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ISLAM FOR ALL

Book 1 - RETURNING YOUR TRUST

*Book 2 - ANSWERS TO MOST COMMON QUESTIONS ASKED
BY NON MUSLIMS*

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About the Book

Islam as a universal religion meant for all mankind inhabiting God's earth. It is a way of life, applicable to each and anyone and akin to a compass, guiding our lives in this world and in the hereafter.

The book Islam for All writes about "Returning Your Trust" and "Answers to Most Common Questions Asked by Non-Muslims" would enlighten Muslims and Non-Muslim on all there is to know about Islam in a simple and convincing manner. With understanding comes acceptance which gives rise to wisdom that results in peace and harmony among mankind and their bonding with God.

The truth would only surface when this book is read without prejudice.

Preface

In the name of Allah swt, Most Gracious Most Merciful.

How would you react if you were to see a child coming barefoot and about to step into a tiny burning ember smouldering on the ground? Obviously you would at once rush to the child and sweep him off into your arms. And, what a huge sense of relief and satisfaction would you experience by thus drawing him away from the flames.

In much the same way, if a man were about to be burnt and torched up in the fire, you would be terribly upset. Your heart, your whole being would reach out to him in agony and compassion. Ever thought why this happens? It happens because all of us, men and women are off springs of the same parents, the same first couple who first inhabited the earth. But this happens because of another reason too, the reason which lies cradled in our heart. Yes, the heart.

Each of us has a beautiful heart that beats and this heart is a brim with love, compassion and mercy. This heart writhes and bleeds at another's pain and blossoms forth like a flower with joy while helping others. Such is our heart in its original state. It follows then that a true human being is he of such a person becomes an act of service to the human race. He gets restless at someone's pain and sorrow. To erase the pain, somehow we become his urgent concern and immediate objective of life.

Man's life in this world is transient and too short lived. Post death, he would get another life which is permanent. In that after life, he cannot attain paradise if he has not worshipped and obeyed his true Master, the One God. Rather, he would have to become the fuel of hell fire forever. Today, millions of people are in the race for becoming the fuel of the hell fire. They are blundering up a path that heads straight to hell. In such a scenario, it is a case of conscience for all lovers of humanity who believe in the human bond to come forward and discharge their obligation of salvaging those who are heading towards hell.

The author of this book Muhammad Kaleem Siddiqui is a person consumed with passion and compassion to rescue man from that fire. In this book, he has placed some flowers in your hands and his love for mankind can be clearly felt in them, a duty that is upon all of us as true humans.

With these words, I place before you these pieces of a heart and return to you what is yours, your trust, and your legacy.

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Book 1 - Returning Your Trust

By Maulana Kaleem Siddiqui

Chapter 1 - My Apologies

My dear readers! Please forgive me. I apologise to you. On my own behalf and on behalf of the entire Muslim community, I sincerely apologise for not handing over to you your greatest wealth. This happened due to the trappings of Satan. Satan planted in our hearts a disregard for the sinner and instead of a disregard for the sin, and he thus converted the entire world into one huge battle field.

A realisation of our failure propelled me to pick up the pen today with the intention of delivering your due right back to you and to say a few words of love and fellow feeling free from any self-interest.

As I place these pages in your hands. He Who is the Real Master Who knows the state of each heart is a Witness here and now, that I truly wish to do that which my sincere concern for you, demands of me. The distress of not being able to reach out to you so far, has given me many sleepless nights. You have a heart. Turn to it and ask it about the truth of my words. The heart always speaks the truth.

Chapter 2 - A Word of Love

Needless to say, it is my deep desire that you see and read my words of love through eyes of love. For God's sake, for the sake of the Master and Creator of this world, please stop and ponder awhile so that my heart and soul may get some peace in the thought that I have delivered a "trust" back to a brother or a sister and thus, acquitted myself of an obligation which was due upon me as a human.

I now wish to convey to you a beautiful fact. This fact in reality is the greatest truth of which man needs to be conscious and which he needs to believe in after stepping into this world. And, be aware of this truth in man's responsibility too. I wish to speak to you about this lovely truth.

Chapter 3 - Nature's Greatest Truth

Nature's greatest truth, the supreme truth of this cosmos, is that the Creator and Organiser of the universe and its creatures is the One and the only Master, One God.

He is the sole and singular in all His qualities. None else is His associate or partner in creating and managing this world, in creating creatures and in giving them life and death. He is a Power Who is Omni-present and Omniscient. He hears all, sees all. Not a leaf stirs sans His consent. Every man's soul, inner being acknowledges this.

Be he a believer in One God or a worshipper of idols, he surely knows deep down within him and believes that the Nourisher and the Real Master is but "One" only.

A person's intellect too refuses to accept anything other than this that the world's master and Creator is One. The logic is plain. Take the case of the school which has two principles or a village having two Heads. They cannot function at all. Their functioning is disrupted and in turmoil. For that matter, nations also cannot have two Kings or two Presidents or Prime Ministers.

How then can the affairs of such a vast universe be managed by more than One God or by many masters? How can there be many directors and managers of the world?

Chapter 4 - Here is the Evidence

God's own declarations. His own Word is the first evidence (of His Oneness). Yes, His Word - the Quran. But in order to prove that the Quran is the word of God, in the first place, the Quran itself threw a challenge cum clincher thus: -

“And if you are in doubt concerning that which we have sent down (i.e. the Quran) to our slave, then produce a chapter like it thereof and (for doing this work) call all your people besides God, if you are truthful” - (Quran Ch.2-V.23)

Fourteen hundred summers have passed since this challenge was issued. People around the world researched using science and now computers too but gave up. None could take up this challenge or bring together a case to establish that the Quran is not the Word of God.

The Quran presented 1400 years back to the scientific fact (like DNA, the origin of the universe, the Bing Bang, embryology, particles smaller than atoms, sub-atomic particles, the expansion and the final implosion of the universe, the birth place of stars, black holes, recording of sounds and images, the atmospheric layers and a hundred other scientific facts) which have been discovered only now, proving that the Quran is from God, the Knower and Creator of these facts. It is this true book that vouches for God's Oneness.

In this book (the Quran). God Has furnished many arguments, evidences and touch stones directed at out

intellect. And these evidences testify to His Oneness. Here is one such argument.

“Had there been many god (and masters) of the heavens and earth then there would have been great turmoil and unrest” (Al Quran 21:22)

Simple logic! Had there been many gods, the scenario would have been something like this: One god would order that night should set in but the other god would insist that it should be day-time. One god would decide that the span of a day would be six months while the other would decide differently. Yet another god would want the sun to rise in the west but one of the gods would disagree and say, “NO, the sun will rise in the east”.

Had there many gods sharing the One Supreme God’s powers, decisions and management, then again the scene would be somewhat like this: A man would pray to the rain-god for rains. The rain-god would accept his supplication. But, suddenly, another god would disagree and would command that there will be no rain. Then, the subordinate rain-god would go on strike and protest. Meanwhile, the people would be waiting for day-break but it would turn out that the sun-god was on strike.

Chapter 5 - A True Testimony

The plain and sober truth is that everything in the universe and its harmonious, organised functioning, speaks for itself and testifies to the fact that there is One and only One Master of this universe. He can do, at one command, whatever He wished anytime, anywhere. He can't be visualised in imagination of thoughts nor can he be depicted in images.

Lo! He created the heavens and the earth, the entire cosmos only to put them at the service of mankind! The sun serves us! The winds serve us! The earth too is at our disposal. Fire, water and all inanimate and animate creation, apart from our own species, of course, have seen daylight only to be put to our service and use. Eureka! God crowned man as the chief and leader of all those things and created him as His slave only, to worship and obey Him.

It is only fair, then, that an honest person should utilise his life and possessions according to the wishes of His Master Who alone gives him life and death, nourishes him with food, water and all other requirements of life. Now despite this, if a person does not employ his life in following His Master's commands, then surely such a person is not worthy of being called a human.

Chapter 6 - A Prime Truth

The true Master has laid out a bare truth in His true book. The Quran:

“Everyone shall taste death. Then unto US you shall be returned” - (Quran Ch.29-V.57)

This verse has two parts. The first part mentions that every human soul has to surely experience death. This is a reality which every man believes, whatever his religion, sect or region may be. In fact, even those who don't believe in religion, the atheists too acknowledge the reality of death. Animals also understand this fact. A mouse flees at the sight of a cat. A god bolts at the sight of an approaching truck. Why? Because they believe in death.

Chapter 7 - After Death

The second part of the above mentioned verse of the Quran states another absolute reality. If only man could grasp it! If he could perceive this one reality to the hair, the world's social environment and circumstances would change overnight. This absolute truth is: After death, you will meet God. Yes, face to face and will be handed out your dues (rewards and penalties) according to your deeds of this life.

