutation: the defense of the faith against misinterpretation and error, within or without a religious tradition. Given the invariably pluralistic character of theological reflection, there is a constant tension between the concern for identity and continuity of the tradition, on the one hand, and for deeper and richer comprehension of truth itself, on the other. Over against this, in most cultures there is a concurrent rivalry with other religions, with their contrary doctrinal claims, and beyond that, the challenges of secular wisdom and unbelief. This calls forth a special sort of doctrinal formulation: Formal argumentation in defense of the vindication of the true faith against its detractors or disbelievers. At the heart of all efforts to support religious faith lies the problem of primal authority. It is required of a doctrinal statement that it be clear and cogent, but doctrines

always point past their logical surface to some revelations in the past or deposit of faith.

The religions in general provide a personal or institutionalized system grounded in beliefs and worship for the spiritual development of man. To accomplish it, the religions provide: Firstly; A doctrine which gives it a theoretical or philosophical justification. Secondly; Instructions or Commandments, which create the ethics designed to modify motives which govern behavior. Without the efforts, and channeling of energy based on these values, there can be no direction of development. Thirdly; Religious practices which constitute a methodology or techniques. These three, however, are interdependent and not wholly separate. The Doctrines, for instance, can be regarded as an ethics of thought and a technique for modifying the world view such that it provides a framework within which all experiences can be interpreted in a unified self-consistent manner. The religious practices such as 'prayer' can have no meaning without the doctrine and are the means for establishing the ethics. The ethics leads to the

transformation of behavior and interaction within a society as well as with the environment. This not only change experience but also modifies the person so as to change perception, thoughts and the world view. Religion can have different forms according to how it is formulated, organized and practiced and this may depend on the times, places and nature of the people. According to Qur'an; "To every People have we appointed rites and ceremonies which they must follow let them not then dispute with thee on the matter but do thou invite (them) to thy Lord: for thou art assuredly on the Right Way."(Qur'an;22:67); "We sent an apostle except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people in order to make (things) clear to them. Now Allah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: and He is Exalted in power Full of Wisdom."(Qur'an;14:4); "..He causes not to stray except those who forsake (the path)"(Qur'an;2:26). 'Whom He pleases'; the usual expression for *Mashiyat*, the "Universal Will and Plan", which is all-wise and on the highest plane of goodness and righteousness, in line with the limited free will or the option to choose

between the truth and falsehood using the intellect provided to each human. Religions are distinguished by their different practices. The ethical teachings of all religions are more or less the same and seldom lead to disputes. Controversies between different religions are usually about doctrines. These may be understood differently in different places and ages owing to the changes in language and conditions of life. If, however, attention is focused on the aim of religion, then on its different methods and forms, which either conform or conflict with the aim, it would help in reducing the existence of disputes. The application of term religion, on Islam is an understatement, Islam, which is a *Din*, a complete code and practicable way of life, prescribed by the Creator for the wellbeing of humanity. If some followers of Islam are found to be casual in following some of the teachings, while ignoring others, Islam can not be blamed for it. The life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the role model for humanity.

Articles of Faith:

The Islamic faith is based on sound philosophy, doctrines and practices, successfully practiced the world over for centuries. The Islamic root of affirmation is based on the conviction upon unity of Allah. In order to be a Muslim one has to believe in the six articles of faith, which has been repeatedly mentioned in Qur'an at;24:62, 2:136,177,285, 4:136, 3:114, 4:78, 54:3, 17:99, 29:20, 64:67 and many other places. Firstly; To affirm his belief in Allah (Single God). Secondly; To believe in His messengers (include all Biblical prophets, from Adam to Jesus, twenty five mentioned by name in Qur'an), and Muhammad (peace be upon him) to be His Last Messenger. Thirdly; His books, Qur'an and all scriptures revealed to His Messengers which also include the original Torah, Psalms and original Gospel of Jesus. Fourthly To believe in metaphysical creatures like the angels. Fifthly; Resurrection after death on the Day of Judgment, accounting and the scales, hell and paradise. Sixthly; that the good and evil of destiny are in the power of Allah, the Most High.

Angels are the metaphysical spiritual creatures mentioned in Biblical and Islamic traditions. They have no physical desires nor material needs. In Islamic concept, the angels do not have free will or choice to disobey Allah; they only obey His commands and worship Allah. According to Bible the primary function of angels is to praise and serve God and do His Will. In Judaism and Christianity some angels are believed to have fallen from a position of proximity to God, because of pride or for attempts to usurp the position of the Supreme Being such as Lucifer (after his fall called Satan by early Church Fathers). According to Qur'an: "The angels are but His honored servants. They do not precede Him in speaking and they act according to His commandment."(Qur'an:21:26-27). Gabriel, Michael Israfil (Raphael) are well known angels in Bible. The angels are mentioned as ordinary messenger (Job;1:14; 1Samuel;11:3; Luke;7:24; 9:52); as messengers of prophets (Isaiah;42:19; Haggai;1:13), of priests (Malachi;2:7), and ministers of the New Testament (Revelation;1:20). They are created by God and they worship Him

(Nehemiah;9:6). Their personal existence is plainly implied in such passages as Genesis;16:7,10-11; Judges;13:1-21; Mathew;28:2-5; Hebrews;1:4, etc. These superior beings are very numerous: "Thousand thousands,". (Daniel; 7:10; Mathew; 26:53; Luke: 2:13; Hebrews; 12:22-23). As to their nature, they are spirits (Hebrews; 1:14), like the soul of man, but not incorporeal. Imperfection is ascribed to them as creatures (Job;4:18; Mathew;24:36; 1Peter; 1:12). Angels never die (Luke;20:36). They are possessed of superhuman intelligence and power (Mark;13:32; 2Timothy; 1:7; Psalms; 103:20). They are called "holy" (Luke: 9:26); "elect"(1Timothy;5:21). The functions of angels are manifold: they obey the will of God (Psalms; 103:20; Mathew; 6:10); execute the purposes of God (Numbers;22:22; Psalms; 103:21); execute the judgments of God (2Samuel; 24:16; 2Ki 19:35; Psalms; 35:5-6); celebrate the praises of God (Job 38:7; Psalms; 148:2; Isaiah; 6:3). In the widest sense they are agents of God's providence (Psalms; 104:4; Hebrews; 11:28; 1 Corinthians;10:10; 2 Samuel; 24:16; 1 Chronicles; 21:16; 2Kings;19:35; Acts;12:23; Exodus;12:23).

Apart from angels, Jinn is an other metaphysical creature mentioned in Qur'an, which are created from smokeless fire. They are spirits, and therefore subtle like a flame of fire. Allah says: "while before him (Adam) We had created Jinn from smokeless fire."(Qur'an;15:27). Their being free from smoke implies that they are free from grossness for smoke is the grosser accompaniment of fire. Like humans, Jinns have also been given limited choice (free will) to choose between evil and good, hence they will be sent to heaven or hell as per their faith and deeds. Iblis (Satan), who became rebellious by disobeying God, is among the Jinns, he is the enemy of humanity (Qur'an;7:27, 15:39, 17:53, 36:62, 16:99). Qur'an mentions about Jinns at many places: Jinns follow Islam and different religions;(Qur'an;72:11-15); they are not aware of hidden secrets (Qur'an;34:14), some jinns listened and believed in Qur'an (Qur'an;;46:30, 31, 72:1-6, 13); they also appears to believe in the previous scripture and revelations of Moses. (Qur'an;46:30).

The Day of Judgment is one of the cardinal beliefs in Islam. Allah says: "The Day whereon they will

(all) come forth: Not a single thing concerning them is hidden from Allah. Whose will be the dominion that Day? That of Allah the One the Irresistible! That Day will every soul be requited for what it earned; no injustice will there be that Day for Allah is Swift in taking account.”(Qur’an;40:16-17). The Bible also mentions about Resurrection of the dead on the Day of Judgment: “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” (Daniel;12:2); “ Lo! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.”(1Corinthians;15:51-52); “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.” (Isaiah;26:19);“The LORD shall judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in

me.”(Psalms;7:8). The Qur’an and Bible agree that the time of occurrence of Day of Judgment is not known to any one except God. Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) said: “But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”(Mark;13:32).[The concept of Trinity is refuted, as it is evidently clear that Jesus did not know the time of Day of Judgment, so he is not part of divinity]. Allah says: “They ask you (O Muhammad) about the Hour of Doom and when will it take place. Say: "Knowledge about it rests only with my Lord: He Himself will disclose it at the proper time. Heavy is its weight in the heavens and the earth. It will not come gradually but all of a sudden. They ask you as if you yourself were in search of it. Tell them: "The knowledge about it rests only with Allah though most people do not understand.””(Qur’an;7:187); “Surely Allah Alone has the knowledge of the Hour,”(Qur’an;31:34).

Paradise is the abode of enjoyment which Allah, the Exalted, prepared for the righteous. No eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no human being has ever thought of the blessings that they

will enjoy there (Qur'an;32:17). It is mentioned in Bible: "And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."(Luke;23:43); "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed."(Genesis;2:8). The Hell is the abode of punishment that Allah has prepared for the sinners and unbelievers: "Surely, We have prepared for the evildoers a fire, whose pavilion encompasses them. If they call for help, they will be helped with water like molten copper which will scald their faces. How dreadful a drink and how evil a resting place!"(Qur'an;18:29). According to Bible: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."(Psalms;9:17); "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."(Psalms;16:10);"For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell."(Psalms;86:13). Prophet Jesus Christ's (peace be upon him) denunciations against the Pharisees (the ancient Jewish sect that emphasized strict interpretation and observance of the Mosaic law in both its oral

and written form) is evident, when he said to them: “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?”(Matthew;23:33).

CHAPTER-3: PREDESTINATION

Predestination is the most misconstrued doctrine of theology, the misunderstanding has been catastrophic for the people and even nations. God has empowered the people to make efforts: “Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves..”(Qur’an:13:11 also 8:53). Predestination has been defined in different ways, according to the Oxford Dictionary, ‘Predestination’, is a doctrine teaching, the action by which God is held to have immutably determined all (or some particular) events by an eternal decree or purpose, specially the preordained salvation of God's elect. The Destiny is the predetermined course of events; that which is destined to happen; the fate of a particular person, country, etc.; the ultimate condition; a person's lot in life. The American Heritage Dictionary defines it as: The doctrine that God has foreordained all things, especially that God has elected certain souls to eternal salvation; the divine decree foreordaining all souls to either salvation or damnation; the act of God

foreordaining all things gone before and to come. The Merriam Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines 'Predestination' as: The doctrine that, God in consequence of his foreknowledge of all events infallibly guides those who are destined for salvation. In general theology: Predestination is the doctrine that God has foreordained all things, especially that He has elected certain souls to eternal salvation. It is also related with the divine decree foreordaining all souls to either salvation or damnation and the act of God foreordaining all things gone before and to come i.e. Destiny; fate. Determinism, is an other philosophical doctrine, that all events, including human decisions, are completely determined by previously existing causes. It is commonly perceived by most people that since every act performed by them, good or bad has already been preordained by God, hell or paradise has been destined for some people, then there is nothing much which could be done about it, so why strive? The destiny or predestination once linked with reward & punishment is a complex issue which is related with the ultimate power of God. The issues of 'Predestination' and

'Free Will' were argued extensively among Muslim theologians during 8-10th centuries. Mutazila (also called *Qadariya*), the rationalist theological school held that; God would be unjust if he predestined all human actions, they believed in complete Free Will; the human freedom to choose between good or evil and to perform other actions without any coercion. The Compulsionists (*Jabriyyah*) advocated a strict predestination. However the Ashariya, supported the use of reason and speculative theology (*kalām*) to defend the faith but was not as extreme in its rationalism as the Mutazila. In Islam, predestination has much wider connotation, the balanced concept of Predestination can be better understood by keeping in view Allah's Knowledge and Power, His Will, Justice, Fate, Choice, Free Will, Cause and Effect and concept of Salvation in Islam.

Timeless Absolute Knowledge:

According to one philosophical thought, the present state of the universe is the effect of its previous state and the cause of the state that follows it. If a mind, at any given moment, could

know all the laws and all the forces operating in nature and the respective positions and momenta of all its components, it could thereby know with certainty the future and the past of every entity. Obviously it is beyond the human capacity to possess such knowledge, Allah alone has Absolute Timeless Knowledge. Apart from the theology, the concept of 'Absolute Timeless Knowledge can also be explained by science, enhancing rational understanding writes Harun Yahya: 'Time' is defined as: 'A nonspatial continuum that is measured in terms of events which succeed one another from past through present to future'. What perceived as 'Time' is, in fact, a method by which one moment is compared to another. A person formulates the concept of "time" by comparing the moment in which he lives with what he has in his memory (illusions). If this comparison is not made, there can be no concept of time. If the memory did not exist, then he would not think of the existence of such a preceding period, and he would only experience the single "moment" in which he lives—which is a very essential point. Since human brain is accustomed

to a certain sequence of events, time has always flowed forward; time is not an absolute fact, but just a sort of perception. The 'relativity of time' is a fact, also verified by one of the most important physicists of the twentieth century, Albert Einstein, who pointed out, as quoted in Barnett's book: 'Space and time are forms of intuition, which can no more be divorced from consciousness than can our concepts of color, shape, or size.' According to the Theory of General Relativity: "Time has no independent existence apart from the order of events by which we measure it." Since time is based on perception, it depends entirely on the perceiver and is therefore relative. The speed at which time flows differs according to the references used to measure it, because there is no natural clock in the human body to indicate precisely *how fast time* passes. One may get up without alarm for the morning prayer in routine, not knowing precisely how long he slept unless he get the help of clock or other aids. As Lincoln Barnett wrote: "Just as there is no such thing as colour without an eye to discern it, so an instant or an hour or a day is nothing

without an event to mark it." The relativity of time is plainly experienced in dreams. Although what is seen in the dreams seems to last for hours, in fact, it only lasts for a few minutes, and even a few seconds. The information about the rate of the passage of time is based on relative references. The relativity of time is a scientific fact also proven by scientific methodology. Einstein's Theory of General Relativity maintains that the speed of time changes depending on the speed of the object and its position in the gravitational field. As speed increases, time is shortened and compressed: it slows down as if coming to the point of "stopping." Hence some one traveling near the speed of light will be in highly compressed (many times shortened) time as compared to some one on ground. Some writers have used this as basis for fiction literature. The relativity of time is not caused by the deceleration or acceleration of clocks, or the deceleration of a mechanical spring. It is rather the result of the differentiated operation periods of the entire system of material existence, which goes as deep as sub-atomic particles. In other words, for the person

experiencing it, the shortening of time is not experienced as if acting in a slow-motion picture. In such a setting where time shortens, one's heartbeats, cell replications, and brain functions, etc, all operate more slowly. Nevertheless, the person goes on with his daily life and does not notice the shortening of time at all. These facts revealed by the Theory of Relativity have been verified quite a few times by various scientists.

The findings of modern science lead to the conclusion that: Time is not an absolute fact as supposed by materialists, but only a relative perception. What is most interesting is that this fact, undiscovered until the twentieth century by science, was revealed to mankind in the Qur'an fourteen centuries ago. There are various references in the Qur'an to the relativity of time. It is possible to see in many verses of the Qur'an the scientifically proven fact that time is a psychological perception dependent on events, setting, and conditions. For instance, a person's entire life is a very short time, as man is informed in the Qur'an: "It will be on the Day when He will call you and you will rise up in response to it, with

His praise, and you will think that you remained in the state of death but a little while.”(Qur'an;17:52); “On that Day when He will gather them all together, it will appear to them as if they had not stayed in this world but an hour of a day to get to know each other. At that time they will realize that: in fact the losers are those who denied the meeting with Allah and were not rightly guided.”(Qur'an;10:45). Some verses indicate that people perceive time differently and that sometimes people can perceive a very short period as a very lengthy one: “He will say: "What number of years did you stay on earth?" They will say: "We stayed a day or part of a day, but ask those who keep account." He will say: "Brief indeed was your sojourn, if you had only known!"(Qur'an;23:112-114). In some other verses God states that time may flow at different paces in different settings: “...Truly, a day in the sight of your Lord is like a thousand years of your reckoning. (Qur'an;22:47); “The angels and the spirit ascend to Him in a day the measure of which is like fifty thousand years”.(Qur'an;70:4); “He rules all affairs from the heavens to the earth: in the end all will ascend to

Him in a single day, the measure of which is a thousand years by your reckoning”(Qur'an;32:5). These verses are clear expressions of the relativity of time. This finding, which was only recently understood by scientists in the twentieth century, was communicated to man fourteen centuries years ago in the Qur'an is an indication that Qur'an is the word of God. Who encompasses the whole of time and space: “Sons of Adam inveigh against (the vicissitudes of) Time, and I am Time, in My hand is the night and the day”(Hadith Qudsi No.4). Many other verses of the Qur'an reveal that time is a perception. The situation described in the verse here is also evidence that time is in truth a psychological perception, Allah says: “..but God caused him to die for a hundred years, then brought him back to life. He said: "How long did you tarry thus?" He said: Perhaps a day or part of a day." He said: "No, you have tarried thus a hundred years..."(Qur'an;2:259). Hence it is clearly emphasized that God, Who created time, is unbound by it. Man, on the other hand, is bound by time, which is ordained by God. As in the verse;2:259, man is even incapable of knowing

how long he has slept. This being so, to assert that time is absolute (just as materialists do in their distorted thinking) is very unreasonable.

The relativity of time clears up the important concept of Predestination (Destiny). Relativity is so variable that a period appearing to man to be billions of years' in duration may last only a second in another perspective. Moreover, an enormous period of time, extending from the world's beginning to its end, may not even last a second but just an instant in another dimension. This is the very essence of the concept of 'Predestination', a concept that is not well understood by most people, especially rationalists who deny it completely. Predestination is God's perfect knowledge of all events past or future. A majority of people question how God can already know events that have not yet been experienced and this leads them to fail to understand the authenticity of destiny. However, "events not yet experienced" are only so for the people. God is not bound by time or space, for He Himself has created them. For this reason, past, future, and present are all the same to God. In 'The Universe

and Dr. Einstein', Lincoln Barnett explains how the Theory of General Relativity leads to this conclusion. According to Barnett, the universe can be "encompassed in its entire majesty only by a cosmic intellect." The will that Barnett calls "the cosmic intellect" is the wisdom and knowledge of God, Who prevails over the entire universe. Just as a man can easily see a yardstick's beginning, middle, and end, and all the units in between as a whole, God knows the time, men are subject to as if it were a single moment right from its beginning to its end. People, however, experience incidents only when they occur. Destiny is the eternal knowledge of God and for God, Who knows time like a single moment and Who prevails over the whole of time and space. This knowledge, either recorded in the 'book' or 'preserved tablet' or in the DNA cell in the womb does not effect the human freedom to choose and act, however the external factors remain beyond human control.