It is not true that, once your body has disintegrated in the mud after death, our soul will enter someone's body. This idea does not pass the litmus test of man's own intellect.

First of all, this whole concept of reincarnation or transmigration of souls (also known as "awagaman") is not mentioned in the Vedas (Hindu holy book). We can trace it only in the later religious books - the Puranas. This reference also merely mentions that a person's genetic characteristics embedded in his genes are transferred down the generations genetically from father to son and so on.

Actually, the roots of the notion and belief in reincarnation and transmigration of souls lie elsewhere: An artificial hierarchy of superior and inferior divisions developed in society. Of course this was the handiwork of Satan's machinations. The high point was that this hierarchy was erected in the name of religion. The self appointed patrons of religion took obeisance from the 'Shudras' whom they considered lowly.

Now, this down trodden and crushed souls questions the religious representatives putting the million-dollar question thus: “When God our Creator has granted equal facilities, eyes, nose etc equally to all humans, why do you make yourself superior and us inferior?”

The reply of the religious leader was interesting. They justified the system of social division by dishing out this theory of transmigration of souls. They explained the injustice meted out to some thus: They said, “Your bad deeds of your past life are responsible for your inferior position now!”

As per their theory, souls are born again in the world. They return inside different bodies according to their past life deeds. Those with bad past life deeds are born again as animals (or low caste with physical defects) while those with the worst deeds are re born in the form of vegetation. Those with good past life accounts escape the cycle of rebirth or transmigration and they gain salvation (moksha).

Chapter 8 - Three Proofs Against Transmigration of Souls

The foremost proof, in this matter is that the international community of scholars, scientists and researchers concur unanimously on the view that the first to appear on our planets were plants, followed by animals. Humans were born millions of years after that. Now the question is: If man had not yet appeared on the scene and hence had not yet committed any vice or virtue, then from where did the souls take re birth in the form of plants and animals?

Secondly, if we accept the idea of transmigration of souls, then it should result in a constant decrease in population because of the reduction caused by those souls who never return and gain salvation. But, the reality is just the reverse. There is a constant increase in the population of humans, animals and plant life too.

Thirdly, there is a huge difference in the number of births and deaths. The birth rate is more than the death rate. Interestingly, sometimes a million mosquitoes are born while only a few die.

Have we not all heard of causes wherein a child suddenly claims to recognise a house or location as the place where he lived in his past life? He also gives his past life name and declares that he has taken a rebirth. How do we explain this? The answer is simple: There is nothing but a machination of the Satan's and Jinn's who speak thus

through children and try to damage man's faith (science attributes this behaviour to the phenomenon of collective unconscious).

The hard truth is that no sooner does a person breathe his last; he faces the greatest reality - the reality of returning directly to His Master and getting a full recompense for his good and bad deeds which he committed in this life.

Chapter 9 - Actions Will Bear Fruit

A person, who works the oracle here, performs deeds of merit and walks the path of virtue here, will tread the enchanted grounds of paradise there, after death. And, in paradise, he will find every imaginable object of comfort, bliss and luxury and treats and pleasures such as no man has ever imagined, no eye has seen or no ear has ever heard of.

Nay, not even a thought of such a paradise crossed any heart or mind. But wait! Hold your breath! The greatest gift and pleasure of paradise will be the sight of the Master, the One God Whom the residents of paradise will see directly. Nothing will be more blissful and pleasurable than this experience.

Now, we also have people with bad report cards. Their performance, evil doings and defiance of God here will land them in Hell. There they will go through the fiery chastisement and retribution for their sins. They will burn in blazing fires there. But - the greatest of all their punishments will be that they will not be allowed to see God. There, in the midst of the hell fire, they will drain the cup of misery and suffer painful torments.

Chapter 10 - Polytheism - The Greatest Sin

The One True God informed us in the Quran that good deeds can be big or small and sins too can be major or minor. However, He has also declared something exceptional in this regard: He informed us that there is one sin which is the greatest and it will draw maximum punishment and He will NEVER NEVER forgive such a sinner who comes along with this capital sin. Such a man or woman will burn in hell fire forever and ever. He or she will not get death there either (to end the torment).

That master sin is to accept someone or something as the partner of the One God and Master, to bow and humble yourself before someone else, to fold hand and supplicate to anything or anyone else too, to consider someone else too to be worthy of worship and obeisance and to be convinced that something or someone else too has the power to grant life or death, profit or loss of livelihood.

This, in effect, is the master sin. This sin is in itself the greatest oppression, corruption and outrage. To even consider that an idol or the sun, moon, stars, some ascetic fakir or saint is worthy of worship, is something that God will never forgive.

He might, if He so desires, forgive other sins bit not this one. Our own intellect, our logical mind too holds this sin to be vile and repulsive.

Chapter 11 - A Case in Point

Consider the case of this man whose wife is engaged in a regular tussle with him. She argues-abuses and absolutely refuses any truce with him. Eventually the man asks her to move out, whereupon she says to him, “I am yours only and shall ever remain so. I shall live and die here and I promise never to leave house, not for a moment”.

The result: Despite his fury, the man is compelled to compromise and continue with the relationship.

On the other hand, there is a wife, extremely docile, caring and duty conscious. She serves her man a hot dinner even if he turns up at midnight and gladdens his heart with tender affection. One day, this woman turns around and says to her husband, “look here, just having you is not sufficient enough for me. I need that neighbour of mine too as a husband”.

Now, if the husband as an iota of self-respect, he would not tolerate this. In fact, he would either kill her or kill himself.

Why does he react in this manner? You guessed it right. No man on earth can wish to have a rival or a partner in his marital rights as a husband. Just imagine! A man created from a humble drop of water, cannot tolerate a partner along with himself, how then can God, the Master Who created man from this humble and impure drop of water, tolerate and permit that man should ascribe a partner to Him and worship someone else too? How can God stand

this when the fact remains that He alone is the Provider of all of man's possessions?

Another case in point, here is a prostitute. She plunges into degradation and dishonour for the sole reason that she sells her honour for anyone and everyone. In the same manner, a person who worships others, be they idols, deities, human or anything else, falls from God's grace and he is worse than the prostitute who into disgrace, she still realises her sin.

Chapter 12 - Negation of Idolatry in the Quran

The Quran presents an allegory about idol worship. It is thought worthy. It runs thus:

“The things which you worship besides God, they cannot, together, create even a fly; far from creating it, they cannot take back something which the fly might lift away from them. How feeble that those that are worshipped and how feeble are the worshippers. And they did not realise God (His Powers) as they should have; He is the Most Powerful and the One Who can do anything - (Al Quran 22:73)

What an amazing and beautiful example! As for these idols which we have crafted with our hands, it is we who have sculpted them. If these idols had any sense, they would have worshipped us!

Chapter 13 - A Flimsy Idea

Some people argue that they worship others besides God, just because these “others” lead them to God. They say they gain God’s favours through them and through the idols. This argument is very much like the case of a man at the railway station. The man inquired from the porter about his train. When the porter informed him about the details of the train, the man leaped into the porter’s shoulders instead of boarding the train.

He argued that he did so because it was after all the porter who gave him information about the train! To worship someone who gives information about God is as ridiculous as the action of the man who climbed into the porter instead of climbing into the train.

There are some brothers who argue that they keep idols to ensure concentration and attention towards God (during worship). Now, this is indeed strange! This is much like the case of a man who is staring at a dog. He insists that he is doing so in order to concentrate attention on the thought of his father! But there is no relation between the dog and his father. Similarly, where is the relation between a weak idol and that All Powerful, Merciful and Compassionate Master? Will the act of looking at an idol ensure concentration of attention towards God or cause distraction?

In essence, the conclusion is that it is the greatest of all sins to attribute partner to God. God will never pardon this particular sin. Anybody guilty of this sin will become fuel of hell fire for eternity.

Chapter 14 - Faith - The Supreme Virtue

Faith is the greatest of all virtues, the essence of all that is good and worthy. Everyone, adhering to any religion, believes that it is only faith that a person carries with him after death while he abandons all his possessions behind him. A person of faith, “a faithful” is he who hands over to others their due rights. On the other hand, he who usurps others rights is termed an “oppressor”.

Now, the greatest right over us is that of our Creator. And what is the greatest right that he has over us? This right is that we should worship Him alone and accept Him only as the Master, Giver of profit or loss, honour or dishonour. And why is it so? That is because HE alone is the Creator, Nourisher, Provider and Giver of life and death.

Yes, this is His greatest right on us - which we spent this God given life as per His wishes and obey Him alone. This, in essence is faith (Iman). A person cannot be a “faithful” a person of faith without accepting Him alone as the only Master and without submitting to Him. Rather, such a person would be termed “faithless”

The example of a person who usurps this greatest right of the Creator and yet claims to be a “man of faith” is similar to the case of a dacoit who commits a major robbery and becomes a millionaire. Then one day he walks up to a shop to return a coin and says magnanimously to the

shopkeeper, “take this coin back, I got it extra from you by mistake”.

Bizarre, isn't it, returning a single cent after committing a major plunder, is his “faith” and honesty” then it would be a worse faith, indeed, to worship someone else instead of one's own Master.

Faith, in effect means only one thing, that you accept that your Master is only One and that you worship Him alone and spent each moment of your life in implementing His wishes and commands. True faith really means that you spend your life given by Him according to His wishes. To reject His commands is “irreligion” and “faithlessness”.

Chapter 15 - The True Religion

True religion has always been the one ever since the dawn of time. This one and true religion always taught the same thing - that we accept and believe in the “One and Only God”, worship Him alone and obey His commands. The Quran says:

“Truly, the religion with God is Islam” - (Quran Ch. 3 - V.19)

“And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will be never be accepted of him and in the hereafter he will be one of the losers” - (Quran Ch.3 - V.85)

It is human shortcoming that man’s faculties have boundaries and limits. His eyes do see but not beyond a distance. He can hear but only within a certain range. His powers of smell, taste and touch also have their limits. These five senses provide man with information. But, his mind too has its own constraints. It cannot perceive or answer some questions such as:

What kind of life does God, His Master, prefer for Him? In what manner should he worship God? What will happen after death? Which are the actions which will take him to paradise or alternatively, to hell? A person cannot on his own answer these posers.

Chapter 16 - The Prophets

God, in His Mercy, turned towards this shortcoming and disability of man. He has messages and guidance to some select, noble souls through angels. These men, the prophets, conveyed the art of living and the ways of worship. They unveiled to people those truths of the life which were out of bounds of the intellect.

These men were known as prophets and messengers. They could also be called “Avatars” provided the term “Avatar” means “one and whom something has been sent down and revealed”. These days the term “Avatar” is generally taken to mean “God or God in the guise of man”. This is an absolute fallacy and major sin too. This delusion wrenches man away from worship of One God and Master and lands him straight into the quick sand of idol worship.

These great men, the prophets and messengers, selected by God to blaze out the true path for mankind, appeared in every region and nation and in all times and climes. Each of them instructed the people to believe in and worship none but One God only and to abide by the code and way of life which they brought and spent their lives according to their wishes.

Not one of these prophets invited man to worship anyone other than the One God. On the contrary they made every effort to drag people away from this sin (of polytheism). People accepted their teachings and began treading the path.

Chapter 17 - The Origins of Idol Worship

The prophets were mortals after all. They died. (There is no death for God only).

Their death aroused sentiments of grief, love and memories in their followers after them. The people missed them, mourned them, and wept in the memory. This was the break, the golden chance for Satan and he pounced upon it. Recall that he was man's enemy.

God had given him the power to whisper evil thought into man's heart and mind and to tempt and lead him astray. Of course, God wanted to test man to see who obeyed Him and who followed the Satan.

Now, Satan got his chance. He approached the grieving people and said, "You love your prophets but now that they are dead, you are unable to see them. But, I will ensure you that you can still see them. I'll carve out their statues. You can then look at the statues and gain peace'.

The statues were made. The people would gaze at them at their will. By and by, a deep regard and love for these statues grew in their hearts. Another opening for Satan! He approached them again and whispered, "Believe me, if you bow to these statues, you will find God in them".

The people's heart already a brim with love for these idols readily bowed them and soon began worshipping

them. Lo! Man, who was meant to worship One God only, began worshipping idols. And, before he knew it, he was caught in the trap of polytheism.

When this happened, when man, the leader and chief of this world stooped down to bow to stones and dust, he lost his honour and fell into degradation. He fell from God's grace and became a fuel for the fires of hell till the end of time.

Now, God sent more prophets again. They came to unhook people from idol worship and to stop them from worshipping anything other than God. Some people accepted their exhortations. Some did not. Those who did gained God's pleasure. But grave divine decisions were taken, decisions of destructions from those who spurned the prophet's advice. They were obliterated from the face of earth.

Chapter 18 - The Maxim of the Prophets

The prophets kept coming continuously in quick succession. A common premise and the same thread ran through their teaching. They invited people to one and the same religion and the same principles (the principles of Oneness of God, life after death, accountability of actions after death, heaven, hell and God's message sent to all mankind through prophets).

Each of them said: "Believe in One God. Do not conjoin anyone with God and His qualities. Do not make anyone a partner in His worship. Accept all His prophets as His true prophets and all His angels as His pure creatures who do not eat or sleep but merely execute His commands.

Accept and believe the revelations, the scriptures which He sent through the angels to be true. Believe also in the plain truth that after death, you will surely be handed out your recompense for your virtues and vices. Finally, have faith that all positive and negative happenings in life are part of destiny and are from God. So, follow the way of life and the religious code which I have brought'.

All the prophets were true. All the scriptures revealed to them were true. We believe in each of them and do not discriminate between them. But - there is a question: What is the proof that these prophets were actually the true and genuine prophets of God? The proof of their truth and authenticity is in this that they be tested on the litmus stone

of this one principle: the teachings of these men who invited people to believe in One God must not contain any talk of worshipping anyone else or worshipping their own selves, except God.

Now, if the teachings of some religious personalities today contain a sanction for idol, worship or worship of many Gods, then these personalities were either not prophets or their teachings have been manipulated later. It is indeed a hard reality that the teachings of all prophets prior to Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) have been altered and in many cases their holy scriptures too has been tampered with.

Chapter 19 - The Last Prophet - Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam)

There is an amazing and precious fact! The fact is: All prophets and “holy scriptures” prophesied the coming of a last and final prophet. These prophets also instructed and their scriptures mentioned that once this final prophet appears and is recognised (through certain signs), people must accept him and his scripture and code of religion which he brings and give up all earlier religious laws.

But there is another amazing fact here! This fact is that despite major changes in all previous holy books, the forecast about the coming of the last prophet could not be tampered with. God did not allow it. This forecast exists in all holy books today. This very fact is, by itself an open proof of the truth of Islam.

Why did this happen (preservation of the forecast in holy books)? This happened so that none can stand up and give excuses on Judgment Day and say, “I did not know (about the coming of the last prophet)”.

This last Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) has been called “Naraashans” in the Vedas, “Muhammad” in the Bhavishya Purana, “Kalk Avatar” in the Puranas, “Parakletos” in the Bible and the ‘Last Buddha’ in the Buddhist scriptures. The date, time and place of the Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) birth and many other signs related to him have been mentioned in these holy books.

Chapter 20 - Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) - An Introduction

About 1400 years ago, that last Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) was born in the city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia. His father died before his birth. His mother too did not live long. His grandfather and later his uncle raised him. Soon, this most extra ordinary person of the world became the apples of the eyes of the Makkans.

The love for him grew as he grew up. He was popularly known as “The truthful” and “The trustworthy” The people would deposit all the valuables with him (as in a bank). They would invite him to arbitrate in their disputes.

An interesting incident took place once. The Kaabah, the sacred mosque of God was being renovated. A sacred stone lay in its corner. Due to its sanctity, all the Makkan tribes and their leaders wished to get the honour of installing this stone themselves. Matters came to a head and swords were drawn. Just then, a sensible man came up with a solution to the impasse.

He suggested that the first person to enter the Kaabah should settle the dispute. The crowds agreed. Lo and behold! The first to arrive at the Kaabah just then was Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam)! The people cried out in one voice. “This is just fine! The ‘truthful and the trustworthy’ has arrived and we are pleased”.

The prophet broke the standoff in an ingenious way. He rolled out a sheet of cloth and the ground and he lifted the stone, placing it on the cloth. He then asked all leaders of the various tribes to come forth and hold the hem of the cloth and lift it. When the leaders reached the Kaabah's wall carrying the cloth with the stone in it, the Prophet lifted the stone and installed it in its original spot. he thus averted a near blood bath.

As a norm, the people consistently involved him prominently in their affairs. They would become upset and restless in his absence when he travelled and would weep inconsolably when he returned.

In those days, 360 idols and statutes of deities were installed in the Kaabah. Arabia overflowed with evils like castes, social division, oppression and suppression of women, alcoholism, gambling, usury, conflicts, violence, adultery etc.

When Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) was 40, God began sending down the Quran to him through an angel and also gave him glad tidings of having appointed him as the Prophet of God. God now, conferred on him the responsibility of inviting people to monotheism or worship the One God only.

Chapter 21 - The Voice of the Truth

Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) stood atop a hill. His voice rang out in the still desert air as he called out to his people. The people responded. They had recognized the familiar voice. It was the voice of the “truthful and the trustworthy”. Promptly, they rushed to the bottom of the hill.

From the crest of the hill, the Prophet asked them: “Will you believe me if I inform you that a vast army is approaching behind this hill and is about to attack you?”

The people echoed back: “How can we not believe you? You never lie or deceive. Moreover, you are in an elevated position up there and can see the other side of the hill from atop”.