Limited Free Will:

The balanced doctrine of Predestination is based upon professing His Will, Power to plan and

execute, His 'Timeless Knowledge' and limited freedom of choice granted to man for trial. Nothing exists in this world or hereafter except by His will, His timeless knowledge, His determining and predestining, and except it be written on the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lauh al-Mahfuz*). Allah says: "No misfortune can happen on earth or in yourselves but is recorded in a decree before We bring it into existence, that is really easy for Allah; that you may not grieve for what escapes you, nor rejoice in what has come to you. Allah does not love any vainglorious boaster" (Qur'an;57:22-23). He inscribed everything there in the sense of description, not that of foreordaining. Determining, Predestining and Will are pre-eternal attributes of unknowable modality. The Fate exists, whether good or bad, which Allah has measured and ordained for all creatures according to His previous knowledge and as deemed suitable by His wisdom. Thus each saying, deed, or omission of the people is known to Allah, Who has recorded, willed, and created them. Allah says: "And had Allah willed they would not have fought one against the other; but Allah does whatever He

desires”(Qur’an;2:253); “Thus have their (so-called) partners (of Allah) made the killing of their children to seem fair unto many of the idolaters, that they may ruin them and make their faith obscure for them. Had Allah willed (it otherwise), they had not done so. So leave them alone with their devices.” (Qur’an;6:137); “but you cannot will, except by the will of Allah. Surely Allah is All-Knowledgeable, All-Wise. He admits to His mercy whom He wills, and for the wrongdoers He has prepared a painful punishment.” (Qur’an;76:30-31); “Yet your wishes are of no avail unless Allah, the Lord of the worlds, pleases so” (Qur’an;81:29). Allah has granted power and limited free will to human and jinns by which they can perform certain actions by use of their wisdom i.e. to choose between right and wrong. It was due to the ‘free will’, which enabled the Satan (Iblis, a jinn) to disobey the divine commandment; to bow down to Adam, the first human as token of respect to God’s vicegerent. However later Satan requested for respite, and permission to lure in the man from the true path, towards the evil path of disobedience and transgression. God as per His

Wisdom and plan, granted him the permission. On the other hand despite having been warned by Allah against the evil designs of Satan, Adam fell in to the trap by allowing himself to be seduced and thus disobeyed His Lord (Qur'an; 7:14-18, 20:117-121) by his free will. Adam prayed for mercy and God forgave him: this way of forgiveness for repentant sinners, continues for the humanity: So say: "O my Lord! grant thou forgiveness and mercy! for Thou art the Best of those who show mercy!"(Qur'an;23:118). It is mentioned in Qur'an: "Say "The Truth is from your Lord": let him who will believe and let him who will reject (it): for the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire..."(Qur'an;18:29); "Then Allah will say to him: "My revelations did come to you; but you denied them, were arrogant and you were among the disbelievers."(Qur'an;39:59). As for those who believe and do good deeds, rest assured that We do not waste the reward of him who does a good work"(Qur'an;18:30);"He Who created Death and Life that He may try which of you is best in deed: and He is the Exalted in Might Oft-Forgiving."(Qur'an;67:2); Say: "It is He Who has

created you (and made you grow) and made for you the faculties of hearing seeing feeling and understanding: little thanks it is ye give."(Qur'an;67:23); "Certainly, We have destined many Jinns and human beings for hell; those are the ones who have hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, they have ears with which they do not hear. They are like animals - or even worse than them, because they are those who are heedless."(Qur'an;7:179). However it is not within power of human to do what ever they desire, their choice of Free Will is limited, for example man can stand on one leg, but to lift both legs he has to get some support. The choice involves a corresponding personal responsibility. Although every action is already in the knowledge of Allah and nothing can happen unless He approves or desires, but it does not necessarily imply that He is happy with what ever man does due to freedom provided. Every doer of actions feels that he does or does not do a thing without any coercion. He stands up and sits, comes in and goes out, travels and stays by his own free will without feeling

anybody forcing him to do any of these actions. In fact, he clearly distinguishes between doing something of his own free will and someone else forcing him to do that action.

The Islamic law also wisely distinguishes between 'freedom' and 'coercion'. A wrongdoer is not punished for an action done under compulsion, like eating forbidden food (Qur'an;5:3,6:119, 16:115): "Allah does not charge a soul beyond its capacity' (Qur'an;2:286); "There shall be no coercion in matters of faith. Distinct has now become the right way from the (way of) error: hence, he who rejects the powers of evil and believes in God has indeed taken hold of support most unfailing, which shall never give way: for God is all-hearing, all-knowing."(Qur'an;2:256); "(O Prophet) keep on giving admonition, for you are an admonisher not a taskmaster over them. As for those who turn their backs and disbelieve, Allah will punish them with the mighty punishment."(Qur'an;88:21-24). If the action is not done by the individual's free will, then praising the virtuous is a joke and punishing the evildoer is an injustice, and Allah is, of course, far from

joking and being unjust. Allah has sent messengers who are: "bearing good tidings, and warning, so that mankind might have no argument against Allah after the messengers."(Qur'an;4:165); "Verily this (Qur'an) is no less than a Message to (all) the Worlds: (With profit) to whoever among you wills to go straight" (Qur'an;81:27-28). If the individual's action is not performed by his free will, his argument is not invalidated by the sending of messengers and scriptures. Qur'an says; "This is Paradise; you have inherited it by virtue of your past deeds."(Qur'an;43:72). Hence it is evident that once every thing is 'Preordained', then there appears to be no justification for reward and punishment, but after providing guidance; God has granted 'FREEDOM OF CHOICE OF FAITH AND DEEDS' to human which makes them accountable for the choice of good or evil. Allah will not reward or punish any one on the basis of His timeless knowledge, but as per the faith of individual and deeds performed, which will be produced as a record (Qur'an;83:7-9,18-21) and witnessed on the day of judgment: "That will be the Day of your

accountability, O mankind! Surely you must strive towards your Lord, a hard striving, then you shall meet Him.”(Qur’an;84:6);“On that Day man shall be told about all his deeds, from the first to the last. Indeed, man shall bear witness against himself,”(Qur’an;75:13-14);“Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy they will attain salvation”(Qur’an;23:102).

Hence man should think, plan and make sound choice, but if things do not happen as desired. manner, he should not lose faith and give in to stress and strain. A Muslim should have strong faith in Allah and accept whatever happens, because human knowledge is limited and his thinking is based on personal contemplation, whereas God has infinite knowledge and He plans on a universal basis. The most common example of a teacher, who after observing an intelligent and hardworking student predicts that he will get first position in the final examination, while an other student who is dull and does not work hard is likely to fail. The teacher writes it down and keeps it in a safe place. At the end of academic year, the results are similar as predicted by the teacher. The

teacher can not be blamed for the failure of the dull student or success of other one. It was the intelligent guess work based on the knowledge and experience of the teacher. Allah is supreme in His knowledge. It is obvious that the good Muslims don't have to sit down, do nothing in the hope that what ever is written in the destiny will be given. Allah says: "The idolaters say: "If God wanted, neither we nor our forefathers would have worshipped any one else but Him, nor made anything unlawful without His will." Such excuses were put forward also by those who went before them...."(Qur'an;16:35); "..Then when they went wrong Allah let their hearts go wrong: for Allah guides not those who are rebellious transgressors."(Qur'an;61:5). No one knows what is written in the destiny, may be bad luck to sit idle and get doomed. So one ought to strive for the best (good) and work accordingly, with the hope that Allah may create favorable circumstances to achieve the good for this world and hereafter.

Cause and Effect:

Averroes (Ibn Rushd:1126-1198 C.E) the great Spanish Muslim philosopher and physician opined: “The human actions depend partly on his own free will and partly on causes outside his control. Man is free to wish and to act in a particular manner, but his will is always restrained and determined by exterior causes. These causes spring from the general laws of nature; God alone knows their sequence”. The changes are constantly taking place in the universe; each change is always the effect of some cause or causes. Each cause is itself the effect of a further cause or set of causes; this chain moves in a series that either never ends or is completed by a first cause, which must be of a radically different nature in that it is not itself caused. In philosophy, the First Cause, is the uncreated or self-created cause to which every series of causes must ultimately be traced, which is God. The law of “Cause and Effect” applies to human life as well. Indeed, it has a direct bearing on the task assigned to man by God, when He first created him, that is, building human life on earth. That is the law of cause and effect, which operates,

by Allah's will. For example, fire burns, therefore, when something is put close to a fire, it will burn. If finger is placed on top of the flame, burning sensation will immediately be felt. If it is not done, such feeling will not be experienced. This is a simple example of the working of the law of cause and effect. Hence if someone places his finger close to the flame of fire and say that God's Will may prevent the fire from burning. It is certainly true that God may stop the action of the fire (as was done miraculously to save Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him) but normally it is His Will that fire should burn. Therefore, when things are placed in a fire they are burnt. No individual or community can ignore this law or its implications without suffering disastrous consequences: "Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves; and when God wills people to suffer evil (in consequence of their own evil deeds), there is none who could avert it: for they have none who could protect them from Him."(Qur'an:13:11). A good example of how the law of cause and effect works is in the narrative of Prophet Joseph, peace be upon him (Qur'an;12,

Geneis;37-50) wherein due to his good planning, he stored the grains during good harvesting period, which were used to save the people of Egypt and surroundings from starvation during the forthcoming drought. According to an other incidence, narrated by Abdullah bin Abbas that 'Umar bin Al-Khattab (2nd Caliph) departed for Sham (Syria) on an expedition. En route he came to know that an epidemic had broken out at Syria. After consultations, Umar decided to return back to Medina. Abu 'Ubaida bin Al-Jarrah, the commander of the Muslim army, said to 'Umar, "Are you running away from what Allah had ordained?" 'Umar said; yes, we are running from what Allah had ordained to what Allah has ordained. Don't you agree that if you had camels that went down a valley having two places, one green and the other dry, you would graze them on the green one only if Allah had ordained that, and you would graze them on the dry one only if Allah had ordained that?" At that time 'Abdur-Rahman bin 'Auf, who had been absent because of some job, came and said, "I have heard Allah's Apostle saying, 'If you hear about it (an outbreak of

plague) in a land, do not go to it; but if plague breaks out in a country where you are staying, do not run away from it (quarantine).' " 'Umar thanked Allah and returned to Medina. (Summarized from Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith: 7.625). It may be understood that the actions of Prophet Joseph (peace be upon him) and 'Umar bin Al-Khattab, did not contradict Allah's Will because what ever they did, it was part of His Will. It is Allah who set that law in operation and allowed its consequences to be fulfilled. It only needs a little stretch of the mind to understand that this law is also part of predestination, in its broad, Islamic sense. The way God has created the human and the world around them makes it clear that it is His Will that people will be affected by a wide variety of causes. Therefore, if people lead a healthy lifestyle they are likely to live longer than if they are heedless of all the lessons that life brings to them.

The misfortune and evil should not be ascribed to Allah, due to His perfect mercy and wisdom. The faith is tested by God: "We shall surely test your steadfastness with fear and famine, with loss of

property, life and produce. Give good news to those who endure with patience; who, when afflicted with calamity, say: "We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return." Such are the people on whom there are blessings and Mercy from Allah; and they are the ones that are rightly guided."(Qur'an;2:155-157); "Now, when trouble touches man, He cries to us: but when we bestow a favour upon Him As from ourselves, He says, "This has been given to me because of a certain knowledge (I have)!" Nay, but This is but a trial, but Most of them understand not!. Thus did the (generations) before them say! but all that They did was of no profit to them. Nay, the evil results of their deeds overtook them. and the wrong-doers of This (generation)- the evil results of their deeds will soon overtake them (too), and They will never be able to frustrate (Our Plan)!"(Qur'an;39:49-51). Allah's decree by itself has no evil whatsoever, because it is coming from mercy and wisdom. Allah, the Exalted said: "Corruption has appeared on the land and sea for what men's hands have earned. Allah has ordained this for men, so that they may taste some of what they have done, in

order that they may turn back (from evil)”(Qur’an;30:41).

A Hadith is mostly misunderstood, in the perspective of destiny. Narrated Abdullah bin Musud; Allah's Apostle, the true and truly inspired said: ‘Indeed, the creation of each one of you is brought together in the mother's belly for 40 days in the form of a drop of sperm, then he is a germ-cell for a like period, then an embryonic lump for a like period, then there is sent to him the angel who blows the breath of life into him & who is commanded about four matters: to write down his means of livelihood, his life span, his actions and whether happy or unhappy. By Allah, other than whom there is no God, one of you may behave like the people of paradise until there is but an arm's length between him and it, and that, which has been written overtakes him and so he behaves like the people of hell fire and thus he enters it; and one of you behaves like the people of hell fire until there is but an arm's length between him and it, and that, which has been written overtakes him and so he behaves like the people of paradise and thus he enters it.’ (Sahih Al Bukhari Hadith. 4.430

& 8.593, also Sahih Muslim.1216). This Hadith is to be understood in the context of ‘Timeless Absolute Knowledge of God’, law of ‘cause and effect’ free will, trial, reward and His Justice. God has willed that each person shall have the freedom of choice and that freedom takes place according to man’s decision. It is true that God knows what every person chooses even before he makes the choice, but there is no coercion in that matter. It is the knowledge that the angel records when he, by God’s command, breathes the spirit into the fetus. He writes what God knows. There are areas, in which man has no choice; such as his being affected by natural forces, being subject to burn in fire, drown in water, be killed with a bullet that hits his heart or brain, etc which are also known to God. It is the man who makes the choice of his means of livelihood and his effort. If one sits at home doing nothing for a livelihood, he will get nothing. If he goes out to work and exerts his best efforts in improving his situation, he will get the reward, the quantity of this reward is as per His blessings. The same applies to his life duration. If he exposes himself to great risks, he is likely to die

quickly. If he does the type of good acts, which the Prophet (peace be upon him) describes as prolonging life, such as kindness to relatives and dutifulness to parents, then God will give him extra years. The end of this Hadith is often misunderstood, because some people may take it as a reference to what God had already written down to be the fate of a person in the Hereafter. It is everyone's total sum of the working of his or her free choice and free will that determines their fate, which is blessed by God. Thus, it is the person himself who may change his or her course of action shortly before their death. He would have done good deeds throughout his life, but then one day he sinks into disbelief and takes actions that place him among those who will go to Hell. This is again his free choice. It is true that the angel recorded this before his birth, but that recording is based on his (exercise of) free choice, which is already known to Allah. This ending of the Hadith stresses the importance of being always on the watch for what may enhance the position of a person in the Hereafter. People must never feel too secure as a result of having done well in the

past life. They must continue to do so until death. At the same time, one must never despair if done badly. Repentance and mending the ways, with sincerity and trust in God, will ensure the safety: No one has the authority to alter the decisions of Allah but Allah himself can change his decision and this can happen when a believer prays to Him: “They pray to Allah, ‘Our Lord, let not our hearts become perverse after You have once guided us aright; bestow upon us mercy from Yourself for You are the real Benefactor’!”(Qur’an;3:8). Allah is not bound, He is All Powerful, Mighty, free to do what ever, erase or change at His will. Companion Salman Farsi narrates that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said; “*Qadar* cannot be altered but by Prayer” (Tirmidhi). When some one prays, even it is also in the knowledge of God.

Bible on Predestination:

In the New Testament, word Predestination is properly used only with reference to God's plan or purpose of salvation. The Greek word rendered "predestinate" is found only in six passages, in New Testament (Acts;4:28; Romans;8:29-

30;1Corinthians;2:7; Ephasians;1:5,11) and in all of them it has the same meaning: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory"(1Corinthians;2:7). They teach that the eternal, sovereign, immutable, and unconditional decree or "determinate purpose" of God governs all events. In Christianity, Predestination is the doctrine that; God has long ago determined who will be saved and who will be damned. This doctrine of predestination or election is beset with many difficulties, considered to belong to the "secret things" of God. But the Christians, are urged to accept this doctrine with all its mysteriousness, and settle all the questionings in the humble, devout acknowledgment, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight".(Mathew:11:26). The 'Decrees of God' are his eternal, unchangeable, holy, wise, and sovereign purpose, comprehending at once all things that ever were or will be in their causes, conditions, successions, and relations, and determining their certain futurition: "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before

thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”(Jeremiah:1:5). The decree being the act of an infinite, absolute, eternal, unchangeable, and sovereign Being, comprehending a plan including all his works of all kinds, great and small, from the beginning of creation to an unending eternity; ends as well as means, causes as well as effects, conditions and instrumentalities as well as the events which depend upon them, must be incomprehensible by the finite intellect of man. It is mentioned in New Testament:” All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out”(John;6:37);“And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;” (Acts;17:26);“Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardened.”(Romans;9:18). The decrees are eternal: “Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world”(Acts;15:18); unchangeable (Psalms;33:11; Isiaah;46:9), and

comprehend all things that come to pass (Ephesians;1:11, 2:10; **M**atthew;10:29-30; Acts;2:23; 4:27-28; Psalms;17:13-14).

Three types of predestination doctrine have developed in Christianity. One doctrine holds that God singled out the saved because he foresaw their future merits. A second doctrine [often identified with John Calvin (1509-64), French Protestant theologian and reformer] states that from eternity God has determined the saved and the damned, regardless of their merit or lack thereof. A third doctrine, set forth by Thomas Aquinas (1225-74 C.E, known as 'the Angelic Doctor' Italian philosopher, theologian, and Dominican friar) and Martin Luther (1483-1546, the German priest who sparked the Reformation) ascribes salvation to the unmerited grace of God but links the lack of grace to sin. In Christian theology, Grace is the unmerited gift of divine favor, which brings about the salvation of a sinner. The concept of grace has given rise to theological debate over the nature of human depravity and the extent to which individuals may contribute to their own salvation through 'Free Will'. Though in principle the ideas

of merit and grace are mutually exclusive, the question of whether grace may be given as a reward for good works or for faith alone was important in the Protestant Reformation. There has also been controversy over the means of 'Grace': Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and some Protestants believe that 'Grace' is conferred through the sacraments (religious actions, ceremony, rites or symbol in which spiritual power is believed to be transmitted through material elements or the performance of rituals), while some other Protestants (e.g., Baptists) hold that participation in grace results from personal faith alone: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."(Acts;10:43); "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor un-circumcision; but faith which worketh by love."(Galatians;5:6); "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."(Acts;15:9). The Christians also claim to be chosen people of God entitle for His Grace through belief in Jesus: "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren

beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:"(2Thessalonians;2:13); "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:"(Ephesians;1:11).