Thereupon, the prophet invited the people to Islam and cautioned them against idol worship. He warned them about the fires of hell upon death. He tried to impress upon them that they could not see the fires just as they could not see the other side of the hill below while he could see it from his elevated position on the hill top.

Chapter 22 - A Human Weakness

It is human shortcoming that a person emulates even those fallacious beliefs and actions of his forefathers which are wide of the mark. He does so despite the fact that his own logical mind and other evidence refute the validity or correctness of these ideas and actions. Despite this, he persists with the practices of his ancestors. Far from examining or refuting these practices, he does not tolerate a word against them.

Chapter 23 - Road Blocks and Trials

This human shortcoming above mentioned was the very reason why the very people of Makkah who had honoured and trusted the prophet for 40 years and had titled him the “truthful”, suddenly became his worst enemies. The more he invited them to this single truth (of monotheism) the more vehemently and violently they opposed him. Some of them prosecuted his followers who believed him.

They assaulted them, strapped their necks, dragging and stoning them. They pinned down many believers in burning coals. Despite all this, the Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) took no revenge. He harboured no vindictive or negative feelings for his persecutors but only prayed for their guidance.

Once, disheartened and disappointed with his own people of Makkah, he visited the nearby town of Taif and the people and the people of this town derided him. They set young pranksters after him.

These truants ran after him, abused and stoned him until his feet bled. When he sit down in exhaustion, these boys would raised him forcibly only to stone him again. He left the town. On the outskirts, he sat down to gather his breath. He did not curse them. Instead he supplicated to God with these words: ‘O Lord! Grant them understanding, for they know not.’

Ultimately, he was compelled to bid farewell to his beloved city of Makkah for the only fault that he had conveyed God’s pure words - the Quran - to the people

there. Subsequently, he migrated to the city of Madina. However, the Makkan armies repeatedly attacked him in Madina too.

Chapter 24 - The Triumph of Truth

Truth always wins. It won here too. After going through the grind 23 years, victory finally embraced the Prophet. His sincere and selfless appeals and invitation to the truth touch the deepest chords of hearts. A flood of affirmations poured in from across the length and breadth of the lands around him. Entire Arab entered the cool shade of Islam and a revolution swept across the entire world, thereafter.

Chapter 25 - The Final Will

Some time before his death, Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) performed the pilgrimage of Hajj along with a huge number of other Muslims. There, during the Hajj, he announced his famous final will and parting exhortation, He said: “O people! After you die, you will be questioned about me as to whether I conveyed God’s religion and the truth to you. What will you say?”

The surging crowd responded: “We bear witness that without doubt you have conveyed it.”

He raised his finger towards the heavens and said thrice: “O God, Be thou Witness, be Thou Witness, be Thou Witness. Thereupon, the Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) announced: “Those of you whom this true religion has reached, must convey it to those whom it has not yet reached. Let him who is present; convey it unto him who is absent.”

He also stated that there will be no prophets after him and that he was the last prophet - the “Narashans” the “Antim Avatar”, the “Last Buddha”, the “Parakletos”, the “Kalki Avatar” whom people have been awaiting and about whom they knew all details and signs.

The Quran says: *“Those to whom we gave the Scriptures (Jews and Christians) recognise him (Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam)) as they recognise their sons. But,*

doubtless, a group of them conceal the truth while they know it (i.e. that he is the last prophet prophesied in all holy books) - (Quran Ch.2 - V.146)

Chapter 26 - Every Soul's Obligation

It is now the bounden duty and a religious and human obligation upon every human soul till doomsday, to worship One God, not to attach partners to Him, to accept His last Prophet and the true Prophet and follow the code and the way of life brought by him. Doing this called faith or Iman. Without faith or Iman, a person will burn in hell eternally after death.

Chapter 27 - Some Questions

Some questions may crop up in your mind. For instance - why at all should we believe in going to heaven or hell after death we can't see heaven or hell? In this regard, it will be most relevant to note that all ancient scriptures hold a vivid description of heaven and hell exists in all religions.

This can be better understood by a simple example: Someone tells the baby inside the mother's womb, "Now look here, when you are out of here, you will get milk, you will cry and you will see many other things too."

The baby may not believe this while he is still inside the womb. But no sooner does he emerge from the womb; he finds all those things which were told to him to be true and right in front of his eyes. Our world too is in a state of pregnancy. When a person emerges from it after death, he opens his eyes in the next world and like that new born baby, he finds all things said to him to be true and very much in front of him.

Chapter 28 - A Riddle

Another question that might puzzle the mind can be: If all religion and religious scriptures are true, then why is important to believe and accept Islam? The answer to this poser is simple, especially if seen in light of today's system in the modern world. Take the example of our own country. We have Parliament and a Constitution. We also had a string of Prime Ministers.

Each one was Prime Minister in his own right. Each of them introduced some changes and laws in response to the need of his times and these became the integral part of the country's law. Now any change made in this law by the present Prime Minister and his cabinet will automatically abrogate the related previous law on the same subject.

It becomes mandatory for the citizens to accept this new changed law. Now if the citizens wanted to follow the laws laid by the previous Prime Minister and not the laws of the present Prime Minister, then obviously such a person would be taken as an enemy of the State and would incur indictment and punishment.

In the same manner, all religion and religious texts appeared in their own times and each in its own right taught the same truth (of monotheism). But now it is imperative for a person to believe in the last prophet, Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) and follow the final code of religion brought by him while at the same time believing and accepting all previous prophets and religions to be true.

Moreover previous prophets were sent to their own people for their own times but Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) being the last Prophet, has been sent to all mankind and for all times.

Chapter 29 - True Religion is only One

It is plain now that it is not correct to say that all religion leads a person to God or that only the paths (religion) are different while the goal is common. The reality is that truth is only one. Falsities can be many. Light can be only one continuous spectrum of unbroken radiance. Yes, light can only be one. Darkness and its shadows can be many! True religion too, is only one. It was always one religion and only that religion, is Islam.

Religion never changes. It is only the internal laws (religious codes) that change with the times. And, these laws were changed only through God's guidance sent through prophets. When mankind is one species, our Lord God is also one, and then the true path is also one. The Quran says: "The religion from God is only Islam."

Chapter 30 - An Additional Question

Yet another question could tug at your mind: Where is the proof that Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) is His true and the last prophet. God announced this through His Word - the Quran. The Quran is the word of God. Now, to prove that Quran is the word of God, in the first place, the Quran itself has given evidences and arguments as mentioned earlier.

The arguments have been upheld and stood their ground as none of these could be refuted to date. It is this true book that has announced that Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) is the true and final prophet of God.

The second proof is the very person of Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam). Every moment of his life is on record and exposed to the world. His entire life is but an open history book. No other man's life and times have been thus chronicled and rolled over before the world as Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam)'s life.

His own sworn enemies and anti-Islamic historians also never alleged that he ever lied even in his private life about anything or anyone. His own countrymen swore to his honesty and integrity. How such a person who never lied in private could tell lies in the matter of religion and God? The true Prophet himself conveyed that he was the last prophet and that no prophet would come after him. He also did not give any prophecy about any prophet after him.

The third proof is: the holy scriptures of all religions. All religious scriptures contain prophecies about a last prophet, a last “Rishi”, “Antim Rishi”, “Narashans”, “Kalki Avatar” and ‘Muhammad” in Hindu scriptures (and by his own name and other names in Christian, Buddhist and other scriptures mentioned earlier). The signs about this last prophet (by which he can be recognised) have also been detailed in all these holy books as they conform to Prophet Mohammad only.

Chapter 31 - Pandit Ved Prakash Upadhyay

Pandit Ved Prakash Upadhyay (an expert in Holy Scriptures) has written that a person who doesn't accept Islam and does not believe in Prophet Muhammad (SalAllah Alahi Wasalam) and his religion, is actually not a Hindu. The reason for this is that the Hindu Scriptures have already clearly instructed the people to accept the religion of Kalki Avatars, the Narsashans whenever he appears on this earth (just as other scriptures have instructed people to accept the last prophet).

Hence, any Hindu who truly believes in his own religious scriptures but does not believe in the Kalki Avatar and his teaching will burn in the hell fire after death forever. There, he will be deprived the sight of God. Rather, he will suffer God's wrath.

Similarly, a person of any other religion too cannot be a true believer and follower of his own religion until and unless he believes and follows this last Prophets because his own holy book has prophesied his coming and also instructs him to follow his last prophet.

Chapter 32 - Faith Needed

Come to think of it, faith is essential not only for the life after death but is needed in this world and this life too. It is a case of conscience, an obligation on man to worship One God. Anyone who deviates and parts company with God and bows and kneels to others is worse than an animal. Why? Even a dog lies faithfully only at his its own Master's door and pins all hopes on him alone. What a man is he who abandons his own true Master and Lord and bows away, right and left, here and there at every other door?