The Old Testament speaks of the election of individuals to office or to honor and privilege, e.g., Abraham, Jacob, Saul, David, Solomon (peace be upon them all), were all chosen by God for the positions they held; so also were the apostles. There is also an election of nations to special privileges, e.g., the Hebrews: "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth."(Deuteronomy;7:6). According to popular Jewish belief, even the sinners from among the children of Israel will suffer only very limited punishment in the life to come, and will be quickly reprieved by virtue of their belonging to "the chosen people": a belief which the Qur'an

rejects(Qur'an;2:79-80). Allah declares the Jews and the Christians are human beings like others which He has created, and punishes them for their sins, the Sovereignty belongs to Him, He forgives whom He pleases and He punishes whom He pleases (Qur'an;5:18).

CHAPTER-4: FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

The ‘articles of faith’ are orally confessed by the Muslims (believers), which should be deep rooted in the heart. The pillars of faith are the physical manifestation of combination of faith and practices. Islam is based on the five obligatory pillars (principles), which are also the forms of worship (Qur’an;2:21, 43:64, 69:52); the first two (*Shahada & Salah*) are daily, next two (*Zakat & Saum*) are annual and the last (*Hajj*) is once in life :-

The First Pillar: Confession: The Muslims believe in One God- Allah, the Unique, Single God of the universe, worshiped by all the Prophets and their followers Adam -- Noah -- Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob -- Moses -- Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all). The Islamic Creed of Confession (*Shahada*) is the verbal commitment and pledge to testify: “*La ilaha Illallah , Muhammad-ur- Rasul-Allah*” [None has the right to be worshipped but Allah and Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the Messenger of Allah]. Belief in One God is repeatedly mentioned in Bible

at: Deuteronomy;6:4; Isaiah;44:6, 45:21-22, Hosea; 13:4, 1Timothy,2:5 and in Qur'an;7:158. The second part of Islamic Confession about the prophethood of Muhammad (peace be upon him) was also revealed in the Bible: Deuteronomy; 18:18,19, Song of Solomon5:16, John; 16:7, 12-14, 14:16 & 15:26. This is the basic step towards the spiritual form of worship repeated in every prayer. The Jewish creed is embodied in a single prayer recited at every prayer service: "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One", also translated as "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is unique, alone."In Hebrew this is pronounced phonetically: “ *Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad.*” (Deuteronomy; 6:4, & Mark 12:29-30 also Deuteronomy; 5:7-9 and 6:13-15, John;5:30).

The ‘Nicene Creed’, which was promulgated at the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E is widely used by most of the Christians. This is a Christian statement of faith that is the only ecumenical creed because it is accepted as authoritative by the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, and major Protestant churches. The Nicene Creed was

originally written in Greek, the modern English version of the text states: “We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died, and was buried. On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism

for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.” It is obvious that this creed is far from the monotheism preached by Prophet Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and other prophets including Jesus Christ (peace be upon them all).

The Second Pillar: Prayer –*Salah* : Muslims are required to offer prayers (*salah*) to Allah (Qura’n;6:72) daily five times. Prayer is the physical, spiritual and social form of worship in congregation. It is general misconception that the daily prayers are only practiced in the present day Islam which is the revived faith of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). Prayers (*salah*) have been part of faith right from the beginning, Qur’an refers them at: 2:83, 14:37, 14:40, 11:87, 3:39, 19:31, 3:113. The Prayer (*salah*) of a Muslim is not complete without recitation of The Opening Chapter (*Surah Fateha*) of (Qur’an;1:1-7). The Bible mentions about prayer at Exodus; 34:6-7, Mathew;6:9-13, also in Psalms; 7:1-17 and 8:1-9. Abraham offered prayer: “And Abram fell on his face.”(Genesis; 17:3-5), offering of prayer is also mentioned at Genesis; 18:22, 22:5, 26:25, 12:8,

Exodus; 4:31, 5:3, 5:7, 5:8 & 34:8-9, Psalms;86:9, 95:5, 5:7, 55:16, 55:17, 95:6, 138:2, 1 Kings; 8:33, 34, Jeremiah;7:2, Daniel; 6:10, 9:3, Joshua;7:6, Mathew;14:23 & 17:21. Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) also offered prayers: “Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and said unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder”.(Mathew;26:36, 26:39). The disciples of Jesus also offered prayers: “Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour”.(Acts; 3:1, 10:9, 12:12, 16:13, 16:25, 20:36, Luke; 22: 44-46, Mark; 1:35 & 9:29). Cleanliness and purity is liked by Allah “...Allah loves those who purify themselves.”(Qur’an;9:108). Ablution is obligatory for the (*Salah*) prayer (Qur’an;5:6). Ablution before prayer is also mentioned in Bible: “And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet there at:”(Exodus;40:31); “Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them”.(Acts;21:26).

The Third Pillar: Obligatory Alms -*Zakat* : Obligatory Charity (*Zakat*) involves annual payment of a certain percentage of assets which is distributed among the poor or other rightful beneficiaries. This is a financial, social and spiritual form of obligatory worship (Qur'an;98.5, 24:56, 2:43). Charity has also been prescribed in the previous scriptures (Numbers;18:25-26, Leviticus;27:30-32, Deuteronomy;14:22, 14:28-29, 26:12, 1 Peter;4:8, Mathew;23:23-24). The messengers of God had always been emphasizing charity, which is mentioned in Qur'an at 2:83, 70:24, 5:121, 9:55, 19:31 & 21:73.

The Fourth Pillar: Fasting: The physical and spiritual forms of worship are combined in *Saum* (Fasting). This is very old form of worship which is obligatory for the Muslims as it was to the previous believers: "O believers! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you so that you may learn self-restraint."(Qur'an;2:183); "So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, (Jonah;3:5-8). Fasting is mentioned in Bible: "And he (Jesus) said unto

them (disciples), This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting”(Mark;9:29) also at Exodus; 34:27-28, Leviticus;16:29-30, 2 Samuel; 1:12, 2 Samuel;12:16, Numbers; 9:1-3, Psalms;35:13, Jeremiah; 36:6, Joel; 2:12-13, Zechariah;8:18, Acts;13:2-3, Mark;9:29 & Mathew; 17:21. Every year in the lunar month of Ramadan, all Muslims fast from early morning till sunset, abstaining from food, drink, and sexual relations with wife. Apart from spiritual benefits, fasting also has medical advantages.

The Fifth Pillar: The Pilgrimage -Hajj: Performance of Hajj is the special form of worship, in which the physical, financial, social and spiritual aspects are combined. The Hajj (Pilgrimage to Makka) is obligatory for every Muslim once in life time if one can afford financially and physically. Allah says: “And complete the Hajj or `Umra in the service of Allah.”(Qur’an;2:196); “In it are Signs Manifest; (for example), the station of Abraham; Whoever enters it attains security; Pilgrimage thereto is a duty men owe to Allah,- those who can afford the journey; but if any deny Faith, Allah stands not In

need of any of His creatures.”(Qur’an;3:97). Hajj revive the memory of pronouncement of Islamic monotheism (*Tawheed*) by Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) and his first born Ishmael while building Ka’ba at Makka and reminder of the sacrifice of his only son Ishmael (Genesis;16:3,16:15), offered by Abraham in obedience to the command of God. Allah says: "Verily, the first house (of worship) appointed for mankind was that in Baca (Mecca), full of blessing, and guidance for all people."(Qur’an;3:96). The Bible also mentions about Baca: “As they go through the valley of Baca they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools.”(Psalms;84:6). Baca; in the ancient dialect, is synonymous with Makkah. The spring is known as the Zamzam. Some of the Hajj rituals (Qur’an;5:27 & Fiqh-us-Sunnah: 5.85) , are identical as mentioned at Genesis; 22:2, 22:4-5, Exodus;29:26, Genesis;4:1-5, Numbers; 8:10-16, Numbers; 6:5, 6:13, & 6:18).

Jihad- The Strenuous Endeavour:

Jihad is derived from the Arabic word ‘*Juhd*’, which means “effort”. The verb *Jahida* means ‘to be tried as a result of exerting an effort or energy; making endeavor; so Jihad is to contend with difficulties and to work continually. Strenuous Efforts (Jihad) made sincerely for advancement of the cause of Allah, though not included among five pillars of Islam; but it is an important element of the Faith (*ayman, Belief*). Allah says: “The true believers are those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, then never doubt; and make Jihad (exert their efforts) with their wealth and their persons in the cause of Allah. Such are the ones who are truthful in their claim to be the believers.”(Qur’an;49:15). The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "The head of the matter is Islam, its pillar is the prayer, and the top of its hump is striving (Jihad) in the way of Allah."(Fiqh As-Sunnah: 1.75). Jihad has wider meanings, it does not necessarily mean armed struggle against oppression and self defence only but other peaceful means are also included. The specific word used exclusively for warfare is *Qitaal*

(Qur'an;2:216-217) or *Qatelu, wa-Qatalu* (Qur'an;4 89-91). Muslims are urged to conduct the Bigger Jihad (*Jihad Kabira*), through Qur'an. Allah says: "therefore, do not yield to the unbelievers, and make Jihad (strive) against them with this Qur'an, a mighty Jihad."(Qur'an;25:52). The scholars have identified three main forms of Jihad, the First and foremost Jihad is to; 'Strive against Selfish Desires' (*Nafs ammarah*), to purify the heart, so that the faith (*Ayman*) of Islam is deeply rooted in the heart, to become fully subservient to the commands of God. Jihad is a life-long mission for the Muslims as a community to struggle against all evils, socio-economic, cultural, educational, political dogmas; superstitious and mythological concepts; and directing the Muslims towards obedience to Allah, enlightenment, refinement, progress, dignified character and honest actions. Second category of Jihad is, making strenuous efforts (Jihad) to convey the Last message of God (Islam) to the humanity(*Dawah*) using all means, sacrificing wealth or self being for the cause of God. Allah says: "Thus We have appointed you (Muslims) a

middle nation, that ye may be witnesses against mankind, and that the messenger may be a witness against you.”(Qur’an;2:143); “We have given the Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants (Muslims) whom We have chosen”.(Qur’an;35:32). The Prophet (peace be upon him) in his last sermon said: “O’ People, no prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. ... All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly”. As true followers of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), it is the obligation of Muslims to pass on the Guidance and the Religion of Truth (Islam) to the humanity. This is a great responsibility so Muslims have to gain knowledge of Islam, practice it and then convey it to the humanity. The true believers may expect reward for their good deeds and salvation.

The third and top noblest form of Jihad is to fight in self defense, against oppression. Allah says: “Fight in the cause of Allah with those who fight against you, but do not exceed the limits. Allah

does not like transgressors. Kill them wherever they confront you in combat and drive them out of the places from which they have driven you. Though killing is bad, creating mischief is worse than killing. Do not fight them within the precincts of the Sacred Mosque unless they attack you there; but if they attack you put them to the sword; that is the punishment for such unbelievers. If they cease hostility, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. Fight against them until there is no more disorder and Allah's supremacy is established. If they desist, let there be no hostility except against the oppressors.”(Qur’an;2:190-193). Islam urges the believers to show kindness and equity to non aggressor non Muslims: Allah says: *“As for such of the unbelievers who do not fight against you on account of your faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, Allah does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave toward them with full equity. Indeed Allah loves those who act equitably. Allah only forbids you to make friendship with those who fought you on account of your faith and drove you out of your homes and backed up others in your expulsion. Those*

who will take them for friends are indeed the wrongdoers”(Qur’an;60:8-9). The tyrant rulers of the old, (especially in Arabia and around) did not allow Muslims to preach and those who embraced Islam were oppressed, killed or expelled; such people had to be subdued. According to traditional Islamic scholars, the world was divided into three zones: the House of Islam (*Dar-ul-Islam*), where Muslims are ascendant; the House of Peace(*Dar-ul-Aman*), those powers with whom Muslims have peace agreements; and the House of War(*Dar-ul-Harab*), the rest of the world. Allah says: “Permission to fight back is hereby granted to the believers against whom war is waged and because they are oppressed (before this revelation, Muslims were not allowed to fight even for self defence); certainly Allah has power to grant them victory- those who have been unjustly expelled from their homes only because they said, "Our Lord is Allah." Had not Allah repelled some people by the might of others, the monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which Allah's praise is daily celebrated, would have been utterly demolished. Allah will certainly help those who

help His cause; most surely Allah is Mighty, Powerful.”(Qur’an;22:39-40); “Warfare (*Qitaal*) is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that ye hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that ye love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows, ye know not.”(Qur’an;2:216); “And what reason do you have not to fight in the cause of Allah, to rescue the helpless oppressed old men, women, and children who are crying: "Our Lord! Deliver us from this town whose people are oppressors; send us a protector by Your grace and send us a helper from Your presence?”(Qur’an;4:75). In the present world all the nations are members of United Nations Organization and signatory to its charter of peaceful coexistence and basic human rights, whereby every human being is free to adopt and practice any faith. Hence now whole world may be termed as House of Peace (*Dar-ul-Aman*) except some zones where people are oppressed.

According to the traditional procedure of Allah, if a Messenger (*Rasool*) himself delivers the message of guidance to the community or nations, and they became rebellious by refusing to accept it: then

those nations and communities were entitled to divine punishment. (Qur'an; 5:33-34, 11:117, 13:32, 28:59, 65:8, 73:15-16). Allah says: "But those who disobey Allah and His Messenger and transgress His limits will be admitted to a fire, to abide therein: and They shall have a humiliating punishment."(Qur'an;4:14). Besides punishment in hereafter, the punishment in this world is either through the followers of the messenger if they are strong enough, but if they are weak in numbers and strength then the Divine punishment befalls upon them through natural calamities resulting in their destruction. The example of Divine punishment to the nations of Noah, Aad, Samood and Lot (peace be upon them) in the form of destruction through natural calamities like floods, earthquakes, tornados etc are well recorded in Bible and Qur'an. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), prior to his death (632 C.E) had invited the rulers of neighboring powers to Islam through epistles and emissaries. Those who responded negatively, they were entitled for Divine punishment as per the tradition of God. After Prophet (peace be upon him), this pending

task was accomplished by his successors by subduing the Byzantine and Persian empires. It is no more applicable now. Apart from Divine punishment the object of *Jihad* was not to coerce them to accept Islam, but to ensure that freedom of choice is provided to the people of neighboring areas to choose between truth (*Haqq*) and falsehood (*Batil*), forced conversion is prohibited by Qur'an;2:256. The non Muslims always enjoyed freedom of faith as protected citizens under Muslim rule. It is incorrect to consider every war fought by Muslims as Jihad. Jihad is the struggle only for the cause of Allah (*jihad-fi-sabi-lillah*): the concept of *Jihad* was nevertheless, used by some medieval Muslim rulers (even presently by some groups) to justify wars motivated by self power, sectarianism, geographical and economic ambitions.

The warfare for the cause of Allah (*Qital*) has always been permissible, and as such mentioned in the previous scriptures, Allah says: "Lo! Allah hath bought from the believers their lives and their wealth because the Garden will be theirs: they shall fight in the way of Allah and shall slay and be

slain. It is a promise which is binding on Him in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. Who fulfills His covenant better than Allah? Rejoice then in your bargain that ye have made, for that is the supreme triumph."(Qur'an;9:111 also mentioned likewise at 2:54, 5:21-22, 5:26,2:251). The Bible declares; "And you shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall chase ten thousand; and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword."(Leviticus;26:7-8);"Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."(1Samel;15:3); "slay utterly the old man, the young man and the virgin, and little children and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark: and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the old men that were before the house."(Ezakhel;9:6). Also mentioned at Psalm;149:6-9, Hebrews;11:32-34, Numbers; 31:17-18, 31:35, Joshua;6:21, 10:28. In the New Testament the Jesus Christ (peace be upon him)

says: “But as for these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them before me.”(Luke;19:27), “Don't think that I came to send peace on the earth. I didn't come to send peace, but a sword.”(Mathew;10:34); “Do you think that I have come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, no, but rather division.”(Luke;2:51); ““I came to throw fire on the earth. I wish it were already kindled.”(Luke;12:49);“Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division.”(Luke;12:51).“And, behold, one of those who were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priests, and cut off his ear.”(Mathew;26:51).

Killing of Muslims brothers on sectarian or other people due o their different beliefs, is terrorism; it is not correct to malign Jihad in such heinous activities because the menace of sectarianism is totally rejected by Islam: Allah says: “Surely those who divide the religion into sects and identify themselves as a sect, O Muhammad, you have nothing to do with them. Their case will be called to account by Allah Himself, He will inform them

as to what they did.”(Qur’an;6:159);“Be not like those who became divided into sects and who started to argue against each other after clear revelations had come to them. Those responsible for division and arguments will be sternly punished” (Qur’an;3:105);“In fact, your religion is one religion, and I am your only Lord: so fear Me Alone. Yet people have divided themselves into factions and each faction rejoices in its own doctrines - well! Leave them in their heedlessness for an appointed time. Do they think that, in giving them wealth and children, We are eager for their welfare? By no means! They do not understand the reality of the matter.”(Qur’an;23:52-56);“those who divide their religion into sects and become separate groups, each group rejoicing in its own circle. When an affliction befalls the people, they turn in prayer to their Lord in repentance. But when He let them taste a blessing from Him, lo! Some of them begin to ascribe other powers a share in their Sustainers divinity, showing no gratitude for What We have given them. Enjoy yourselves; soon you will find out your folly.”(Qur’an;30:32-34). Reconciliation

among Muslims brothers in conflict, is to be done with fairness and Justice: Allah says: “If two parties among the believers fall into mutual fighting, make peace between them. Then if one of them transgresses against the other, fight the one who has transgressed until he returns to the commands of Allah. Then, if he returns, make peace between them with justice and be fair; for Allah loves those who are fair and just. The believers are brothers to one another, therefore, make reconciliation between your brothers and fear Allah, so that you may be shown mercy.”(Qur’an;49:9-10).

In the 20th century the concept of jihad inspired Muslims in their struggle against Western colonialism, which still continues in different forms. While the theological legality of armed struggles (commonly referred as Jihad) being conducted by various armed groups against oppression and foreign occupation may have justification, but the mode of conduct of warfare in violation of principles set forth in Islam remains a hot topic of intense debate and controversies among Muslim and non Muslim thinkers. Killing

of innocent people is strictly prohibited; human life of Muslims and non Muslims alike, has a very high place in Islam, Allah says: “whoever kills a person, except as a punishment for murder or mischief in the land (through judiciary), it will be written in his book of deeds as if he had killed the mankind and whoever will save a life shall be regarded as if he gave life to all the mankind.”(Qur’an;5:32); Killing of religious people, women, children, aged, sick people, animals and even cutting of trees is prohibited.(Al Muwata Hadith. Number;21.10). *Suicide is not permissible* (Qur’an;4:29, Sahih Al Bukhari Hadith Numbr:8.126). Killing by burning is not allowed (Sahih Al Bukhari, Hadith, Number.4.260); mutilation of the dead bodies is prohibited (Sahih Muslim Hadith.804); safe conduct: is to be fulfilled: (Al Muwata Hadith, Number.21.12). Islam is the faith of Peace, the peace offer has to be accepted: “If the enemy is inclined towards peace, do make peace with them, and put your trust in Allah. He is the One Who hears all , knows all.”(Qur’an;8:61), Grant of asylum is allowed: “If one amongst the Pagans ask

Thee for asylum, grant it to him, so that He may Hear the word of Allah. and then escort Him to where He can be secure. that is because They are men without knowledge.”(Qur’an;9:6). Creating mischief on the earth by killing innocents on the name of Jihad, amounts to malign the noble concept. Allah does not like mischief, He says : “.. and do not seek mischief in the land, for Allah does not love the mischief makers.”(Qur’an;28:77); “When it is said to them: "Do not make mischief on earth," they say: "We make peace. Be aware! They are the ones who make mischief but they do not realize it.”(Qur’an;2:11-12 similarly also at 2:60, 206, 3:63, 7:56). Allah says: “The punishment for those who wage war against Allah and His Apostle and strive to create mischief in the land is death or crucifixion or the cutting off their hands and feet from opposite sides or exile from the land based on the gravity of their offense. This will be their humiliation in this world and in the Hereafter they will have grievous punishment,”(Qur’an;5:33). It is generally agreed that on failure of peace efforts, Jihad (for the cause of Allah Only) be declared by

the Caliph or the Muslim ruler in consultation with the religious scholars keeping all the factors in view so that there is no deviation from the command of Allah and His Apostle (peace be upon him). The principles of warfare laid down by Islam must be adhered to. The noble concept of Jihad as defined by Qur'an has nothing to do with the terrorism, as practiced by some groups maligning Islam.

CHAPTER-5 :THE LAW (SHAR'IA)

The peaceful coexistence with justice is the basic requirement of any society for its survival, development and expansion; to achieve this, the people have to adhere to the rules of conduct or procedures known as 'law', established by custom, agreement, or authority. The enforcement of the body of rules is through a controlling authority. The laws of morality are means of controlling human conduct by setting normative standards. The best law is by the Creator, Who knows well the capabilities and limitations of His creatures; the human being one of them. The Bible emphasizes the importance of law by declaring that the Law of God, is absolute and perpetual, Jesus said: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled"(Matthew;5:18). Law was given to Adam (Genesis;2:16-17), Noah (Genesis;9:6), the Israelites (Exodus;20:2-17; Psalms;78:5) through Moses. (Exodus;31:18; John;7:19) and through the ministration of angels (Acts;7:53; Galatians; 3:19; Hebrews;2:2). It is

described as; Pure: “The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes”(Psalms;19:8); “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple”(Psalms;19:7 also Romans;12:2). The law is truth (Psalms;119:142) and requires perfect obedience (Detromonmy;27:26; Glatians;3:10; James;2:10). It is man's duty to keep the law: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”(Ecclesiastes;12:13). Keeping of law result in blessedness (Psalms;119:1; Mathew;5:19; 1Jhon;3:22,24); *the love of law, produces peace* (Psalms;119:165). Disobedience of law, invite divine rage: “That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD”(Isaiah;30:9); “Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it”(Jeremiah;6:19). Transgression of law is sin: “Whosoever commits sin transgresses also

the law: for sin is the transgression of the law”(1 John;3:4). The Israelites were punished for disobeying of law: (Nehemea;9:26-27). The ancient people of Israel adhered to the law of God given to Prophet Moses (peace be upon him) in the Torah and the Mishna (the latter was later incorporated into the Talmud). Thus, for example, unfairness in labor relations was considered a religious sin and caring for the sick a religious obligation. The rabbinic ordinances were regarded as having validity only because the authority of the rabbis is sanctioned by the Torah. This however remained the personal law for Jews for centuries, being a minority in various countries. With the rebirth of a Jewish national state (1948) and the connected revival of Jewish culture, the Talmud has achieved renewed importance. Orthodox Jewry has always focused upon its study and has believed it to be the absolute Halakhic ("practice," "rules of conduct") authority. This belief has now become even further intensified. While rabbinic courts in Israel have jurisdiction only in the area of family life, it has become one of the aims of

religious (Orthodox) Jewry there to establish Talmudic law as the general law of the state.

Under the Old Testament, the 'Ceremonial Law', prescribes; the rites and ceremonies of worship. This law was obligatory and was practiced by Jesus Christ (peace be upon him); he confirmed the continuity of the law of Prophet Moses (peace be upon him), by declaring: "*Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them.*"(Mathew;5:17 also the Beatitudes, Matthew; 5:3-12 and the Lord's Prayer Matthew; 6:9-13). However on the contrary, after Jesus, the founder of Christianity abolished the law (Hebrews;7:9,11; 10:1; Ephasians;2:16); though it was binding on all. Whereas Jesus had said: "The disciple is not above his master:"(Luke;6:40); but Paul, the self declared 13th disciple of Jesus declared; "But now we are delivered from the law, being dead to that in which we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."(Romans;7:6). The Christians even claimed to be exempted as a covenant of works (Glatians;3:17), freedom from the bondage

and the curse of law: “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace”(Romans;6:14 also 7:4,6,Glatians;3:13).

The New Testament lays down the general principles of good government, but contains no code of laws for the punishment of offenders: “For this, Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not kill, Thou shall not steal, Thou shall not bear false witness, Thou shall not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shall love your neighbor as yourself.”(Romans;13:9). Punishment proceeds on the principle that there is an eternal distinction between right and wrong, and that this distinction must be maintained for its own sake. It is not primarily intended for the reformation of criminals, nor for the purpose of deterring others from sin. These results may be gained, but crime in itself demands punishment. The Western Civilization has been following Roman Law and its derivatives. It was the law of ancient Rome from the time of the founding of the city of Rome in 753 BC until the fall of the Western

Empire. However it remained in use in Christendom (Eastern, or Byzantine, Empire) until 1453 C.E. Romans considered ritual law (*fas*) to be God-given and social law (*lex*) as man-made. The 'Roman Law', as a legal system and as basis for the law codes has affected the development of law in most of Western civilization as well as in parts of the East. The Churches followed Canon Law which, established within Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, independent churches of Eastern Christianity, and the Anglican Communion for church governance.

The relationship between religious and secular authority in society is commonly known as 'Church and State'. In most ancient civilizations the separation of religious and political orders was not clearly defined. With the advent of Christianity, the idea of two separate orders emerged, based on command of Jesus: "Render unto Caesar what are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's"(Mark;12:17). The close association of religion and politics, however, continued even after the acceptance of Christianity as emperors such as Constantine exercised

authority over both church and state. In the early Middle Ages secular rulers claimed to rule by the grace of God, and later in the Middle Ages popes and emperors competed for universal dominion. During the Investiture Controversy the church clearly defined separate and distinct religious and secular orders, even though it laid the foundation for the so-called papal monarchy. The Reformation greatly undermined papal authority, and the pendulum swung toward the state, with many monarchs claiming to rule church and state by divine right.

The concept of secular government, as evinced in the U.S. and post revolutionary France, was influenced by Enlightenment thinkers. The Western Civilization separated the religion from state, by declaring the religion to be personal matter of individual and initially depended on Roman Law, later on Civil Law, also called Romano Germanic Law, the law of continental Europe, based on an admixture of Roman, Germanic, ecclesiastical, feudal, commercial, and customary law. In western Europe today all states protect freedom of worship and maintain

distinction between civil and religious authority. The separation of church and state has been tested in the arena of public education by controversies over issues such as school prayer, wearing of headscarf for Muslim girls, public funding of parochial schools, and the teaching of creationism. After 9/11, there has been revival of religious frenzy among the West, especially in USA. The religiosity displayed by George.W.Bush Junior, is well known. A survey conducted in February 2008, by 'Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life', a Washington based think tank, concluded: that vast majority of Americans - almost 70 percent – agree that it is important for US president to have strong religious beliefs. The American war on terror appears to be directed against the Islamic world than the terrorists, viewed by many as the Crusade of 21st century. The legal systems of some modern Islamic countries are based on Islamic law (Shari'a) or admix of Shari'a and Western law: while in most of Muslim dominated countries western law has replaced the Shari'a after colonization. Shari'a being restricted as the personal law for Muslims only.

Shari'a:

Islam being a complete code of life (*Din*) covers all aspects including social, economic, political, military and other aspects of human life, hence the Islamic law, spells out the moral goals of the community, where state and religion are not separate entity. Total and unqualified submission to the will of Allah is the fundamental tenet of Islam: Islamic law is therefore the expression of Allah's command for Muslim society and, in application, constitutes a system of duties that are incumbent upon a Muslim by virtue of his religious belief. Known as the *Shari'a* (literally means path leading to the watering place). The Jews flouted the law: "The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying books. Wretched is the likeness of folk who deny the revelations of Allah. And Allah does not guide the wrongdoers."(Qur'an;62:5). Allah say: "And unto thee have We revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a watcher over it. So judge between them by that which Allah hath revealed, and follow not

their desires away from the truth which hath come unto thee. For each We have appointed a divine law and a traced out way.”(Qur’an;5:48). The Jews and Christians have been commanded to follow Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and Qur’an: *“O people of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Now Our Messenger (Muhammad) has come to you to reveal much of what you have concealed from the Holy Books and to pass over much which is no longer necessary. There has come to you from God a new Light and a clear Book (Qur’an), with which God will guide to the ways of peace all those who seek His good pleasure and bring them out of the depth of darkness into the light of His grace and guide them to the Right Way.”*(Qur’an;5:15-16). In Islamic society, therefore, the term law has a wider significance than it does in the modern secular West, because Islamic law includes both legal and moral imperatives. The Islamic law constitutes a divinely ordained path of conduct, that guides the Muslim toward a practical expression of his religious conviction (rituals) and all aspects of life (social, economic, political etc) in this world and

the goal of divine favour in the world to come. For the same reason, not all-Islamic laws can be stated as formal legal rules or enforced by the courts. Much of it depends on conscience alone. The Shari'a duties are broadly divided into those that an individual owes to Allah (the ritual practices or *'ibadat*) and those that he owes to his fellow men (*mu'amalat*). It is the latter category of duties alone, constituting law in the Western sense, that is penal law. The other laws include; offenses against the person, homicide, law of transactions, family law, succession law, procedure and evidence etc. The Qur'anic revelations laid down basic standards of conduct for the first Muslim community established under the leadership of the Prophet (peace be upon him) at Medina in 622 C.E. The Qur'an is the book of guidance for the believers; it also lay down the parameters of legal code. The Qur'an contains about ninety verses directly and specifically addressing questions of law. Islamic legal discourse refers to these verses as Allah's law and incorporates them into legal codes. The remainder of Islamic law is the result of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), human efforts to codify

Islamic norms in practical terms and legislate for cases not specifically dealt with in the Qur'an and Sunnah, through *Ijma*, (agreement among scholars) and *Qiya*, (analogical reasoning).

Beginning in the mid eighth century, the four major Sunni schools of legal thought (*madhhabs*) Hanafi, Maliki, Shafii, Hanbali and the Shi'a Jafari *madhhab* (Twelvers) emerged. They were named after the great scholars Imam Abu Hanifah (699-767 C.E), Imam Malik ibn Anas (715-795 C.E), Imam Al-Shaf'ie (767-820 C.E), Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (780-855 C.E) and Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (699-748 C.E) respectively. These schools differ in their methodologies, which help them to arrive at verdicts to questions that are put to them. All Sunni schools use systematic reasoning to deal with areas of law not directly covered by the Qur'an or *Sunnah*. They differ primarily in their emphasis on textual authority or analogical reasoning, but each school recognizes the conclusions of the others as being perfectly legitimate and within the framework of orthodox Islam. *Imamah* is one of the core beliefs of Shiite Islam, which separates Shiites from other

Muslims. *Imamah* is the belief that, in every time and place, there must be an infallible, divinely appointed guide who preserves the religion exactly as it was revealed by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The person who bears the duty of guarding and preserving the Divine message after it is revealed and is chosen by God for this function is called the Imam; in the same way that the person who bears the prophetic spirit and has the function of receiving Divine injunctions and laws from God is called the Prophet. It is possible for the Imamate and Prophecy (*Nubuwwat*) either to be joined in one person or to be separate. Shi'a Muslims, believe that Prophet Muhammad's (peace be upon him) religious leadership, spiritual authority, and divine guidance were passed on to his descendants, beginning with his son-in-law and cousin, Ali ibn Abi Talib, his daughter, Fatimah, and their sons, Hasan and Husain. Sunnis and Shi'a differed in their understanding of 'who held the power to interpret *Shari'a*'. Shi'as initially believed that only an infallible Imam could interpret *Shari'a*. When the line of appropriate descendants

ended, this tradition was reinterpreted to grant judicial authority to the *fuqaha* as the Imam's representatives. The Sunnis, consider that the competent scholars of religious sciences can conduct *Ijtihad*, which means 'independent reasoning' as opposed to *taqlid* (imitation). In the absence of direct guidance from Qur'an or Sunnah for a given situation, the exercise of rational judgment by a competent authority is termed as *Ijtihad*. It is a unique and important component of Shari'a. *Ijtihad* started during the life of the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the far flung areas. The rules of *Ijtihad* were framed by Abu Bakr, the first Caliph. *Ijtihad*, being human generated legislation is considered fallible; since more than one interpretation of a legal issue is possible: it is open to revision. The term *Shari'a* is sometimes applied to all Islamic legislation. Modern scholars have however challenged this claim, distinguishing between *Shari'a* and *fiqh* and calling for reform of *fiqh* codes in light of modern conditions.

The law prescribed through the previous Messengers like Moses (peace be upon him);

confirmed by Jesus (peace be upon them) remain applicable to Muslims, unless changed or amended through Qur'an or by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Allah says: "This is the guidance from Allah; He bestows it upon whom He pleases of His devotees. If they were to join other gods with Him all their deeds would have become void. Such were the people to whom We gave the Book, wisdom and Prophethood. Now if these people deny this guidance, it does not matter; We would bestow this guidance upon other people who would not disbelieve. O Muhammad, those were the people who were rightly guided by Allah, therefore, follow their guidance and tell these people: "I am not asking you any compensation for this work of delivering the Message to you, this message is nothing but a reminder to all the worlds."(6:88-90). The Muslims do not discriminate against anyone of His Messengers (Qur'an;2:285) and follow the eternal guidance provided to all of them being the same. Hence due to the common source of origin: ONE GOD; there are many commonalities amongst the law of Moses and

Shari'a', which can also form basis for reconciliation: "O people of the Book (Jews and Christians)! Let us get together on what is common between us and you.."(Qur'an;3:64). Some commonalities are notable: The dietary instructions of Qur'an are almost similar as in Bible, adhered to by Jews and Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him). Muslims are allowed to consume permissible (*Hilal*) food from the Jews and Christians. The permissible (*Hilal*) animals are to be slaughtered by reciting the name of God not idols. (Qur'an;5:5, Acts;15:29, Deuteronomy;14:21, Genesis;9:4, Leviticus 17:14-15, Deuteronomy 12:16, 1Samuel 14:33 and Acts 15:29 also at Revelation 2:14). Swine is regarded as the most unclean and the most abhorred of all animals (Isaiah;65:4; 66:3,17; Luke;15:15-16). A herd of swine were drowned in the Sea of Galilee (Luke;8:32-33, Mark;5:13). Eating pork is also prohibited in Bible: Leviticus;11:7-8, Deuteronomy 14:8 & Isaiah 65:2-5 and Qur'an:16:115, 2:173, 5:3, 6:145. Consumption of alcohol and gambling is prohibited in Qur'an;5:90, Proverbs;20:1 & Ephesians;5:18. God had ordained in Torah: "A

life for a life, an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth and for a wound an equal retaliation." But if anyone remits the retaliation by way of charity it will be an act of atonement for him.(Qur'an;5:44-45). Jesus quoted the Old Law "eye for eye," etc, and modifies it in towards of forgiveness: "You have heard that it was said, `An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also;"(Matthew;5:38-39). The retaliation has also been allowed by Qur'an (Qur'an;2:178-179) and Bible (21:23-25, Leviticus, 24:18-21 and Deuteronomy; 19:21). The killing of innocent people is a major crime (Leviticus; 24:17, Deuteronomy;5:17, Exodus;20:13 and Qur'an;17:33, 5:32.).

Adultery is a major sin: "Neither shall you commit adultery." (Deuteronomy;5:18 & Exodus;20:13, Mathew;5:28 also at Qur'an;17:32). Death is prescribed for adultery in Bible (Leviticus; 20:10-16). Punishment of death by stoning was already prevalent for adulteress (Deuterinomy;22:20-21) and for blasphemy (Lectivis;24:16). In Islam death

by stoning is prescribed for unmarried adulterer and adulteress only if four eye witness are produced or self confession by the accused takes place.(Al-Muwatta Hadith, 41.2). Homosexuality is strictly forbidden by Qur'an;7:81. Bible prescribe death as the punishment for homosexuality (Leviticus;20:13). Theft or robbery is a serious crime, strictly forbidden (Deuteronomy;5:19 & Exodus;20:15, Leviticus;19, Qur'an;60:12, 29:29, 7:86). Amputation of hand of thief is the punishment prescribed in Qur'an;5:38, Matthew;18:8. Apparently in the period of Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) thieves were crucified, Matthew;27:38. False witness is not permitted (Deuteronomy;5:20 & Exodus; Chapter: 20 and Qura'n;25:72). The neighbors are to be respected and treated nicely.(Deuteronomy;5:21 & Exodus; Chapter: 20 and Qura'an;4:36, Sahih Bukhari Hadith:6.4 & 8.45). Abu Huraira narrated that the Prophet said that while committing adultery, drinking alcoholic, stealing or committing robbery a believer ceases to be a believer (for that duration). (Sahih Al Bukhari Hadith;3.655). Good treatment of parents with

respect and honor has been prescribed at Deuteronomy;5:16 & Exodus; Chapter: 20, Mathew;15:4, also emphasized by Qura'n;31:14. The circumcision is the important statute ordained to Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) as mentioned in Genesis;17:10-13,24-27, Joshua;5:2-9, Judges;14:3, 15:18; 1Samuel;14:6; 17:26; 2Samuel;1:20, Ezekhiel;31:18, Acts;7:8 & John;7:22. Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) was also circumcised (Luke;2:21). The Christians have abandoned this statute (Roman;2:25-29, Galatians;6:15), while Muslims, being the true faithful followers of Abraham, strictly adhere to the practice of circumcision (Sahih Bukhari Hadith;7.777) like Abraham, Moses, all the other prophets including Jesus (peace be upon him). The strict observance of the Sabbath day, was enjoined to the children of Israel at Deuteronomy;5:12-15, Exodus; Chapter: 20 and Qura'n;4:154, 16:123-124. However the Muslims have been exonerated from this restriction applicable to the followers of prophet Moses (peace be upon him). Muslims only break off for the duration of Friday prayers (Qur'an;62:9-10).