However, the hard fact is that a person needs faith more after death from where he will never return. There, he will not get a second death even he was to beg for it. There, regrets and remorse will prove futile. If a man departs from this world without faith, then he will burn in the consuming fires of hell without a break, forever. What happens when a tiny flame merely brushes us for a moment?

We cry out in pain. How then will we be able to stand a blazing fire which is 70 times hotter than the world's fire and in which one will be roasted alive perpetually? There, when the skin will be burned to a cinder, a new skin will at once replace it, to be burn and replace again. The process will be repeated continually, (today we know that the pain receptors are in the skin and the skin feels maximum pain) the torment of burning will be uninterrupted.

Chapter 33 - Dear Readers

My dear readers! We have no clue as to when death will strike. We are not sure even if we will be able to exhale the breath we have just inhaled or if we will be able to breathe in a new breath. Before death catches up with you, there is still a chance. Know and feel your foremost and supreme obligation. Without faith, neither is this present life a life worth the name nor will the post death life be a worthy life.

Tomorrow, we will be ushered into our Lord's presence. The first question there to be asked of us will be about faith. I have my own personal end too and in this matter: On Dooms Day, that is Judgment Day, I don't wish that you turn around and say, "I did not know. The fact was never conveyed to me."

I trust that these sincere and true words have found a place in your heart. Then, come O noble Soul, You my dear friend, possessor of a true heart and true soul, come and make the Lord a Witness. With such a true heart as is acceptable to the Knower of hearts, come acknowledge and pledge that:

Shahadah in Arabic:

"Ash-hadu-al-la-illallah-wa-ash-hadu-anna-Muhammadan-abduhu-wa-rasooluhu"

Translation:

“I testify that there is no God except the One God and I testify that Mohammad is the servant and the prophet of God”

“I repent and turn away from the rejection of God and I turn away from attaching partners of God. I turn away from all types of sins. I take a pledge that I will comply with the commands of my true Master and God Who has created me. I will also sincerely follow His true Prophet Mohammad’

May God, the kind and merciful keep you and me steadfast on this path until our last breath! Ameen

My dear friend! If you spend your life along with this believe and faith until the knock of death, then and only then will you realise and appreciate how this brother of yours has fulfilled the call of love for you.

Chapter 34 - A Test of Faith

It is quite possible that you could be tested on account of your faith. But truth always wins. In this world too, truth is destined to win the day. However, if some trials do happen to come your way, then go through them with the thought that life in this world is transient and meant to last only for a few days. The trials are a cipher, a shadow, a straw and too insignificant in the face of the comfort's luxuries, bliss and unimaginable pleasure of paradise forever and ever after death. And, of course, the trials are nothing in comparison to gaining God's pleasure and viewing Him face to face.

Chapter 35 - Your Call

A matter of exceptional importance stands out now. The truth, this faith, is the right and trust of every other soul whom this right has not yet reached. Hence, it is an obligation upon you to pass forward this truth, this truth and right, much like a legacy to those others to whom it belongs and who have not yet heard about it. You need to do this sincerely, good will and well-meaning sympathy with the only end to save a brother or a sister God's wrath and from fire and torments of hell.

Perform this "labor of love" with a deep sense of compassion. Hand over the truth to others just as the dear prophet did. At the same time, pray to God for their guidance and that they may realise and recognise the straight true path.

Imagine for a moment this scene: A man is pacing near a blazing pit of fire. Just then, he sees a visually challenged man strolling ahead of him. This blind man unaware of the pit of fire ahead, strays towards it edge and falls over into the pit. The person behind has been watching him calmly all this while. He does not move. He neither calls out to the man, even once, to caution him nor does he move forward to hold him back or say, "Look out! Your path leads straight into a pit of fire".

Do you think such a person deserves to be called a human being? The minimum requirement of humanness is to stop that blind person, hold his hands pull him back, save him, assure and promise him thus, "as far as I can and

as long as there's life in my veins, I won't let you fall in the fire".

The point is clear. After accepting faith, every Muslim who has received the guidance of faith, the Prophet and the Quran, becomes duty bound to do one thing. This "one thing" is to set about the task of salvaging and extricating those souls who are still entangled and caught up in the fire of polytheism, who are attaching partners of God and are rejecting God (His Oneness).

Hold the hands of such people or if their feet if need be. Plead with them so that they adopt faith and do not keep blundering up the wrong path, following the wrong scent.

It is a fact that words coming from the depths of the sincere heart, words flowing with compassion and selflessness, surely touch and move another heart. It is a "heart to heart" matter. Even if a single person gains faith and finds God's real true door through you, then you are truly exonerated and stand vindicated. Indeed, then you have truly worked the oracle. That is exactly why God is so pleased with him who draws away another soul from polytheism (shirik) and rejection of God (kufur) and directs him onto the highway of truth.

Assume, for a while that your son has revolted and joined the enemy ranks. Suddenly, a Good Samaritan turns up from nowhere. He counsels your son and eventually transforms your son back to his loyal, obedient self and your son returns to you. How pleased would you be with that noble man who brought back your son to your fold! In much the same way, Our Lord God is singularly pleased

when someone becomes a medium in conveying faith to another soul and disperses the spark of faith further and further on, in every hole and corner and onto the four winds.

Chapter 36 - In the After Glow of Faith

After accepting Islam and becoming the true servant of the true Lord and Master, you need to do certain things. To offer the five daily prayers becomes your first duty. Learn them. Offer them. These prayers will radiate peace in your soul and enhance your love for God. In the month of Ramadhan, you must fast. If you are wealthy, you must contribute part of your wealth to the needy, for that is their share. Finally, if you can afford it, you must go for the pilgrimage of Hajj once in a life time.

Beware! Watch out! Now, your head must not bow before anyone except God. You must now need to steer clear of all prohibited things like alcohol, gambling, usury, pork, bribes etc. However, you may freely enjoy all those pure and gifts of God which He has made permissible.

You have now to read the pure word of God, the Quran. You must also observe that the ways of purification and hygiene. You must pray from the depths of your heart and soul for your friends, family and relatives and for all men and women walking on this earth, that they may live and die with faith because faith alone is the first and last anchor of human civilisation and society.

In the dimly lit corridors of times gone by, there once stood a great prophet of God. He was Prophet Ibrahim. In an incident, he was forced into a fire. He walked into the flames but not a hair of his was harmed! This was due to his faith. Today too, the power of faith can transform a fire into

blossoms and can ward off obstacle in the way of the true glowing path.

If the faith of Prophet Ibrahim could stir our hearts again, fires and flames and embers all would turn to flowers again.

Needless to say, it is my deep desire that you see and read my words of love through eyes of love. For God's sake, the sake of the Master and Creator of this world, please stop and ponder awhile so that my heart and soul may get some peace in the thought that I have delivered trust back to another brother or a sister and thus acquitted myself of an obligation which was due upon me as a human.

I now wish to convey to you a beautiful fact. This fact, in reality is the greatest truth of which man needs to be conscious and which he needs to believe in after stepping into this world. And, to be aware of this truth is man's responsibility too. I wish to speak to you about this lovely truth.

Peace be upon you.

Book 2 - Answers to Most Common Questions Asked by Non Muslims

By Dr Zakir Naik

Chapter 1 - Introduction

- **Da'wah is a Duty**

Most Muslims know that Islam is a universal religion, meant for all mankind. Allah (Subhanah Wa'ataalla) is the Lord of the entire universe and Muslims has been entrusted with the duty of conveying His message to all mankind. Alas, most Muslims today have become callous towards this duty! While accepting Islam as the best way of life for ourselves, most of us are unwilling to share this knowledge with those to whom the message has not yet been conveyed.

The Arabic word Da'wah means a call or an invitation. In Islamic context, it means to strive for the propagation of Islam. The Glorious Quran says:

“Ah! Who is more unjust than those who conceal the testimony they have from Allah? But Allah is not unmindful of what ye do!” - Quran - Cp.2-V.140

- **Twenty Most Common Questions**

In order to convey the message of Islam, dialogue and debate becomes inevitable. The Glorious Quran says:

“Invite (all) to the way of the Lord, with wisdom and beautiful preaching and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious!” - Quran - Ch.16-V.125

In conveying the message of Islam to non-Muslims, it is usually not sufficient to highlight only the positive nature of Islam. Most non-Muslims are not convinced about the truth of Islam because there are questions about Islam at the back of their mind that remains unanswered.

They may agree with your contentions about the positive nature of Islam. But, in the same breath, they will say - “Ah! But you are same Muslims that marry more than one woman. You are same people who subjugate women by keeping them behind the veil. You are fundamentalist etc.”

I personally prefer asking the non-Muslims upfront, with their limited knowledge, whether right or wrong, from whichever source it may be, what they feel is wrong in Islam. I encourage them to be very frank and open and convince them that I can take criticism about Islam.