Usury is prohibited in Bible at Leviticus;25:39-37 and Qura'n;2:278-279, 2:275, 2:276, 30:39.

The Islamic system of government is based on the principle of consultation (*shura*), the democratic way spelled out by Qur'an fourteen centuries ago (Qur'an;42:38 & 3:159); notwithstanding the hereditary kingship which followed. Even Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was asked to consult people in worldly matters: "and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs; and when you make a decision to do something, then put your trust in Allah"(Qur'an;3:159). In Islam state and faith are closely interlinked: "These are the people who, if We establish them (in power, authority) in the land, will establish Prayer (*Salah*) and pay Charity (*Zakah*), enjoin the right (justice) and forbid evil; the final decision of all affairs is in the hands of Allah."(Qur'an;22:41). The people charged with authority (*Ulu-l-amr*), running the government are to be respected and obeyed by the Muslims (Qur'an;4:59) otherwise there can be no order or discipline resulting in to anarchy, however not on the matters which are in conflict with the faith and fundamentals of Islam.

Obedience to ruler is mentioned in Bible at Romans;13:1-4. Monarchy is not appreciated by God as system of rule in the Old Testament. After Moses the Israelites asked Prophet Samuel for appointment of a King like other nations. (Qur'an; 2:246-250). They were cautioned about the excesses of kings but they did not budge from their demand, ultimately, their request was accepted by God and Saul was appointment as King of Israelites (1Samuel;8:5-22,10:1), this was beginning of monarchy among Israelites. The Charter of Medina, in fact was the first ever written constitution in the history of mankind. This was based on the contract agreed upon by Muslims, Jews and others, stipulating that they all would be treated as equal citizens of Medina, giving the non-Muslims right of choosing a legal system they wished their affairs be governed by, be it Islamic or Jewish law or pre-Islamic Arab tribal traditions. This confirms the principle “no compulsion in religion”, freedom of expression and religious practice was open to everyone. It gave the right of protection, security, peace and justice; not only to Muslims, but also to the Jews

who lived in the City of Medina, as well as the allies of Jews who were non-Muslims. The Jews were recognized as a separate political and ethnic minority, and allowed to practice their religion quite freely. In fact, Jews were considered on an equal basis as Muslims under the Islamic State.

In classical form, the *Shari'a* differs from Western systems of law (based on Roman Law) being followed by Christians, in two principal respects. In the first place the scope of the *Shari'a* is much wider, since it regulates man's relationship not only with his neighbors and with the state, which is the limit of most other legal systems, but also with Allah and his own conscience. Ritual practices, (*ibadat*) such as the daily prayers, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage, are an integral part of *Shari'a* law and usually occupy the first chapters in the legal manuals. The *Shari'a* is also concerned as much with ethical standards as with legal rules, indicating not only what man is entitled or bound to do in law, but also what he (obligatory) ought, in conscience, to do (*halal*), something that is lawful and permitted in Islam, or refrain from doing (*haram*) not permissible.

Thus the Shari'a is not merely a system of law, but a comprehensive code of behaviour that embraces both private and public activities. The second major distinction between the *Shari'a* and Western legal systems is the result of the Islamic concept of law as the expression of the 'Divine Will'. *Shari'a* law though appears to be rigid in certain aspects but there is room for flexibility in *fiqha* through *Ijtehad* to meet the challenges of growing and changing needs of society. In Islamic jurisprudence it is not the society that moulds and fashions the law, but the law that precedes and controls society, however the legitimate changes and requirements of the modern society are kept in view within bounds of Divine Will. The Western Law, is not based on the Bible, they have discarded the Law of Moses, which Jesus declared as his mission (Mathew;5:17-20). By contrast in the Western Law, it is the society that moulds and fashions the law thus consumption of alcohol, homosexuality, gay marriages (not permitted in Bible) have been made legal, on the desire and public support of the Western Society, where as in *Shari'a*, it is not possible to make such laws which

are unnatural and clearly against the Divine Will, manifested in Qur'an and Sunnah. Keeping in view the importance of Shari'a among the Muslims living in UK; the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, the most senior figure in the Church of England, has triggered intense debate by saying that; he considers the introduction of Shari'a law for British Muslims as "unavoidable" because it would help maintain social cohesion; since some Muslims do not relate to the British legal system; many UK Muslims already use Shari'a law in aspects of their day-to-day lives, such as banking and marriage, and the same principle of separate laws could "easily be accepted for other faiths groups".

Priesthood:

Priesthood is the office of a spiritual leader expert in the ceremonies of worship and the performance of religious rituals. Though chieftains, kings, and heads of households have sometimes performed priestly functions, in most civilizations the priesthood is a specialized office. The priest's duties are concerned less with magic than with the

right performance of ritual acts required by the divine powers. Many African societies, for example, differentiated between shamans and the priests responsible for the worship of tribal ancestors. Sacrifice is often one of the most important duties of the priesthood. Not every highly developed religion possesses priesthood, the most notable exception being Islam. The priesthood as institution exists among Israelites. The Hebrew; Cohen, (Greek; Hierus, Latin; Sacerdos), always denote one who offers sacrifices. Under the Levitical arrangements the office of the priesthood was limited to the tribe of Levi, and to only one family of that tribe, the family of Prophet Aaron (Harun, peace be upon him). Their duties were manifold (Exodus; 27:20-21; 29:38-44; Leviticus; 6:12; 10:11; 24:8; Numbers;10:1-10;Deuteronomy;17:8-13;33:10; Malachi;2:7). The priests represented the people before God, and offered the various sacrifices prescribed in the law. The priests were well looked after by providing sufficient revenue like: Tenth of the tithes paid to the Levites (Numbers;18:26,28); First-fruits of tree (Numbers;18:8,12-13); Redemption-money of

the first-born (Numbers;3:48; 18:15-16); First-born of animals or their substitutes (Numbers;18:17-18); First of the wool of sheep (Deuteronomy;18:4); Show-bread after its removal (Leviticus;24:9; 1Samuel; 21:4-6; Mathew; 12:4); Part of all sacrifices (Leviticus; 7:6-10, 31-34; Numbers;6:19;18:8-11; Deuteronomy;18:3); All devoted things (Numbers;18:14); All restitutions when the owner could not be found (Numbers;5:8) and a fixed portion of the spoil taken in war (Numbers;31:29,41).

The priesthood is the essential institution of Christianity, though Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) strictly forbade the excesses in adornment of prophets and pious, when he said: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you build the tombs of the prophets, and adorn the sepulchers of the righteous”(Matthew;23:29). The Christian Roman Catholic Church is characterized by an episcopal hierarchy with the pope as its head and belief in seven sacraments and the authority of tradition. Sacrament is a visible form of invisible grace, especially: In the Eastern, Roman Catholic, and some other Western Christian

churches, any of the traditional seven rites that were claimed to be instituted by Jesus and recorded in the New Testament and that confer sanctifying grace. In most other Western Christian churches, the two rites, Baptism and the Eucharist, that were claimed to be instituted by Jesus to confer sanctifying grace. The Christian Roman Catholic Church regards itself as the only legitimate inheritor of the ministry of Jesus, by virtue of an unbroken succession of leaders beginning with St. Peter and continuing to the present day. It holds that the pope is the infallible interpreter of divine revelation. Pope enjoys a very high privileged status, he even ruled 'Papal States' comprising a group of territories in central Italy from 754 until 1870 C.E. They were originally given to the papacy by Pippin III (714-768, the King of the Franks and the father of Charlemagne) and reached their greatest extent in 1859. The last papal state the 'Vatican City' was formally established as a separate state by the Lateran Treaty of 1929. Church organization is strictly hierarchical. Within dioceses are parishes, each served by a church and a priest. In the episcopal

Christian Churches, Priest is a member of the second order of the ministry, ranking above deacons and below bishops and having authority to perform certain rites and administer certain sacraments. Only men can enter the priesthood, but women who wish to enter holy orders can become nuns, who are organized into orders and convents. The idea of the “priesthood of all believers” was also a cardinal doctrine of the Reformation, and the Protestant belief that priests are not needed as intermediaries between church members and the Holy Spirit is seen most clearly in sects such as the Society of Friends. Though reformers such as Jan Hus and John Wycliffe attacked abuses in the Roman Catholic church in the late medieval period.

The mainstream Islam abhors the priesthood, the institution misused and corrupted by the Jews and Christians. The concept of *Imamah* followed by Shi'a Islam, can not be compared with the institution of pope, though there appears some semblance. Allah says: “They (Jews and Christians) have taken their rabbis and priests (*Ahbar*) to be their Lords beside Allah and so they

did with Christ (Messiah- Jesus) the son of Mary, although they were commanded in the Torah and the Gospel to worship none but One Ilah (Allah); besides Whom there is none worthy of worship. Exalted be He above those whom they associate with Him.”(Qur’an;9:31). Priest worship, and the worship of saints and ascetics is a form of superstition to which people have been prone in all ages. The growth of Jewish superstition is shown in the Talmud, and of Christian superstition in the doctrine of ‘Papal Infallibility’ and the worship of saints. The mere idea of a separate order of priesthood to stand between Allah and man and be the exclusive repository of Allah's secrets is derogatory to the goodness and all-pervading grace of Allah. The worship of "lords many and gods many" was not confined only to the Pagans. The deification of the son of Mary is put in the verse (Qur’an;9:31) in a special clause by itself, as it held (and still holds) in its thrall a large portion of civilized humanity. At an other place, it is recorded in Qur’an: “Say: "O people of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: that we worship none but Allah; that we associate

no partners with Him; that we erect not from among ourselves Lords and patrons (Cohen, pope, priests, saints) other than Allah." If then they turn back say: "Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's will)." (Qur'an;3:64)..The same remarks apply to the status of saints and *pir*. They may be pure and sincere according to their faith, (which no one knows except Allah) but no one can protect or claim Lordship over people except Allah, Who says: "When my servants question you about Me, tell them that I am very close to them. I answer the prayer of every suppliant when he calls Me; therefore, they should respond to Me and put their trust in Me, so that they may be rightly guided." (Qur'an;2:186); "And your Lord says: "Call on Me, I will answer your prayers. Surely those who are too arrogant to worship Me shall soon enter hell in humiliation." (Qur'an;40:60). The corruption of rabbis, priests and *pir* exist as a barrier to the true path. Allah says: "O believers! Indeed most of the (Jewish) rabbis and (Christian) priests misappropriate the wealth of people and hinder them from the way of Allah. To those who

hoard gold and silver and do not spend it in the way of Allah, proclaim a painful punishment.”(Qur’an;9:34). Hence the divine wisdom of abolishing priesthood through Islam is self evident. Some Muslim communities under the influence of local culture and ignorance, tend to go beyond the limits in extending reverence to the noble preachers of old which is not sanctioned by Islam.

Asceticism and monasticism is not prescribed in Islam, though the humility or unselfishness that go with asceticism may have its value. Asceticism often means the negation of art and beauty, it has no necessary sanctity attached to it. The beautiful and good things of life are really meant for, and should be the privilege of those with faith in Allah. If they do not always have them in this life, and if there is sometimes the semblance of others having them who do not deserve them, let it be remembered that this is a test from Allah. In the life to come they will be purely for the faithful. Allah says: “Say: Who hath forbidden the adornment (*zeenah*) of God which He has brought forth for His devotees, and the good things of His

providing? Say: "All these things are for the enjoyment of the believers in the life of this world though shared by others; but these shall be exclusively theirs on the Day of Resurrection. Thus do We make Our revelations clear for those who understand. Say: The things that my Lord hath indeed forbidden are: shameful deeds whether open or secret; sins and trespasses against truth or reason; assigning of partners to God for which he hath given no authority; and saying things about God of which you have no knowledge."(Qur'an;7:32-33). The believers should use all kinds of gifts with gratitude which Allah has provided, but excess is not approved of by Allah. Christian monks are praised for particular virtues, though the monasticism is disapproved. Allah says: "...But the monasticism which they invented for themselves We did not prescribe for them: (We commanded) only the seeking for the Good pleasure of Allah;...(Qur'an;57:27). Allah certainly requires that men shall renounce the idle pleasures of this world, and turn to the path which leads to good pleasure of Allah. However that does not mean

somber lives and isolation. Allah's service is done through pure lives in the turmoil of this world. The Qur'anic prayer is the testimony: "Our Lord! *Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the Hereafter that which is good*, and guard us from the doom of Fire."(Qur'an;2:201). This spirit was lost, or at least not fostered by monastic institutions. On the contrary a great part of the "struggle and striving" for noble life was suppressed. The introvert and pessimistic approach would have disastrous consequences. The *Sunnah* of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) provides complete guidance; As per Qur'an; "It is He Who has sent amongst the Unlettered an apostle from among themselves to rehearse to them His Signs to sanctify them and to instruct them in Scripture and Wisdom although they had been before in manifest error"(Qur'an;62:2). The Muslims gain spiritual satisfaction through practicing the six fundamentals of Islam and non obligatory (*nawafil*) additional prayers like the midnight prayer (*tahajjud*) , fasting and charity (*sadaqah*).

The Universal Faith:

After the death of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in 632 C.E, initially the early Muslim caliphates, the Arabs, then the Persians and later the Turks set about to convey the message of Islam to the humanity. In process they created classical Islamic civilization. Later, in the 13th century, both Africa and India became great centers of Islamic civilization and soon thereafter Muslim kingdoms were established in the Far East in Malay-Indonesian world while Muslims flourished in China with the efforts of Muslim traders and preachers. It is unprecedented in the history of mankind wherein the uncivilized people of the desert, became torch bearers of the great civilization of the world with in a short period of 23 years. It was only possible due to the strict adherence to the faith of Islam, its doctrine, beliefs and practices, effectively preached and demonstrated by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). His successors carried forward his mission with zeal and devotion, enjoining good and forbidding evil; and observing the limits set by Allah. Consequently Muslims armies after

consolidation of their hold in Arabian Peninsula had swept completely across North Africa to the Atlantic Ocean by 711 C.E. There they turned north and, crossing the Strait of Gibraltar, overwhelmed the Visigothic kingdom in Spain to liberate the masses from the tyrannical, suppressive and corrupt rule of King Roderick. Had the advancing Muslim armies not been checked at the centre of France in the Battle of Tours in 732 C.E they might have over run the entire Europe. Later Vienna was unsuccessfully besieged by Ottoman Turks, first in 1529 C.E and again in 1683 C.E, had they succeeded, the course of European history might have been different. However the Muslims had carved out an empire stretching from the borders of India to the Atlantic Ocean, the largest empire that the world had yet seen. The super power status facilitated in extending the Muslim influence and in conveying the message of Islam world over, even in the areas not directly under Muslim rule. Forced conversion is forbidden in Islam (Qur'an;2:256), as evident that, despite Muslim rule in Spain, India and Eastern Europe for centuries, the majority of

population remained non Muslim and freely continued to practice their faith. Where as, after the end of eight centuries of Muslim rule in Spain (711-1492 C.E) Muslims and Jews were forced to convert to Christianity and those who declined, were expelled by force. The Muslim traders and preachers through their good conduct and moral righteousness achieved the miracle of conversion in Indonesia, Malaysia in the Far East. The East coast of Africa as far down as Mozambique, as well as the bulk of the inhabitants on the West coast of the continent are Muslims, but history does not record any invading hoards of Muslims from anywhere. This forced De Lacy O'Leary in to write: 'History makes it clear however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated.' ("Islam at the Crossroads" London, 1923, p.8). Despite all the negative propaganda by the hostile media, even after 9/11, Islam remains the fastest growing religion in North America and Europe, no one is carrying the sword to force the conversion.

The obligation of conveying the message of true faith by instituting the rule of Allah, was nevertheless used by some medieval Muslim rulers to justify wars motivated by purely political ambitions. The only comparable conquests in human history are those of the Mongols in the thirteenth century, which were primarily due to the influence of Genghis Khan. These conquests, however, though more extensive than those of the Muslims, did not prove permanent, because they lacked any ideological base, they were just conquests for worldly gains, power and plunder. Most of descendents of Genghis Khan ultimately embraced Islam and contributed towards further enhancing the glory of Islamic civilization. Hence today the only areas occupied by the Mongols are those that they held prior to the time of Genghis Khan. Similarly the empire established through conquests by Alexander the Great (356-323 BC) could hardly survive Alexander's death as a unit. These empires did not give birth to any new civilization based on sound ideology, which could exist for long in the history. The Muslim conquests of the seventh century and thereafter have

continued to play an important role in human history, down to the present day due to the significance and capacity of Islamic civilization to influence the humanity, which emerged from the direction provided by Islam in the moral, spiritual, sociopolitical, economic and all other aspects of human life.

Human Rights:

Islam is not racial, it grant equality to the humanity, the righteousness is the sole criteria for His preference, not colour or race; Allah says: “O mankind! we created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (Not that ye may despise (each other). Verily the most honored of you In the sight of Allah is (He who is) the most righteous of you. and Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things)” ;“Verily we have revealed the Book to Thee In truth, for (instructing) mankind. He, then, that receives guidance benefits His own soul: but He that strays injures His own soul. nor art Thou set over them to dispose of their affairs”. (Qur’an;39:41).

Humanitarian obligations (*Haqooq-ul-Ibad*) are highly emphasized in Muslim communities. Generally *Haqooq Allah*, the duties towards Allah (belief, rituals, prayers) are over emphasized while duties toward fellow human beings are given a low priority in practice, both at the individual and community level. Since a good balance is the main characteristic of Islam and its code of living so, the responsibilities toward other human beings are indeed given a very strong emphasis in Islam. It should always be remembered that except major sin like denial of God and associating partners with Him; God may forgive other sins that relate to human obligations toward Him, but He will not forgive anything that is due to fellow human being until that person is ready to forgive it. Hence, the Muslims have to perform their obligations like worship and simultaneously be kind to the other human in the society, which is also a form of worship being part of Islamic duties. The Sunnah of Prophet (peace be upon him) is the role model for the Muslims. The virtues like justice, truthfulness, charity, kind and courteous behavior with fellow humans, fairness in trade, dealings,

respect of human life and property of others, helping underprivileged, oppressed and weak, whether Muslims or non Muslims alike; are hall mark of Islam. The life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is full of practical examples. The rights of parents and non Muslims have been elaborated separately due to their special significance. Prophet (peace be upon him) was also the best of neighbors and he emphasized that neighbors have a claim on our kindness. All human are equal, the preference is only in piety (known to Allah alone).

When the message of Islam was preached, slavery was a very common practice in all-human societies, it was an international system. The Greeks, Romans, the ancient Germans whose legal and social institutions have mostly influenced the modern world, recognized and practiced all kinds of slavery, like praedial servitude as well as household slavery. Slavery as it existed under the Mosaic law has no modern parallel. That law did not originate but only regulated the already existing custom of slavery(Leviticus 25:44-46, Exodus;21:20-21,26-27; Joshua;9:6-27).

Christianity as a religion did not oppose slavery. The teachings of Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) did not express disapproval of slavery. Christianity did nothing to eliminate slavery except general advice to the masters to give due to the servants, even the Church held slaves and considered it to be a lawful system. The cruel treatment to slaves in America are well known.

Islam does not support slavery. Like the nuisance of *Riba* (Usury), in the present time, the evil of slavery was so much ingrained in the world that its elimination had to come gradually as the society developed. There was an important reason for that, which was to help slaves cope with their new status. Had Islam issued an order to free all the slaves straightaway, that would have created social and economic chaos, as many would not have been able to cope. This happened in the US when slavery was abolished by law. Many former slaves went back to their masters to serve them, because they could not earn their living without them. The Islamic approach to the eradication of slavery is balanced. Islamic legislation includes a variety of ways to ensure the reduction and eventual

eradication of slavery. As the atonement for many offenses, granting freedom to a slave in addition to repentance was made obligatory. A portion of *Zakah* funds (Charitable donations) was also used to help anyone who could buy his own freedom in return for a sum of money, which he would pay to his master.(Qur'an;9:60). The institution of slavery was discouraged and the owners and other people were enjoined to give financial help to the slaves to earn their freedom under the law of *Mukatabat* and marriage with virtuous slaves.(Qur'an;24:33, 24:32). The slaves were to be treated with equity and fairness (Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith, 3.721). However, the slavery continued in Muslim societies for much longer than what could have been expected because of historical and continuation of international slavery. The renowned Orientalist Annemarie Schimmel in the book titled "Islam: An Introduction"has comprehensively summarized the Slavery in Islam; "Slavery was not abolished by the Koran, but believers are constantly admonished to treat their slaves well. In case of illness a slave has to be looked after and well cared

for. To free (*manumit*) a slave is highly meritorious; the slave can ransom himself by paying some of the money he has earned while conducting his own business. Only children of slaves or non-Muslim prisoners of war can become slaves, never a freeborn Muslim; therefore slavery is theoretically doomed to disappear with the expansion of Islam. The entire history of Islam proves that slaves could occupy any office, and many former military slaves, usually recruited from among the Central Asian Turks, became military leaders and often even rulers as in Eastern Iran, India (the Slave Dynasty of Delhi), and medieval Egypt (the Mamluks).”

In communities which base their civil rights on brute strength, the weaker go to the wall, and public opinion expects nothing else. Even in modern democracies of the saner sort, it is often told that it is the fate of minorities to suffer; strength of numbers here becomes the passport to power and privilege. Islam, while upholding balanced views in general, enjoins the most solicitous care for the weak and oppressed. The minorities are treated with justice in every way-in

rights of property, in social rights, and in the right to opportunities of development. The non-Muslim living under the protection of a Muslim state is referred as *Dhimmi*, a free non-Muslim subject. They are exempt from duties of Islam like military service and alms (*zakat*) instead they are required to pay *jizyah* (poll-tax). Historically some Islamic governments paid this poll tax for poor non-Muslim subjects or reduced it to mere symbolic tax. If the State cannot protect those who paid *jizyah*, then the amount they paid is returned to them. Islam guarantees full protection and security of the State including freedom of religion to all. Thus the notion that the minorities are treated as second class citizens in an Islamic state is based on malicious propaganda. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the main enforcer of human rights safeguarding the legitimate interests of minorities. The monks of Mount Sinai were provided protection. On establishing the first Islamic state at Medina, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) entered into many alliances, treaties with the Muslims and the non-Muslims, securing peace and tranquility

for the Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Safety, security and protection of non Muslims is to be ensured (Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith:9.49 & 4.287). Muslims are encouraged to act towards all the non-Muslims living in Islamic state with kindness and equity. As per Qur'an; "*As for such (of the unbelievers) as do not fight against you on account of your faith, and neither drive you forth from your homelands, Allah does not forbid you to show them kindness and to behave towards them with full equity. Indeed, Allah loves those who act equitably*"(Qur'an;60:8). There are numerous Hadiths, which encourage Muslims to be kind to other religious communities, especially those who constitute minorities in the Muslim State. As a result many deserving non Muslims were able to get very high positions in the Muslim hierarchy. Islam does not forbid engagement in respectful and peaceful dialogue with others, especially the Jews and Christians, provided that neither side exploit the ignorance or dire financial need of others so as to psychologically manipulate them in the name of outreach. Islamic law also permits non-Muslim minorities to set up their own

courts, which implement family laws drawn up by the minorities themselves. The rights of minorities are well protected in Islam. Another interesting fact in Islamic history is that although Muslims are prohibited from preparing, selling and consuming alcohol, whereas the ruling is not the same with non-Muslim. If non-Muslim minority in an Islamic state wish to do so, and do not involve Muslims, they would actually be given this right, they even consume pork, strictly prohibited for the Muslims. This points out that the concept of human rights in Islam has often been given a much negative view. While throughout Europe and America, Muslims are not permitted to make the call to prayer (*adhan*) on loud speakers though, the church bells ring freely in the Muslim world. Muslims are asked to call upon the People of the Book for common terms, that is to worship One Allah, and to work together for the solutions of the many problems in the society. “Those who believe (in the Qur'an) and those who follow the Jewish (Scriptures) and the Christians and the Sabians (monotheistic followers of John the Baptist) and who believe in Allah and the last day

and work righteousness shall have their reward with their Lord; on them shall be no fear nor shall they grieve.”(Qur’an;2:62).

It is reemphasized that there is no forced conversions in Islam, the non Muslim subjects have the right to freely choose to revert to Islam or keep practicing their faith. [“Revert”; because every human is born true to nature, in submission to Allah, in Islam (Qur’an;30:30 and Sahih Bukhari Hadith;6.298)] But once a person reverts to Islam, it is obligatory to practice his faith to be a good Muslim. Apostasy has always been considered as a capital offence in all the religions and political systems of the world, because it is considered as a high treason against the established norms of society. The Bible prescribes death by stoning for apostasy: “You shall stone him to death with stones, because he sought to draw you away from the LORD your God..”(Deutonomy;13:10). Death penalty for apostasy remained in force in England for long time. It was abolished due to social and cultural developments. Apostasy is considered as a major sin in Islam. Whether it is punishable by Islamic

law is a debatable matter among Muslim scholars; taking inference from Sahih Al-Bukhari Hadith:9.17, some believe that the apostate should be punished after trial because they consider this crime as a betrayal, high treason against the community, while others opine that if someone changes his faith and does not challenge the Islamic society, it is a matter between him and Allah, Who will punish him in hereafter. However, both opinions agree that it is a major worst form of sin punishable by Allah. As per Qur'an; "Those who turn back as apostates after Guidance was clearly shown to them the Evil One has instigated them and buoyed them up with false hopes."(Qur'an;47:25). It is totally baseless malicious propaganda that the minorities are not well treated in Islam. The Charter of Medina, in fact was the first ever written constitution in the history of mankind which gave the non-Muslims right of choosing a legal system they wished their affairs be governed by, be it Islamic or Jewish law or pre-Islamic Arab tribal traditions. The Christians and Jews have special place in Islam, they are addressed as '*The People of the Book*' in

Qur'an. The history of Islam proves this, when Muslims, Christians, and Jews lived together in dominant Islamic societies in Spain, Baghdad and Ottomans empire. There are other social courtesies which Muslims are urged to extend to non Muslims. Human life has very high value according to Qur'an. Islam, being the religion of moderation is in total harmony with the human nature, it allows the fine arts, the adornments, which God has created for the enjoyment and development of human faculties with in the bounds of decency and faith. Apart from human, a believer has to be kind with the animals(Sunnah Abu Dawood, Hadith.1065).

Before the advent of Islam the status of women in earlier civilizations was very low to the extent that they were denied basic human dignity. Under the Babylonian law, if a man murdered a woman, instead of him being punished, his wife was put to death. In the Greek Civilization, women were deprived of all rights and were looked down upon. In Greek mythology, an 'imaginary woman' called 'Pandora' is the root cause of misfortune of human beings. The Greeks considered women to be

subhuman to the extent that they were considered impure, and they were bought and sold in marketplaces. A woman could not refuse a husband chosen by her guardian and she could not disobey her husband in anyway. When Roman Civilization was at the zenith of its 'glory', a man even had the right to take the life of his wife. Prostitution and nudity were common amongst the Romans, the women did not have the right to own anything. If a woman had any property of her own, it was automatically transferred to the ownership of the head of the family. Later, in the reign of Justinian (483-565 C.E), women were given the right to retain what they earned through their own work, but money from other sources (gift etc) remained with the head of family. In Bible, Eve is considered responsible for the fall of Adam from grace (Genesis;3:1-7,12); hence as punishment she has to bear labor pain and serve men: "Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shall bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee"(Genesis;3:16). The word "Evil" is derived

accordingly. Islam repudiates that and makes Adam and Eve equally responsible for their actions. (Qur'an;2:36). As recently as 1805, the English law allowed the man to sell his wife. In the year 586 C.E that is when Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was still a young man, the French elegies organized a convention in which they discussed whether women were human or not. They concluded that a woman was a human being created only to serve men. Even after the French Revolution, in the late 18th century, the French law continued to consider that an unmarried woman was totally unqualified to enter into any contract without the consent of her guardian. The French law of the time stipulated that those who did not have legal status were "young boys, idiots and women." The Egyptian considered women evil and as a sign of a devil. Before the advent of Islam, the Arabs looked down upon women and very often when a female child was born, she was buried alive by some.

Islam has offered dignity, justice, and protection to women which had been denied to them since long. Although man and woman have been created

equal, but they are not identical. Both have been fashioned differently from each other, so their roles and responsibilities are also different. The variation in their functions does not imply that one is inferior to the other. In Islam, both men and women can rise in spiritual eminence and knowledge. Umme Warqa, a pious women, well versed in Qur'an had been acting as prayer leader (*Imam*) in the local area, with the permission of Prophet (peace be upon him). Mostly the women used to be in the congregation. An old man is known to deliver *Adhan* (prayer call). The Qur'anic address always applies to men and women equally, at times the women and men are also addressed together (Qur'an;33:35). The Muslim women are dressed up modestly which not only enhances their status to a respectable position but also help in controlling indecencies, forbidden in Islam. It may be kept in view that modest dress for women has always been a part of biblical traditions: "also that women should adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire."(1Timothy;2:9). Veil, as a covering

for the head was usually worn by Jewish women (Genesis;38:14). It was worn, as a token of modesty (Genesis;24:65), as a token of subjection (Corinthians;11:3,6-7,10) and for concealment (Genesis;38:14). The removing of veil was considered rude and insolent (Song of Solomon;5:7) and threatened as a punishment to ungodly women (Isaiah;3:23). It is also mentioned: “but any woman who prays or prophesies with her head unveiled dishonors her head -- it is the same as if her head were shaven”.(1 Corinthians;11:5). The nuns are still dressed modestly, like Mary, but the Christians are themselves defying Bible (Deuteronomy;22:5) by degrading the women through nudity and vulgarity.

Polygyny has been practiced since ages; the Bible did not condemn polygyny, to the contrary, the Old Testament and Rabbinic writings frequently attest to the legality of polygyny (1 Kings;11:3, 2 Samuel;5:13, Deutronomy;22:7). The Talmud advises a maximum of four wives. Nowhere in the New Testament is there any explicit commandment that marriage should be

monogamous or any explicit commandment forbidding polygamy. The Church in Rome banned polygamy in order to conform to the Greco-Roman culture (which prescribed only one legal wife while tolerating concubinage and prostitution). The Qur'an is the only religious book, that contains the phrase 'marry only one', (the legal permission for maximum of four) with instructions of 'justice' with all wives, which is difficult, hence a moral prohibition (Qur'an;4:2-3, 4:129). The Sunnah of Prophet and Companions indicate the existence of more than one wives, but may be that they could be fair at least in the matters of equitable provisions, however one can not control the heart, which may be more inclined to one wife over the others. Some Muslim countries have banned polygyny basing on the analogy of 'impossibility of equity and justice beyond human control (Qur'an;4:129). The concept of temporary marriage (*Mutt'a*) though permissible among Shi'a school is not permissible among four Sunni schools of jurisprudence. Qur'an has "tolerated" or "allowed" polygyny, and no more, it is not obligatory. There are places and times in which

there are compelling reasons for polygyny. In most societies, females outnumber males. Islam as a universal religion suitable for all places and all times couldn't ignore these compelling reasons. The polygyny in Islam is a matter of mutual consent, no one can force a woman to marry a married man. If a woman lays down the condition of monogyny, initially in the marriage contract (*Nikah*), it becomes binding upon man. Abul Abbas As-Saffah, the first Caliph of the Abbasid dynasty had promised his wife Umm-e-Salma that he will remain monogamous, she ensured that he adheres to the term even after becoming Caliph. The abuse of polygyny and repudiation of wife by the husband, even when her conduct is faultless, has recently led to the enactment of reformed family laws in most Muslim countries. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes the kind treatment of women.

Islam granted the right of divorce to women 1400 years ago, once no woman could dream of this freedom. Women were not allowed to bear witness in early Jewish society. In the Christian West, both ecclesiastical and civil law debarred women from giving testimony until late last century. In Islam the testimony of a woman is accepted as equal to that of

a man except in financial cases. In fact the woman's testimony can even invalidate the man's in certain cases. Among the pagan Arabs before Islam, inheritance rights were confined exclusively to the male relatives. Islam abolished all these unjust customs and gave all the female relatives inheritance shares. The payment of *Mehar* to the bride by groom without any upper limit, provide additional financial security to the women. Moreover as compared to men, Muslim woman is financially secure and provided for as a wife, mother, daughter or sister by her husband, son, father and brother respectively. Women are free to earn at their own free will; if they so desire: the expenses of house hold is the responsibility of man. Regrettably in some Muslim societies, the rights granted to the women by Islam are denied due to the local culture and traditions, Islam has nothing to do with this. The rights granted to women by Islam are unrivalled in the history of religion, evident from the fact that among the new converts to Islam in the West are women because in Islam the women are not subjugated but emancipated.

CHAPTER-6: ROLE IF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION IN HUMAN DEVELOPMEN

Islam encourages thinking and acquisition of knowledge, which also include the scientific knowledge (Qur'an;3:190-191). The Qur'an uses word '*Ulema*' only once, in the context of scholars, who ponder over the natural phenomena (scientist): "Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky with which We bring forth fruits of various colors? Similarly, in the mountains there are streaks of various shades including white, red, jet-black rocks. Likewise men, beasts and cattle have their different colors. In fact, only those among His servants who possess knowledge fear Allah; surely Allah is All-Mighty, All-Forgiving."(Qur'an;35:27,28). Hence the Islamic civilization enormously contributed towards the well being of humanity through advancements in all other fields including science and technology. The contributions in the advancement of knowledge by the Islamic scholars, scientists and philosophers are enormous, which have been summed up by Encyclopedia Britannica: "The

madrasahs (Islamic seminaries) generally offered instruction in both the religious sciences and other branches of knowledge. The contribution of these institutions to the advancement of knowledge was vast. Muslim scholars calculated the angle of the ecliptic; measured the size of the Earth; calculated the precession of the equinoxes; explained, in the field of optics and physics, such phenomena as refraction of light, gravity, capillary action, and twilight; and developed observatories for the empirical study of heavenly bodies. They made advances in the uses of drugs, herbs, and foods for medication; established hospitals with a system of interns and externs; discovered causes of certain diseases and developed correct diagnoses of them; proposed new concepts of hygiene; made use of anesthetics in surgery with newly innovated surgical tools; and introduced the science of dissection in anatomy. They furthered the scientific breeding of horses and cattle; found new ways of grafting to produce new types of flowers and fruits; introduced new concepts of irrigation, fertilization, and soil cultivation; and improved upon the science of navigation. In the area of

chemistry, Muslim scholarship led to the discovery of such substances as potash, alcohol, nitrate of silver, nitric acid, sulfuric acid, and mercury chloride. It also developed to a high degree of perfection the arts of textiles, ceramics, and metallurgy.” It further adds: “The decline of Muslim scholarship coincided with the early phases of the European intellectual awakening that these translations were partly instrumental in bringing about. The translation of most Islamic works into Latin during the 12th and 13th centuries had a great impact upon the European Renaissance. As Islam was declining in scholarship and Europe was absorbing the fruits of Islam's centuries of creative productivity, signs of Latin Christian awakening were evident throughout the European continent. The 12th century was one of intensified traffic of Muslim learning into the Western world through many hundreds of translations of Muslim works, which helped Europe seize the initiative from Islam when political conditions in Islam brought about a decline in Muslim scholarship. By 1300 C.E when all that was worthwhile in Muslim scientific,

philosophical, and social learning had been transmitted to European schoolmen through Latin translations, European scholars stood once again on the solid ground of Hellenistic thought, enriched or modified through Muslim and Byzantine efforts..... Most of the important Greek scientific texts were preserved in Arabic translations. Although the Muslims did not alter the foundations of Greek science, they made several important contributions within its general framework. When interest in Greek learning revived in Western Europe during the 12th and 13th centuries, scholars turned to Islamic Spain for the scientific texts. A spate of translations resulted in the revival of Greek science in the West and coincided with the rise of the universities. Working within a predominantly Greek framework, scientists of the late Middle Ages reached high levels of sophistication and prepared the ground for the scientific revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries.” According to Will Durant, the Western scholar, “For five centuries , from 700 to 1200 (C.E), Islam led the world in power, order

and extent of government, in refinement of manners, scholarship and philosophy”.