In the past few years of my Da’wah experience, I have realised that there are barely twenty most common questions that a common non-Muslim has regarding Islam. Whenever you ask a non-Muslim “what do you feel is wrong in Islam?” he poses five or six questions, and these questions invariably fall among the twenty most common questions.

- **Logical Replies Can Convince the Majority**

The twenty most common questions about Islam can be answered with reason and logic. A majority of non-Muslims can be convinced with these answers. If a Muslim memorises and simply remembers these answers, Insyallah he would be successful, if not in convincing non-

Muslims about the complete truth about Islam, then at least in removing misconceptions about Islam and neutralising the negative thinking about Islam that the non-Muslims have. A very few non-Muslims may have counter arguments to those replies, for which further information may be required.

- **Misconceptions Due to Media**

The common misconceptions about Islam arise in the minds of a majority of non-Muslims, because they are constantly being bombarded with misinformation about Islam. International media is mainly controlled by the western world, whether it is international satellite channel, radio stations, newspapers, magazines or books.

Recently, the internet has become a powerful medium of information. Though it is not being controlled by anybody, one finds a large amount of virulent propaganda about Islam on the internet.

Of course, Muslims too are utilising this tool to portray the right image of Islam and Muslims, but they are far behind compared to the propaganda against Islam. I hope the efforts by the Muslims will increase and continue to be pursued.

- **Misconception Change With Time**

The most common questions about Islam are different in different periods and era. The set of twenty most common questions is based on present times. Decades earlier, the set of questions were different and decades later too, the

set of questions may change depending upon how Islam is projected by the media.

- **Misconception are the same throughout the World**

I have interacted with the people in different parts of the world and have found that these twenty most common questions about Islam to be the same everywhere. There may be a couple of additional questions depending upon the locale, the surrounding or the culture. For instance, in America, the additional common question is - “Why does Islam prohibit taking and giving of interest?”

I have included among these twenty most common questions, certain questions more common among the Indian non-Muslim. For instance, “why do Muslims have non vegetarian food?” The reason for including such questions is that the people of Indian origin are spread throughout the world and constitute about 20%, i.e. 1/5th of the world population. Thus, their questions become common questions asked by non-Muslims throughout the world.

- **Misconception of Non Muslims Who Have Studied Islam**

There are many non-Muslims who have studied Islam. Most of them have only read books on Islam written by biased critics of Islam. These non-Muslims have an additional twenty sets of misconceptions about Islam. For instance, they claim to have found contradictions in the Quran, they content that the Quran is unscientific etc.

There is another set of additional replies clearing these twenty misconceptions among non-Muslims who have studied Islam from distorted sources. I have also given the replies to twenty additional less common questions among the non-Muslims in my public talks and books on “Answers to Common Questions about Islam by non-Muslims who have some knowledge about Islam”.

Chapter 2 - Polygamy

Question:

Why is a man allowed to have more than one wife in Islam? I.e. why is polygamy allowed in Islam?

Answer:

1. Definition of Polygamy

Polygamy means a system of marriage whereby one person has more than one spouse. Polygamy can be of two types. One is polygyny where a man marries more than one woman, and the other is polyandry, where a woman marries more than one man. In Islam, limited polygyny is permitted; whereas polyandry is completely prohibited.

Now coming to the original question, why is a man allowed to have more than one wife?

2. The Qur'an is the only religious scripture in the world that says, "marry only one".

The Qur'an is the only religious book, on the face of this earth, that contains the phrase 'marry only one'. There is no other religious book that instructs men to have only one wife. In none of the other religious scriptures, whether it is the Vedas, the Ramayan, the Mahabharat, the Geeta, the Talmud or the Bible does one find a restriction on the number of wives.

According to these scriptures one can marry as many as one wishes. It was only later, that the Hindu priests and the Christian Church restricted the number of wives to one. Many Hindu religious personalities, according to their scriptures, had multiple wives. King Dashrat, the father of Rama, had more than one wife. Krishna had several wives. In earlier times, Christian men were permitted as many wives as they wished, since the Bible puts no restriction on the number of wives.

It was only a few centuries ago that the Church restricted the number of wives to one. Polygyny is permitted in Judaism. According to Talmudic law, Abraham had three wives, and Solomon had hundreds of wives. The practice of polygyny continued till Rabbi Gershom ben Yehudah (960 C.E to 1030 C.E) issued an edict against it. The Jewish Sephardic communities living in Muslim countries continued the practice till as late as 1950, until an Act of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel extended the ban on marrying more than one wife.

3. Interesting Note: - As per the 1975 census of India Hindus are more polygynous than Muslims

The report of the 'Committee of The Status of Woman in Islam', published in 1975 mentions on page numbers 66 and 67 that the percentage of polygamous marriages between the years 1951 and 1961 was 5.06% among the Hindus and only 4.31% among the Muslims. According to Indian law only Muslim men are permitted to have more than one wife.

It is illegal for any non-Muslim in India to have more than one wife. Despite it being illegal, Hindus have more multiple wives as compared to Muslims. Earlier, there was no restriction even on Hindu men with respect to the number of wives allowed. It was only in 1954, when the Hindu Marriage Act was passed that it became illegal for a Hindu to have more than one wife. At present it is the Indian Law that restricts a Hindu man from having more than one wife and not the Hindu scriptures.)

Let us now analyze why Islam allows a man to have more than one wife.

4. Qur'an Permits Limited Polygyny

As I mentioned earlier, Qur'an is the only religious book on the face of the earth that says 'marry only one'. The context of this phrase is the following verse from Surah Nisa of the Glorious Qur'an:

“Marry women of your choice, two, or three, or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one.” [Al-Qur'an 4:3]

Before the Qur'an was revealed, there was no upper limit for polygyny and many men had scores of wives, some even hundreds. Islam put an upper limit of four wives. Islam gives a man permission to marry two, three or four women, only on the condition that he deals justly with them. In the same chapter i.e. Surah Nisa verse 129 says:

“Ye are never able to be fair and just as between women....” [Al-Qur'an 4:129]

Therefore, polygyny is not a rule but an exception. Many people are under the misconception that it is compulsory for a Muslim man to have more than one wife.

Broadly, Islam has five categories of Do's and Don'ts:

- (i) 'Fard' i.e. compulsory or obligatory
- (ii) 'Mustahab' i.e. recommended or encouraged
- (iii) 'Mubah' i.e. permissible or allowed
- (iv) 'Makruh' i.e. not recommended or discouraged
- (v) 'Haraam' i.e. prohibited or forbidden

Polygyny falls in the middle category of things that are permissible. It cannot be said that a Muslim who has two, three or four wives is a better Muslim as compared to a Muslim who has only one wife.

5. Average Life Span of Females Is More Than That of Males.

By nature, males and females are born in approximately the same ratio. A female child has more immunity than a male child. A female child can fight the germs and diseases better than the male child. For this reason, during the paediatric age itself there are more deaths among males as compared to the females.

During wars, there are more men killed as compared to women. More men die due to accidents and diseases than women. The average life span of females is more than that of males, and at any given time one finds more widows in the world than widowers.

6. India Has More Male Population Than Female Due to Female Foeticide and Infanticide.

India is one of the few countries, along with the other neighbouring countries, in which the female population is less than the male population. The reason lies in the high rate of female infanticide in India, and the fact that more than one million female foetuses are aborted every year in this country, after they are identified as females. If this evil practice is stopped, then India too will have more females as compared to males.

7. World Female Population Is More Than Male Population.

In the USA, women outnumber men by 7.8 million. New York alone has one million more females as compared to the number of males, and of the male population of New York one-third are gay's i.e. sodomites. The U.S.A as a whole has more than twenty-five million gays.

This means that these people do not wish to marry women. Great Britain has four million more females as compared to males. Germany has five million more females as compared to males. Russia has nine million more females than males. God alone knows how many million

more females there are in the whole world as compared to males.

8. Restricting Each and Every Man To Have Only One Wife Is Not Practical.

Even if every man got married to one woman, there would still be more than thirty million females in U.S.A who would not be able to get husbands (considering that America has twenty-five million gays). There would be more than four million females in Great Britain, 5 million females in Germany and nine million females in Russia alone who would not be able to find a husband.

Suppose my sister happens to be one of the unmarried women living in USA, or suppose your sister happens to be one of the unmarried women in USA. The only two options remaining for her are that she either marries a man who already has a wife or becomes 'public property'. There is no other option.

All those who are modest will opt for the first. Most women would not like to share their husband with other women. But in Islam when the situation deems it really necessary Muslim women in due faith could bear a small personal loss to prevent a greater loss of letting other Muslim sisters becoming 'public properties'.

9. Marrying a Married Man Preferable to Becoming 'Public Property'

In Western society, it is common for a man to have mistresses and/or multiple extra-marital affairs, in which case, the woman leads a disgraceful, unprotected life. The same society, however, cannot accept a man having more than one wife, in which women retain their honourable, dignified position in society and lead a protected life.

Thus the only two options before a woman who cannot find a husband is to marry a married man or to become 'public property'. Islam prefers giving women the honourable position by permitting the first option and disallowing the second. There are several other reasons, why Islam has permitted limited polygyny, but it is mainly to protect the modesty of women.

Chapter 3 - Polyandry

Question:

If a man is allowed to have more than one wife, then why does Islam prohibit a woman from having more than one husband?

Answer:

A lot of people, including some Muslims, question the logic of allowing Muslim men to have more than one spouse while denying the same 'right' to women.

Let me first state emphatically, that the foundation of an Islamic society is justice and equity. Allah has created men and women as equal, but with different capabilities and different responsibilities. Men and women are different, physiologically and psychologically. Their roles and responsibilities are different. Men and women are equal in Islam, but not identical.

Surah Nisa' Chapter 4 verses 22 to 24 gives the list of women with whom Muslim men cannot marry. It is further mentioned in Surah Nisa' Chapter 4 verse 24 *"Also (prohibited are) women already married"*

"And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed; indeed it was shameful and most hateful, and an evil way." - Quran-Ch.4-V.22

“Forbidden to you (for marriage) are: your mothers, your daughters, your sisters, your father's sisters, your mother's sisters, your brother's daughters, your sister's daughters, your foster mother who gave you suck, your foster milk suckling sisters, your wives' mothers, your step daughters under your guardianship, born of your wives to whom you have gone in - but there is no sin on you if you have not gone in them (to marry their daughters), - the wives of your sons who (spring) from your own loins, and two sisters in wedlock at the same time, except for what has already passed; verily, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”. - Quran-Ch.4-V.23

“Also (forbidden are) women already married, except those (captives and slaves) whom your right hands possess. Thus has Allah ordained for you. All others are lawful, provided you seek (them in marriage) with Mahr (bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage) from your property, desiring chastity, not committing illegal sexual intercourse, so with those of whom you have enjoyed sexual relations, give them their Mahr as prescribed; but if after a Mahr is prescribed, you agree mutually (to give more), there is no sin on you. Surely, Allah is Ever All Knowing, All Wise”. - Quran-Ch.4-V.24

The following points enumerate the reasons why polyandry is prohibited in Islam:

1. If a man has more than one wife, the parents of the children born of such marriages can easily be identified. The father as well as the mother can easily be identified. In case of a woman marrying more than one husband, only the mother of the children born of such marriages will be identified and not the father. Islam gives tremendous

importance to the identification of parents, both the mother and father.

Psychologists tell us that children who do not know their parents, especially their father undergo severe mental trauma and disturbances. Often they have an unhappy childhood. It is for this reason that the children of prostitutes do not have a healthy childhood. If a child born of such wedlock is admitted in school, and when the mother is asked the name of the father, she would have to give two or more names!

I am aware that recent advances in science have made it possible for both the mother and father to be identified with the help of genetic testing. Thus this point which was applicable for the past may not be applicable for the present.

2. Man is more polygamous by nature as compared to a woman.

3. Biologically, it is easier for a man to perform his duties as a husband despite having several wives. A woman, in a similar position, having several husbands, will not find it possible to perform her duties as a wife. A woman undergoes several psychological and behavioural changes due to different phases of the menstrual cycle.

4. A woman who has more than one husband will have several sexual partners at the same time and has a high chance of acquiring venereal or sexually transmitted diseases which can also be transmitted back to her husband even if all of them have no extra-marital sex. This is not the

case in a man having more than one wife, and none of them having extra-marital sex.

The above reasons are those that one can easily identify. There are probably many more reasons why Allah, in His Infinite Wisdom, has prohibited polyandry.

Chapter 4 - Hijaab for Women

Question:

Why does Islam degrade women by keeping them behind the veil?

Answer:

The status of women in Islam is often the target of attacks in the secular media. The 'Hijaab' or the Islamic dress is cited by many as an example of the 'subjugation' of women under Islamic law. Before we analyse the reasoning behind the religiously mandated 'Hijaab', let us first study the status of women in societies before the advent of Islam

1. In the past women were degraded and used as objects of lust

The following examples from history amply illustrate the fact that the status of women in earlier civilisations was very low to the extent that they were denied basic human dignity:

a. Babylonian Civilization:

The women were degraded and were denied all rights under the Babylonian law. If a man murdered a woman, instead of him being punished, his wife was put to death.

b. Greek Civilisation:

Greek civilisation is considered the most glorious of all ancient civilisations. Under this very 'glorious' system, 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 and inferior to men.

Though chastity of women was precious, and women were held in high esteem, the Greeks were later overwhelmed by ego and sexual perversions. Prostitution became a regular practice amongst all classes of Greek society.

c. Roman Civilization:

When Roman civilisation 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.

d. Egyptian Civilization:

The Egyptian considered women evil and as a sign of a devil.

e. Pre-Islamic Arabia:

Before Islam spread in Arabia, the Arabs looked down upon women and very often when a female child was born, she was buried alive.

2. Islam uplifted women and gave them equality and expects them to maintain their status. Islam uplifted the status of women and granted them their just rights 1400 years ago. Islam expects women to maintain their status.

Hijaab for Men

People usually only discuss ‘Hijaab’ in the context of women. However, in the Glorious Qur’an, Allah (swt) first mentions ‘Hijaab’ for men before ‘Hijaab’ for the women. The Qur’an mentions in Surah Noor:

“Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: and Allah is well acquainted with all that they do.” [Al-Qur’an 24:30]

The moment a man looks at a woman and if any brazen or unashamed thought comes to his mind, he should lower his gaze.

Hijaab for Women

The next verse of Surah Noor, says:

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands’ fathers, their sons...” [Al-Qur’an 24:31]

3. Six criteria for Hijaab.

According to Qur'an and Sunnah there are basically six criteria for observing Hijaab:

a. Extent:

The first criterion is the extent of the body that should be covered. This is different for men and women. The extent of covering obligatory on the male is to cover the body at least from the navel to the knees. For women, the extent of covering obligatory is to cover the complete body except the face and the hands up to the wrist.

If they wish, they can cover even these parts of the body. Some scholars of Islam insist that the face and the hands are part of the obligatory extent of 'Hijaab'. All the remaining five criteria are the same for men and women.

b. The clothes worn should be loose and should not reveal the figure.

c. The clothes worn should not be transparent such that one can see through them.

d. The clothes worn should not be so glamorous as to attract the opposite sex.

e. The clothes worn should not resemble that of the opposite sex.

f. The clothes worn should not resemble that of the unbelievers i.e. they should not wear clothes that are specifically identities or symbols of the unbelievers' religions.

4. Hijaab includes conduct and behaviour among other things

Complete 'Hijaab', besides the six criteria of clothing, also includes the moral conduct, behaviour, attitude and intention of the individual. A person only fulfilling the criteria of 'Hijaab' of the clothes is observing 'Hijaab' in a limited sense.

'Hijaab' of the clothes should be accompanied by 'Hijaab' of the eyes, 'Hijaab' of the heart, 'Hijaab' of thought and 'Hijaab' of intention. It also includes the way a person walks, the way a person talks, the way he behaves, etc.

5. Hijaab prevents molestation

The reason why Hijaab is prescribed for women is mentioned in the Qur'an in the following verses of Surah Al-Ahzab:

“O Prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters, and the believing women that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad); that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” [Al-Qur'an 33:59]

The Qur'an says that Hijaab has been prescribed for the women so that they are recognised as modest women and this will also prevent them from being molested.

6. Example of twin sisters

Suppose two sisters who are twins, and who are equally beautiful, walk down the street. One of them is attired in the Islamic Hijaab i.e. the complete body is covered, except for the face and the hands up to the wrists. The other sister is wearing western clothes, a mini skirt or shorts. Just around the corner there is a hooligan or ruffian who is waiting for a catch, to tease a girl.

Whom will he tease? The girl which was wearing the Islamic Hijaab or the girl wearing the skirt or the mini? Naturally he will tease the girl wearing the skirt or the mini. Such dresses are an indirect invitation to the opposite sex for teasing and molestation. The Qur'an rightly says that Hijaab prevents women from being molested.

7. Capital punishment for the rapists

Under the Islamic Shariah, a man convicted of having raped a woman, is given capital punishment. Many are astonished at this 'harsh' sentence. Some even say that Islam is a ruthless, barbaric religion! I have asked a simple question to hundreds of non-Muslim men. Suppose, God forbid, someone rapes your wife, your mother or your sister. You are made the judge and the rapist is brought in front of you. What punishment would you give him?

All of them said they would put him to death. Some went to the extent of saying they would torture him to death. To them I ask, if someone rapes your wife or your mother you want to put him to death. But if the same crime is committed on somebody else's wife or daughter you say capital punishment is barbaric. Why should there be double standards?