The Paradox:

Islam has been completed as a way of life (*Din*), through Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet (peace be upon him). At the time of Farewell Pilgrimage (632 C.E) at Makka, it was Revealed to the Prophet (peace be upon him): “..*Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favor upon you and approved Al-Islam as a Din* (way of life for you) (Qur'an;5:3). the Prophet (peace be upon him) is reported to have lived for eighty one days after this revelation, he did not receive any new order or commandments regarding permissible or prohibitions. Hence Islam does not require innovations in its doctrine (fundamentals of faith & pillars of Islam), teachings and worship rituals. The challenges of modern age can adequately be met by the competent scholars through *Ijtihad*; which is the ‘exercise of rational judgment with independent reasoning’ with in the framework of Qur'an and Sunnah. Islam emphasizes learning the religious

knowledge along with the other branches of knowledge. People involved in learning of religious sciences have been exempted for participation in war. Allah says: “It is not proper that all the believers take the field (in time of war). From every group within their midst some should refrain from going for the war, so that they may obtain the understanding of deeper knowledge of the Faith (Al-Islam), and teach their brethren when they return to them so that they may guard themselves (against evil)”(Qur’an;9:122). Muslims as inheritors of Qur’an are obliged to learn the message to pass on to others: “We have given the Book as an inheritance to those of Our servants (Muslims) whom We have chosen..”(Qur’an;35:32). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in his life time himself prepared the pious companions in the knowledge of Islam, who very keenly asked the questions to clarify their doubts. Apart from four rightly guided caliphs, there were many scribes of Qur’an like Zaid bin Thabit, knowledgeable men like Ibn Abbas and Abdullah bin Umar. The list of such learned companions is very long, running in to

hundreds. The treasure of valuable traditions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was carried from teacher to pupil, father to son and so on. It was segregated through an elaborate process known as the Science of Hadith and compiled in the form of books of authentic traditions (*Ahadith*) lead by Muhammad ibn Isma'il al- Bukhari (810-870 C.E), Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj (817-875 C.E), Abu Da`ud (817-889 C.E), Tirmidhi (d 892 C.E), Nasa'i (830-915 C.E) and Ibn Maja (824-886 C.E).

The traditional orthodox Islamic scholars (*Ulema*) of all schools of thought have always played very important role in up keep of Muslims and spread of message of Islam as guardians of treasure of knowledge. However they developed tendency to remain confined to their respective schools of thought, enjoying considerable influence over their followers. This Scholasticism (the close adherence to the methods, traditions, and teachings of a sect or school) became impediment in the growth of progressive faith of Islam to meet the challenges of modern developments. Many scholars, to name few like: Ibn Hazm (d 1064), Ghazzali (1058-1111) Zamakhshri (d 1144 C.E),

Fakhr al Din Razi (d 1209 C.E), Ibn Taymiyah (1263-1328), Ibn Kathir (d 1373 C.E) made valuable contributions to advance the Islamic scholarship and knowledge. Besides some isolated efforts here and there, overall there has been stagnation in the learning and development process with emphasis on conforming to the existing knowledge base compiled back in 8th & 9th centuries C.E. Islam encourages thought process, Allah says: "This Book (Al-Qur'an) which We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) is highly blessed, so that they may ponder upon its verses and the men of understanding may learn a lesson from it."(Qur'an;38:39). Though the efforts made by scholars like Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahhab (1703-1792 C.E) and Shah Wali Ullah (1703-1762 C.E) to revive the original spirit are noteworthy, however it must be kept in view that the main thrust of the efforts of Ulema have been mostly directed towards safeguarding and preserving the dogmatic, ritualistic and institutional structure of Islam writes Dr.Israr Ahmad: As regards fulfilling the requirements and demands of reviving Islam in the present Westernized milieu, and re-

establishing the ascendancy of the politic-socio-economic system of Islam, they are often unaware of even the existence of such need. Therefore, the services of the Ulema can be seen as a continuation of the efforts – like the services of present day Ulema are mainly focused on preservation rather than renaissance.

The respectable ancestors were justified in narrowing down their fields of activity because the cultural and legal system of Islam was still very much intact in those days, and the predominant need of their time was merely to preserve the religious faith in its original form and defend it against alien influences. As a result, all the past reformers concentrated their energies in the academic fields or at most in the moral and spiritual purification of common Muslims. None of them tried to launch any organized political or militant movement, as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had strict restrictions on such rebellion against Muslim rulers, as long as Shari'a was being enforced and no flagrant violation of Islam was being committed. It was not considered permissible to revolt even if the rulers are

themselves wicked and oppressive. Therefore as soon as the situation was changed and non Muslims started to conquer and occupy Muslim lands the reformist efforts quickly turned in to armed struggles, prominent among them are the Mujahideen movement of Sayyed Ahmad Shaheed (1786-1831) in India, the Sanussi movement in Libya by Syyid Muhammad Ibn Ali As-Sanussi (1787-1859) and struggle against Italian occupation up to 1932, the Mahdist movement initiated by Muhammad Ahmad (1844-1885) to resist British invasion in Sudan. Imam Shāmil (1797-1871) struggled against Russians occupation of Dagestan-Chechnya lasting for 25 years (1834-1859), which was again revived recently and goes on. The Afghan Jihad started in nineties, initially against Russians occupation, has turned against their benefactor US. The armed struggle in Palestine and Iraq against occupation forces, has also been colored by religious fervor. The recent misadventure by Israelis in Lebanon was thwart by Hizb-Allah, a militant out fit with religious spur.

It is obvious that even today the traditional Ulema are following in the footsteps of earlier reformers who had worked under completely different conditions. In other words traditional Muslim scholars have in general restricted themselves and their abilities within a rather narrow circle of activity which is essentially defensive rather than revivalist. Moreover even the task of defending Islamic doctrines is not being properly done by the Ulema as they are more often than not completely out of touch with developments in contemporary philosophical, social, and scientific thought. Imam Ghazzali (1058-1111 C.E) and Imam Ibn Taymiyah (1263-1328 C.E) were able to defeat the onslaught of Greek Philosophy and Aristotelian logic only after a careful and deep study of these invading ideas. Ibn Taymiyah employed a massive battery of philosophic, theological, and legal arguments against every shade of *Bid'ah* (deviation) and called for a return to the beliefs and practices of the pious ancestors. Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624 C.E) a reformer in India reemphasized Qur'anic orthodoxy and tempering Hindu pantheistic influences and reasserting what he deemed the

clear distinctions between God, man, and the world. Despite some impact, however, attempts of this kind remained isolated and were either ignored or reintegrated into the mainstream, until the coming of the modern reformers.

Unlike the doctrinal and philosophical movements of the Middle Ages, the modern movements were chiefly concerned with social and moral reform. The first such movement was the Wahhabi, named after its founder, Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, which emerged in Arabia in the 18th century and became a vast revivalist movement with offshoots throughout the Muslim world. The Wahhabi movement aimed at reviving Islam by purifying it of un-Islamic influences, particularly those that had compromised its original monotheism. Wahhabi theology and jurisprudence, based, respectively, on the teachings of Ibn Taymiyah and on the legal school of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, stress literal belief in the Qur'an and Hadith and the establishment of a Muslim state based only on Islamic law. Deoband School was founded in 1867 in India. The theological position of Deoband has always been heavily influenced by the 18th-

century Muslim reformer Shah Wali Allāh and the early 19th-century Indian *Wahhābiyah*, giving it a very puritanical and orthodox outlook. They have considerable influence in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It is generally perceived that the Taliban are influenced by them; but recently the Deoband has unanimously condemned and renounced all forms of terrorism declaring it to be un-Islamic.

Similarly in order to deal with the modern ideologies that are seeking to destroy the foundations of Islamic faith one needs to first clearly discriminate between what is and what is not against the spirit of the Qur'an. Afterwards one can refute that part of the invading ideologies which are in conflict with the Qur'anic spirit and to accept and incorporate after reconciling that part which is in accordance with its spirit in to a new and contemporary exposition of Islam without compromising on the fundamentals of Islam. Unfortunately this is not being done by the traditional scholars (Ulema). Dr.Israr Ahmed has rightly pointed out that; the role of Ulema today, instead of being that of an engine capable of

propelling the ship of Islam forward, is actually nothing more than that of a heavy anchor which prevents the ship from drifting away in any wrong direction. Although, under the present circumstances, even this is a commendable and substantial service, the fact remains that this is by no means enough. Another aspect of the activity of Ulema that needs correction is their usually strong emphasis on sectarian matters. A serious stagnation of thought along with dogmatism has set in, ever since the practice of Ijtihad ('independent reasoning' as opposed to '*taqlid*'-imitation) was done away with. The religious seminaries and Ulema of every sect are therefore spending most of their time and energies in defending and propagating their particular brands of dogma and rituals, often insisting that any variation in such matters is nothing short of apostasy. The doctrine of *Takfir*; is being used in the modern era in sanctioning violence against leaders of Islamic states who are deemed insufficiently religious. *Takfir* is a pronouncement that, some one is an unbeliever (*kafir*) and no longer a Muslim. It has become a central ideology

of militant groups such as those in Egypt (now also in Afghanistan and adjoining tribal areas of Pakistan) which is claimed to be derived from the ideas of Sayyid Qutab. Mainstream Muslims and Islamic groups reject the concept as a doctrinal deviation. Leaders such as Hassan al-Hudaybi (d.1977) and Yousf al-Qaradawi reject '*Takfir*' as un-Islamic and marked by bigotry and zealotry. Such narrow mindedness has exacerbated the evil of sectarianism and the resulting intolerance among the masses has led to a dangerous trend towards sectarian militancy.

The 19th and 20th-century reformers include Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905), but Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938), is the first modern Muslim philosopher to deal with the intellectual challenges faced by Muslim Ummah in any comprehensive manner. He made an effort to address the real issues, by saying: "With the reawakening of Islam, therefore, it is necessary to examine, in an independent spirit, what Europe has thought and how far the conclusions reached there can help us in the revision and if necessary, reconstruction, of

theological thought in Islam.” Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958) initiated struggle for Islamic revival in India, but was discouraged due to opposition by some traditional Ulema, he got disillusioned and gave up the struggle to join nationalist politics of India. The twentieth century revivalist movement of *Jama'at-e-Islami* by Abul A'la Moududi (1903-1979) in India, later in Pakistan and *Ikhwan al Muslimun* in Egypt by Hassan Al-Banna in 1928 have left lasting impact. Some organization operating in Algeria, Palestine, Lebanon, Chechnya, Philippines, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics and elsewhere getting inspiration from these movements have developed radical out look, despite differences and disagreement in their approach, their significance can not be ignored. The Iranian revolution has its own importance and long term implications.

Due to lack of interest in religion by the Muslims in general and the rulers in particular, and later colonization of large part of Muslim world, the responsibility to acquire even basic knowledge of Islam was left to the religious scholars only. The *Madaris* which produced the scholars like Jabir

ibn Hayyan, Abu Musa Al-Khwarizmi (Algorizm), Ibn Ishaq Al-Kindi (Alkindus), Ar-Razi, Al-Farabi, Alhazen, Al-Biruni, Avicenna, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) and many more, by teaching all branches of knowledge including mathematic, algebra, astronomy, science and technology, medicine and social sciences along with religious sciences, philosophy and logic, teaching in *Madaris* was restricted to religious sciences only. This void created a new class of semiliterate religious scholars (*mullah*) devoid of knowledge of science, political, economic, social and other fields, so important for the smooth management of Muslim societies. Instead of leading the prayers (*salah*) and delivering the weekly sermon (*khutba*) on Fridays, the Muslim rulers encouraged and created a class of *Mullahs* (religious teachers, cleric) with priestly tendencies alien to Islam. Mostly these semi literate people are leading prayers in mosques as prayer leader (*Imam*), the function which can be performed by any Muslim. Since ordinary Muslims are dependent upon Mullah for the socio-religious functions like Nikah (marriage contract), reciting *Adhan* (prayer call)

and Qur'anic verses in the ear of new born babies, washing the dead, burial prayer etc, the Mullah enjoys considerable influence over ordinary Muslims. While delivering sermons, specially on weekly Friday prayer congregation they do not hesitate to deliver talk on any topic be it politics, economics, social, sexual relations or international affairs without much background knowledge. No one among the audience, even an expert can dare to disagree or challenge the *Mullah*, because it may result in dire consequences like being falsely declared as apostate, liable to be killed. Many such incidence have been reported in press. They are main contributor of sectarianism, intolerance and militancy, though there are some exceptionally knowledgeable and tolerant among them as well. The Russian occupation of Afghanistan resulted in creation of Mujahideen by USA. After Russians defeat, they started fighting among themselves for power, using the name of Islam. This resulted in emergence of Taliban, the students of seminaries (*madaris*) which produce Mullah, a sort of professional priest. However it would be a great fallacy to brand all the seminaries

(*madaris*) as source of trouble, most of them are doing good job. The taste of power has now made Taliban to continue fighting whosoever oppose them be it Russians, Americans or Muslim brothers. Talibanization has affected the tribal areas of Pakistan as well, they are using suicide bombers as tool for killing of innocent fellow Muslims in violation of Islamic principles. This menace can not be tackled by more violence. The reforms of religious seminaries (*madaris*), are overdue to include modern and technical education to the students along with the religious education. The graduates of these institutions should not only be looking for a mosque to earn their livelihood as *Imam* (priest), but may join other professions as well. There is strong need of policy shift at the national and international level to bring them to mainstream. The superfluous priesthood, (the form it has taken now) has to be restricted by the society whereby each Muslim should acquire normal religious knowledge to perform routine religious functions and reduce dependence on Mullah. A class of genuine religious scholars well versed in the theology and

comparative religions should always be an asset for *Ijtihad*, guidance and education of the masses in their religious obligations. The massive religious mobilization by *Tablighi Jama't*, by and large is playing an important role with in the larger process of Islamic Renaissance, with regards to its effort for the regeneration of fundamentals of faith among the masses, though some people express reservations. The efforts of non traditional scholars due to their rational appeal for the educated people is highly commendable. Many modern educated Muslims have been encouraged to come closer to Islam.

The Broader Perspective:

A true Muslim adheres to the convictions, the religious beliefs; confession of faith or the basic article of Muslim faith and practices. The sources of the Islamic Creed are Qur'an and Sunnah (the life, actions and sayings of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him). Islam does not teach an exclusive doctrine, and is not meant exclusively for any single race or people. The Jews claimed their faith for themselves, and the Christianity in the

beginning was a sect of the Jews. Even the modern organized Christian churches, though they have been, consciously or unconsciously, influenced by the Time-spirit, including the historical fact of Islam, yet cling to the idea of Vicarious Atonement, which means that all who do not believe; that Jesus died on Cross as a sacrifice to get rid the humanity of Original Sin, or who lived previously to the death of Christ are spiritually at a disadvantage. The approach of Islam is entirely different. Islam existed before the preaching of Muhammad (peace be upon him) on this earth: the Qur'an expressly asks Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to follow the religion of Prophet Abraham, peace be upon him (Qur'an;16:123). It should be kept in view that the Night Journey of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from Mecca to Jerusalem, immediately preceding his Ascension to heavens (*mair'aj*), was evidently meant to show that Islam is not a new doctrine but a continuation of the same divine message which was preached by the prophets of old, who had Jerusalem as their spiritual home, This view is supported by Traditions (quoted in

Fath al-Bari VII, 158), according to which the Prophet (peace be upon him), during his Night Journey, also offered prayers at Yathrib, Sinai, Bethlehem, etc. His meeting with other prophets, mentioned in this connection, symbolize the same idea. The well-known Traditions to the effect that on the occasion of his Night Journey the Prophet (peace be upon him) led a prayer in the Temple of Jerusalem (Al Aqsa Mosque; The distant place of worship), in which all other prophets ranged themselves behind him, expresses in a figurative manner the doctrine that Islam, as preached by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), is the fulfillment and perfection of mankind's religious development. He was the last and the greatest of God's message-bearers. Islam is the best *Din* (way of life) because its teachings are not restricted to doctrinaire rhetoric but practical solutions for the problems of mankind at the individual and collective levels. Islam offers the best way of life because it is a practical, universal religion not confined to any ethnic group or nationality but to the humanity, ever since its existence; hence also called the natural faith or the

eternal faith. Therefore Islam should be viewed in its broader perspective as true legacy of Abraham for peace and salvation of humanity. Allah says: “Verily this Brotherhood of yours (Muslims) is a single Brotherhood and I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore serve Me Alone”(Qur’an;21:92).

CHAPTER-7: CONCLUSION

God, the Supreme Creator, who created the universe and governs it, has endowed the humanity with the gift of natural instincts of His existence. All the beautiful names in any language, signifying the attributes of perfection belongs to Him, by whichever name He is invoked, (He is always the One-for). In Hebrew traditions He has been called 'El 'Elyon', 'El Shadda' 'Yahweh'(Jehovah), "elohiym', 'Adonai' (My Lord, translated as 'Kyrios' in Greek). In Qur'an besides being named as 'Allah', He is has been addressed with more than 99 names like; *Ar-Rahman* (The Merciful), *Al- Hayy* (The Ever Living), *Al-Qayyum* (The Self-Subsistent), *As-Samad* (The Eternal Absolute)... signifying His attributes of perfection. Existence of God, remains the center of attention of people for rational understanding. In the Hindu scripture (Upanishads), 'Brahman' is the eternal, infinite, and omnipresent spiritual source of the finite and changing universe. God is infinite, incomprehensible; His essence is beyond the perception through the physical human senses.

Human eye can not see Him. Infinite can not be comprehended by finite human cognizance. Hence what ever theories about existence of God are evolved, they remain within the ambit of human intellect for understanding in the parables and allegories which remain far from the reality as “there is none comparable to Him”. God is not a ‘being’ like any creatures or thing known to human. Hence in the light of knowledge revealed by Him, the man has come to understand that the God can be comprehended through ‘His works’ or ‘signs’. The God of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) is the Supreme Creator and Sustainer of all the universe and the creatures. He is unique, single, He does not beget nor is He begotten, He does not have any associate, and there is none like Him. He is worshiped without symbols or images, not confined to a place or direction.

The existence of Allah, has been embedded in human nature, hence many African tribes believe in One Supreme God and worship Him without images. Existence of the Supreme Creator, is evident from the existence of human, with all the complexities and the numerous signs all around;

what one has to do is, just to ponder over them and use common sense. The galaxies, the stars, sun, moon the earth, their rotation, movement, the balance of planets through gravitational system, changing of day to night, rains, winds, life, death and many more, all this can not exist by chance. There is some one All Powerful who has created all this with a purpose and ordained laws to govern the universe; He is Allah, The Mighty, All Powerful. However these signs are not perceptible to the rebellious people because they have shut the doors of wisdom and rational thought. The thinkers have developed the rational arguments for the existence of God i.e. Cosmological, Teleological, Ontological, through Morality, Probability and Religious Experience. However God sent the messengers and revealed scriptures. Among them Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) the great patriarch asserted the strict monotheism While Jews and Christians claim to be his followers, but it is Islam which can claim to be the true legacy of Abraham. He granted miracles to the messengers but most people did not believe in them by calling them sorcery. The

later generations consider them just myths. Allah granted the ever living miracle ‘Qur’an’ to His last messenger. Qur’an is excellent in eloquence, full of wisdom, guidance and mercy. It provides the warning, acts as reminder and criterion to distinguish the truth from falsehood. It is protected from tempering, hence available in the original revealed form from fourteen centuries, the claim no scripture can boast. The miraculous powers of Qur’an can be experienced by any believer with insight. The Qur’an is book of ‘signs’, not of ‘science’, however there are over thousand verses (*ayaat*-Signs) which refer to various subjects of science, mostly proved recently, its amazing! Those who ponder over Qur’an, will continue to get wisdom, guidance and blessings.

Man has always been curious about the source and cause of creation of universe. Scientists have developed the theories like, ‘Big Bang’, ‘Expanding Universe’ and ‘Steady-State’ theories. The thinkers and theologians have also evolved concepts, doctrine and myths of creation of universe based on their imagination, knowledge and superstition. Creation by the Supreme Creator is a popular

doctrine among many cultures, especially among the Abrahamic faiths. The Qur'anic narrative of creation is also supported by the scientific theories. The creation of the universe and humanity may be understood as a part of 'Grand Design' of God, based upon balance, Justice and Mercy. According to Islamic perspective, God has created the humanity, to live in this world in total obedience to the will of God, which is His worship in wider perspective apart from the obligatory rituals. This is the trial of humanity, which will entitle them for reward in hereafter, paradise for the successful believers and hell for the sinners and disbelievers. God has granted freedom of choice to the people by providing guidance through human instincts, intellect, messengers and the scriptures, resulting in individual responsibility and accountability. However He accepts repentance of sinners and forgive them. The story of Adam and Eve is, in reality, a symbol of human future. The growth of his consciousness—symbolized by the willful act of disobedience to command of God changed all this. It transformed him from a purely instinctive being into a human

capable of distinguishing truth from falsehood and thus opt for the way of life.

God sent messengers to every nation to warn them. The message of all the messengers sent to different nations at different times had been same, to worship One God and follow His guidance for success in this life and hereafter. Over the period, this message got distorted. The nation of Prophet Noah (peace be upon him) was destroyed through floods for their rebelliousness. After Noah, people followed the right path for some period but again indulged in idolatry and other malpractices. Many nations were destroyed for their disobedience to the teachings of their prophets. Finally; during 18th century B.C; Abraham a resident of Ur (Iraq), renounced idols and discovered existence of One God, through his rational thinking, intellect and blessings of God. After his success in trials, Abraham (peace be upon him) was appointed as messenger of God and granted the leadership of mankind, through Covenant, this leadership role was also to be carried forward by the pious people from his progeny excluding the evil doers. He migrated to

Canaan (Western Palestine), died and buried there at Hebron. He was blessed with sons, Ishmael and Isaac (peace be upon them) at old age. He prepared to offer his only son, Ishmael (peace be upon him) for sacrifice as desired by God, this gesture of supreme sacrifice was accepted by Allah and a ram was substituted. In remembrance of this event, Muslims offer sacrifice of animal on *Eid Ul Adha* and perform Hajj (Pilgrimage). Prophet Abraham with Ishmael (peace be upon them) built Ka'ba (House of worship of Allah) at Mecca, where he had left his young son with his mother Hager, he also prayed for the appointment of messenger from among them (this is reference to Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him). He along with his other son Prophet Isaac (peace be upon him) and his progeny settled in Canaan.

God sent many messengers in the progeny of his grandson Prophet Jacob (also known as Israel and his decedents called Children of Israel or Israelites) like Prophet Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon up to Jesus Christ (peace be upon them all) being the last. Torah was revealed to Prophet Moses, Psalms to Prophet David and Gospel to

Prophet Jesus Christ (peace be upon them all) for the guidance of Israelites (known as Jews, after destruction of northern kingdom of Israel in 721 BC) by Assyrians. Initially children of Israel undertook this mission but they persistently indulged in disobedience, rebelliousness and deliberate corruption of revealed scriptures. They even tried to kill Prophet Jesus (peace be upon him) but God raised him up to Himself. The Christian also corrupted the scripture and message of Jesus by inventing doctrine of Trinity. Thus Allah changed the leadership role from the Children of Israel to the Children of Prophet Ishmael (peace be upon him) by appointing Muhammad, peace be upon him (an Arab, from the progeny of Ishmael) as His last messenger and revealed Qur'an to him. This was fulfillment of prayer of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him). Islam, (total submission and surrender to the will of God) is not a new faith introduced by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), it is the faith preached by all prophets of God from Adam--Noah--Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac-- Moses--Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

Islam is the legacy of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him), who was neither a Jew nor Christians (these religions did not exist then), but he had totally surrendered to the will of God (Islam). Islamic faith is based upon sound philosophy, doctrines and practices successfully practiced the world over for centuries. The Islamic root of affirmation is based on the conviction upon unity of Allah. In order to be a Muslim, one has to affirm his belief in Allah (One God), His invisible creatures, the angels, His books (Qur'an, Torah, Psalms and original Gospel of Jesus), His messengers including all Biblical prophets up to Jesus and the last messenger Muhammad (peace be upon him), Resurrection after death on the Day of Judgment, accounting and the scales, hell, paradise and that the good and evil of destiny are in power of Allah Most High. Islam stands on the five obligatory pillars (principles), which are also the forms of worship; the first two; Creed of Confession and five daily Prayers are daily, next two, Charity (*Zakah*) and Fasting (*Saum*) are annual and the last, Pilgrimage (*Hajj*, tradition of Abraham, peace be upon him) is once in life, for

those who can afford. The Islamic doctrine of predestination is based upon absolute knowledge and power of God to execute His Will and Plan, while professing the 'Limited Free Will' granted to man. If the action is not done by the individual's free will, then rewarding the pious and punishing the evildoer is an injustice, God is Just. In Christianity, Predestination is the doctrine that; God has long ago determined who will be saved and who will be damned. This doctrine of 'predestination' or 'election' is beset with many difficulties, considered to belong to the "secret things" of God. In Christian theology, Grace is the unmerited gift of divine favor, which brings about the salvation of a sinner. The salvation is considered to be belief in Jesus, his death at cross, resurrection and divinity being son of God as part of Trinity. Islam links salvation to the Mercy of Allah for those having Faith (*ayman*): belief in Oneness of God and the other articles of faith; practice five pillars of Islam and the performance of good deeds, while avoiding evil.

Racism and violence is discouraged in Islam, for the Qur'an speaks of human equality, the criteria

of superiority is piety (Qur'an;49:13). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in his last sermon said; "You know that every Muslim is the brother of another Muslim. You are all equal. Nobody has superiority over other, except by piety and good action". God has entrusted the Muslims to be the best and moderate community among mankind; they are required to enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. As custodian of legacy of Prophet Abraham (peace be upon him) and bearers of the Divine trust, Muslims are expected to play leading role, in extending the message of guidance for the betterment of humanity. Islam is a way of life, which provides code covering complete spectrum of human life including social, economic, political, moral, legal, and spiritual and all other aspects. The belief in Islam and performance of good deeds are the means of seeking divine Grace and salvation in hereafter. History is witness that Islam inspired emergence of dynamic civilization. The ideologies cultures and civilizations based upon human thoughts and laws have failed to provide peace, dignity, equality and justice to the humanity, because they discard

the life hereafter. Islam practically demonstrated achievement of these ideals through the first Muslim society, established in the form of a state, by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), which continued to be maintained by the four rightly guided caliphs (632-661 C.E). The Islamic civilization became the most dominant power for more than thousand years and immensely influenced the humanity as a whole including the Renaissance of Europe.

As long as the Muslims adhered to the tenets of Islam and kept their supremacy in knowledge; they lead the world. However Muslims lost the power and glory due to their negligence, mismanagement, corruption, illiteracy, internal dissidence and non adherence to the doctrines of Islam; resultantly most of the Muslim countries were colonized and their resources exploited by the colonial powers during last five centuries. Though at present most of the Muslim countries are free from colonial oppression but the legacy continues. Today Muslims are mostly part of underdeveloped third world threatened by neocolonialism. The Muslim world, in addition to

socioeconomic problems like poverty, illiteracy and economic deprivation have been deliberately embroiled in the major politico-military conflicts at Palestine, Kashmir Chechnya, Afghanistan, Iraq, Philippines, Thailand and elsewhere. Besides their numerical strength of around 1.5 billion, the Muslims are also holding major sources of energy and other mineral resources. They are located at strategically important geographical areas, centers of population- civilizations and international routes of trade and commerce. The Muslim world does not possess adequate political, military, industrial, technological and economic strength compatible with their ideology, culture, history, and stature, at international level, which is an impediment in peaceful resolution of their problems.

Jihad is the most misunderstood tenet of Islam, which has erroneously been made controversial. Jihad (Strenuous Efforts) is only made for the cause of Allah. Jihad neither implies fighting and killing non believers for forced conversion nor that every armed action conducted by Muslims is Jihad as commonly misconceived. The warfare is also

permissible in the Bible: (Leviticus;26:7-8, Ezakhel;9:6, Psalm;149:6-9, Hebrews;11:32-34, Numbers; 31:17-18, 31:35, Joshua;6:21, 10:28, Mathew;10:34, 26:51, Luke;12:49, 51). Jihad has wider meanings than merely fighting: The first and foremost Jihad is to; ‘Strive Against Selfish Desires’: Secondly, to convey the message of Islam to the humanity(*Dawah*). Thirdly; to fight against oppression and for the freedom of invitation and worship of God. Allah says: “And what reason do you have not to fight in the cause of Allah, to rescue the helpless oppressed old men, women, and children who are crying: "Our Lord! Deliver us from this town whose people are oppressors; send us a protector by Your grace and send us a helper from Your presence?”(Qur’an;4:75). The concept of *Jihad* was yet used by some medieval Muslim rulers to justify wars motivated by purely political ambitions. Islam has laid down the basic rules for the conduct of warfare which are most humane, unprecedented in the history of warfare, like: Prohibitions of killing of religious people, women, children, aged, sick people, animals and cutting trees (Al Muwata Hadith. Number;21.10), Suicide

is not permissible(Qur'an;4:29, Sahih Al Bukhari Hadith Numbr:8.126); Killing by burning is not allowed (Sahih Al Bukhari, Hadith, Number.4.260); Mutilation of the dead bodies is prohibited (Sahih Muslim Hadith.804). Hence linking noble concept of Jihad, (for the cause of Allah) as prescribed by Qur'an and Sunnah, with in laid down rules, with terrorism would be the biggest misnomer.

The Islamic doctrine of Jihad, was revived and nourished by USA in the eighties by recruiting Mujahideen (Muslim guerrilla warriors) from all over the Muslim world. They were trained, armed and launched in to Afghanistan with close cooperation of Pakistan and support of USA her Western allies and Saudi Arabia to defeat USSR. This ultimately became the main cause of collapse of USSR and Communism; the rival ideology to the Western Capitalism. The Jihadis (Muslim warriors) were mostly illiterate, having very little knowledge of Islam, social sciences, international affairs, power- geopolitics and economic affairs. Once they were abandoned by their patrons (USA), they chalked out their own agenda: Firstly,

to protect their Muslims brethren against foreign occupation, injustice, oppression, tyranny and exploitation. Secondly; to advance their strict version of Islam (commonly known as Talibanization) against Muslim brothers through violence, strictly prohibited in Islam. After 9/11, the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq by USA and collation partners under the pretext of war against terror resulted in the overthrow of their government leaving these armed warriors groups to go underground and conduct gorilla warfare. These stateless armed groups are operating independently, justification apart, their conduct of warfare in violation to the laid down Islamic principles remains a hot topic of intense debate. No one seems to be making serious efforts to redress the root causes, like; oppression of Muslims, injustice, illiteracy, insecurity, economic disparity, non representative and corrupt Muslim rulers, un-Islamic mode of governance, foreign occupation of Muslim lands, lack of human rights and exploitation of their natural resources. Instead, the military solution is being sought at immense financial and human cost further adding

to the miseries of the poor Muslims, thus providing fresh recruits for the warfare. This cycle needs to be reversed by winning the hearts, so that the human energies and resources are diverted towards peace and development to enable the Muslims to conduct the Bigger Jihad (*Jihad Kabira*), through Qur'an, by practicing and preaching the message of Qur'an.

The keen interest shown by non Muslims in Islam and the revival of strong desire among the believers to practice Islamic doctrine has resulted in renaissance of Islam, which is considered a threat, through the theory of clash of civilization, being projected by some crazy thinkers. What clash! the clash is between belligerents with same level of strength or some what closer in military strength. The Muslim world is no match to the Western economic, industrial, technological and military power, they pose no threat to them militarily. Islam also means 'Peace', it does not believe in thrusting itself upon others by force. It is due to the inherent strength of its divine origin, purity, rationale philosophy and doctrines that the truth of Islam stands out. Allah says: "And say:

"Truth has (now) arrived, and falsehood perished: for falsehood is (by its nature) bound to perish."(Qur'an;17:81). In this era of materialism, a large number of people (mostly women) are getting attracted towards Islam for spiritual satisfaction and to lead a successful, life here and hereafter. Despite all the hostility and propaganda, Islam remains the fastest growing religion in Europe and North America.

Views of some Western scholars accentuate the importance of Islam, Will Durant writes: "For five centuries, from 700 to 1200 (C.E), Islam led the world in power, order and extent of government, in refinement of manners, scholarship and philosophy". Professor Gibb states: "No other society has such a record of success in uniting in equality of status, opportunity and enduring so many and so various races of humanity". According to Duncan Greenless: "The nobility and broad minded tolerance of this creed (Islam) which accepted as God inspire all the real religions of the world will always be glorious heritage of mankind". Muslims as the true inheritors of the legacy of Abraham, preached and practiced by

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) available in the form of his Sunnah and Qur'an, which is Allah's last book of guidance for the humanity. The Prophet (peace be upon him) in his last sermon said: "O' People, no prophet or apostle will come after me and no new faith will be born. ... All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others and those to others again; and may the last ones understand my words better than those who listen to me directly". The Muslims should become conscious of the universal perspective of Islam to effectively discharge their obligations and pray: "Our Lord! Do not punish us if we forget or make a mistake. Our Lord! Do not place on us a burden as You placed on those before us. Our Lord! Lay not on us the kind of burden that we have no strength to bear. Pardon us, Forgive us, Have mercy on us. You are our Protector, help us against the unbelievers."(Qur'an;2:286). Hence they should not only read, understand, believe, obey and preserve but also propagate the true message of Qur'an for the peace and benefit of humanity, so that the humanity also view Islam in its broader

universal perspective and let it play its role for the peace and development of mankind.

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The Creator:

The idea of a Supreme Power who is the First Cause of all things, the Creator and Ruler of heaven and earth has always been part of human nature from the beginning. The belief on God was followed by His worship in different cultures. The relation of a group of human beings to God or the gods or to whatever they consider sacred or, in some cases, merely supernatural is known as religion. The beliefs supporting the existence of God or against it, including the middle positions have resulted in an array of doctrines, the most prominent among them are; Theism, Monotheism, Theodicy, Deism, Agnosticism and Atheism. The main issue which have remained the center of attention of believers of the God has been; How to prove the existence of God rationally? This has been dilated upon in this book. The Abrahamic religions e.g., Judaism, Christianity, and Islam attempt to satisfy human quest through the Revealed knowledge received by the prophets and messengers of God. While exploring the historic development in theosophical and scientific aspects about 'The God' and 'The Creation' specifically in the three religions linked to Abraham. Islam emerges as true legacy of Abraham contrary to the common perception that it was a new religion founded by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). This book is first of four in the series, the other being; The

Creation, The Guidance and Islam: The Legacy of Abraham.

The Creation:

Man has always been inquisitive about the origin and creation of universe to which earth is just a small part. The whole cosmic system of matter and energy is called universe. Its main constituents are the galaxies, within which are stars and stellar groupings and nebulae. Earth's Sun is one star among the billions of stars in the Milky Way Galaxy. In this book the traditional narratives and myths of Creation, Scientific & theosophical theories have been explained, The Grand Design of creation include, Qur'anic and Biblical narrative of creation and their comparative analysis. Synthesis of Islamic & scientific narrative of creation is revealing. Other subjects include human creation; Origin of life, Theory of Evolution and Refutation by Christians; the Islamic perspective include in favor and opposing views, which may appear to be new to some readers. Further corollary is my latest work "[Universe, Science & God](#)".

The Guidance: Does human need to be guided? If so, how? It is said that human is a thinking, rational animal. He knows what is right and what is wrong, so does he/she need some additional source of Guidance? Some say 'No', while others say 'Yes' and still there are who say 'I Don't know'. The Book "Guidance" includes, natural guidance, miracles & signs; The brief on the messengers of God; from Adam – Noah – Abraham – Ishmael – Isaac – Jacob -Moses –

David, Solomon - John The Baptist (peace be upon them all), Prophet Jesus Christ, The Son of Mary (peace be upon him) and The Last Messenger; Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Sacred Scriptures. i.e. The Bible and Qur'an have been briefly introduced.

Islam: The Legacy of Abraham:

Humanity has been blessed with the instincts and intellect to rationally identify and believe in the existence of a Supreme Creator and Sustainer through the signs within and all around. The man endeavors to live the life within the desired parameters to achieve His pleasure, the objective of his creation. This original religion was revived: Islam, in its unique spirit of monotheism, fourteen hundred years ago in concordance with the light of reason; exclusive of mysterious doctrines to cast a shade of sentimental ignorance round the original truths rooted in the human intellect, representing the latest development of the religious faculties. The Book "Islam: The Broader Perspective"; includes the Islam of Prophet Abraham, refutation of Prophet Jesus Christ by Jews, evolution of Christianity, revival of Legacy of Abraham (pbuh) by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Its doctrines, practices and the concept of Predestination has been debated. The other subjects include; Jihad, Shari'a , Priesthood, Human Rights and role of Islamic civilization in the development of humanity and the modern challenges.

Universe Science & God:

“Soon shall We show them OUR SIGNS in the UNIVERSE and in their OWN SELVES, until it becomes clear to them that this QUR’AN IS INDEED THE TRUTH. Is it not enough that your Lord is a witness over everything?”(Qur’an;41:53); “We did not create heaven and earth and everything between them to no purpose. That is the opinion of those who disbelieve...” (Qur’an; 38: 27), “Verily in the heavens and the earth are Signs for those who believe. (Qur’an; 45:3). “To God belongs the Mystery of the heavens and the earth. And the Decision of the Hour (of Judgment) is as the twinkling of an eye, or even quicker: for God hath power over all things.” (Qur’an; 16:77). “Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And God hears and knows all things.” (Qur’an; 2:255).

Science is beginning to see the entire universe as an interlinked network of energy and information. Our capacity for fulfillment can come only through faith and feelings. But our capacity for survival must come from reason and knowledge." The follower of 3 great monotheistic faiths believe that God created the universe and governs it as per His laid down rules. The atheists reject such a set of beliefs. In philosophy there are many rational, metaphysical, logical, empirical, or subjective arguments for the existence of God. Interestingly the conclusions reached by science recently were mentioned 1400 years ago in the last Testament; The

Quran which provides theological, philosophical and scientific evidence of existence of God. To derive maximum benefit it is suggested that the book may be read with an open mind keeping aside the existing ideas.

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Islam:

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