8. Western society falsely claims to have uplifted women

Western talk of women's liberalisation is nothing but a disguised form of exploitation of her body, degradation of her soul, and deprivation of her honour. Western society claims to have 'uplifted' women.

On the contrary it has actually degraded them to the status of concubines, mistresses and society butterflies who are mere tools in the hands of pleasure seekers and sex marketers, hidden behind the colourful screen of 'art' and 'culture'.

9. USA has one of the highest rates of rape

United States of America is supposed to be one of the most advanced countries of the world. It also has one of the highest rates of rape in any country in the world. According to a FBI report, in the year 1990, every day on an average 1756 cases of rape were committed in U.S.A alone. Later another report said that on an average everyday 1900 cases of rapes are committed in USA.

The year was not mentioned. May be it was 1992 or 1993. May be the Americans got 'bolder' in the following years. Consider a scenario where the Islamic Hijaab is followed in America. Whenever a man looks at a woman and any brazen or unashamed thought comes to his mind, he lowers his gaze.

Every woman wears the Islamic Hijaab that is the complete body is covered except the face and the hands up to the wrist. After this if any man commits rape he is given capital punishment. I ask you, in such a scenario, will the rate of rape in America increase, will it remain the same, or will it decrease?

10. Implementation of Islamic Shariah will reduce the rate of rapes

Naturally as soon as Islamic Shariah is implemented positive results will be inevitable. If Islamic Shariah is implemented in any part of the world, whether it is America or Europe, society will breathe easier. Hijaab does not degrade a woman but uplifts a woman and protects her modesty and chastity.

Chapter 5 - Was Islam Spread by the Sword

Question:

How can Islam be called the religion of peace when it was spread by the sword?

Answer:

It is a common complaint among some non-Muslims that Islam would not have millions of adherents all over the world, if it had not been spread by the use of force. The following points will make it clear, that far from being spread by the sword, it was the inherent force of truth, reason and logic that was responsible for the rapid spread of Islam.

1. Islam Means Peace.

Islam comes from the root word ‘salaam’, which means peace. It also means submitting one’s will to Allah (swt). Thus Islam is a religion of peace, which is acquired by submitting one’s will to the will of the Supreme Creator, Allah (swt).

2. Sometimes Force Has To Be Used To Maintain Peace.

Each and every human being in this world is not in favour of maintaining peace and harmony. There are many, who would disrupt it for their own vested interests.

Sometimes force has to be used to maintain peace. It is precisely for this reason that we have the police who use force against criminals and antisocial elements to maintain peace in the country. Islam promotes peace. At the same time, Islam exhorts its followers to fight where there is oppression. The fight against oppression may, at times, require the use of force. In Islam force can only be used to promote peace and justice.

3. Opinion of Historian De Lacy O’Leary.

The best reply to the misconception that Islam was spread by the sword is given by the noted historian De Lacy O’Leary in the book “Islam at the cross road” (Page 8): “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 myth that historians have ever repeated.”

4. Muslims Ruled Spain for 800 years.

Muslims ruled Spain for about 800 years. The Muslims in Spain never used the sword to force the people to convert. Later the Christian Crusaders came to Spain and wiped out the Muslims. There was not a single Muslim in Spain who could openly give the Adhan, which is the call for prayers.

5. 14 million Arabs are Coptic Christians.

Muslims were the lords of Arabia for 1400 years. For a few years the British ruled, and for a few years the French ruled. Overall, the Muslims ruled Arabia for 1400 years. Yet

today, there are 14 million Arabs who are Coptic Christians i.e. Christians since generations. If the Muslims had used the sword there would not have been a single Arab who would have remained a Christian.

6. More than 80% Non-Muslims in India.

The Muslims ruled India for about a thousand years. If they wanted, they had the power of converting each and every non-Muslim of India to Islam. Today more than 80% of the populations of India are non-Muslims. All these non-Muslim Indians are bearing witness today that Islam was not spread by the sword.

7. Indonesia and Malaysia.

Indonesia is a country that has the maximum number of Muslims in the world. The majority of people in Malaysia are Muslims. May one ask, “Which Muslim army went to Indonesia and Malaysia?”

8. East Coast of Africa.

Similarly, Islam has spread rapidly on the East Coast of Africa. One may again ask, if Islam was spread by the sword, “Which Muslim army went to the East Coast of Africa?”

9. Thomas Carlyle.

The famous historian, Thomas Carlyle, in his book “Heroes and Hero worship”, refers to this misconception about the spread of Islam: “The sword indeed, but where

will you get your sword? Every new opinion, at its starting is precisely in a minority of one in one man's head alone. There it dwells as yet.

One man alone of the whole world believes it, there is one man against all men. That he takes a sword and try to propagate with that, will do little for him. You must get your sword! On the whole, a thing will propagate itself as it can."

10. No Compulsion in Religion.

With which sword was Islam spread? Even if Muslims had it they could not use it to spread Islam because the Qur'an says in the following verse:

"Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error" [Al-Qur'an 2:256]

11. Sword of the Intellect.

It is the sword of intellect. The sword that conquers the hearts and minds of people. The Qur'an says:

"Invite (all) to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious." [Al-Qur'an 16:125]

12. Increase in the World Religions from 1934 to 1984.

An article in Reader's Digest 'Almanac', year book 1986, gave the statistics of the increase of percentage of the major

religions of the world in half a century from 1934 to 1984. This article also appeared in 'The Plain Truth' magazine.

At the top was Islam, which increased by 235%, and Christianity had increased only by 47%. May one ask, which war took place in this century which converted millions of people to Islam?

13. Islam Is the Fastest Growing Religion in America and Europe.

Today the fastest growing religion in America is Islam. The fastest growing religion in Europe is Islam. Which sword is forcing people in the West to accept Islam in such large numbers?

14. Dr. Joseph Adam Pearson.

Dr. Joseph Adam Pearson rightly says, "People who worry that nuclear weaponry will one day fall in the hands of the Arabs, fail to realise that the Islamic bomb has been dropped already, it fell the day Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was born".

Chapter 6 - Muslims are Fundamentalist and Terrorists

Question:

Why are most of the Muslims fundamentalists and terrorists?

Answer:

This question is often hurled at Muslims, either directly or indirectly, during any discussion on religion or world affairs. Muslim stereotypes are perpetuated in every form of the media accompanied by gross misinformation about Islam and Muslims. In fact, such misinformation and false propaganda often leads to discrimination and acts of violence against Muslims.

A case in point is the anti-Muslim campaign in the American media following the Oklahoma bomb blast, where the press was quick to declare a 'Middle Eastern conspiracy' behind the attack. The culprit was later identified as a soldier from the American Armed Forces.

Let us analyse this allegation of 'fundamentalism' and 'terrorism':

1. Definition of the Word 'Fundamentalist'

A fundamentalist is a person who follows and adheres to the fundamentals of the doctrine or theory he is following. For a person to be a good doctor, he should know, follow, and practice the fundamentals of medicine. In other words, he should be a fundamentalist in the field of medicine.

For a person to be a good mathematician, he should know, follow and practice the fundamentals of mathematics. He should be a fundamentalist in the field of mathematics. For a person to be a good scientist, he should know, follow and practice the fundamentals of science. He should be a fundamentalist in the field of science.

2. Not All 'Fundamentalists' Are the Same

One cannot paint all fundamentalists with the same brush. One cannot categorise all fundamentalists as either good or bad. Such a categorisation of any fundamentalist will depend upon the field or activity in which he is a fundamentalist.

A fundamentalist robber or thief causes harm to society and is therefore undesirable. A fundamentalist doctor, on the other hand, benefits society and earns much respect.

3. I Am Proud To Be a Muslim Fundamentalist

I am a fundamentalist Muslim who, by the grace of Allah, knows, follows and strives to practice the fundamentals of Islam. A true Muslim does not shy away from being a fundamentalist. I am proud to be a fundamentalist Muslim because; I know that the fundamentals of Islam are beneficial to humanity and the whole world.

There is not a single fundamental of Islam that causes harm or is against the interests of the human race as a whole. Many people harbour misconceptions about Islam and consider several teachings of Islam to be unfair or improper. This is due to insufficient and incorrect knowledge of Islam.

If one critically analyses the teachings of Islam with an open mind, one cannot escape the fact that Islam is full of benefits both at the individual and collective levels.

4. Dictionary Meaning of the Word ‘Fundamentalist’

According to Webster’s dictionary ‘fundamentalism’ was a movement in American Protestantism that arose in the earlier part of the 20th century. It was a reaction to modernism, and stressed the infallibility of the Bible, not only in matters of faith and morals but also as a literal historical record. It stressed on belief in the Bible as the literal word of God.

Thus fundamentalism was a word initially used for a group of Christians who believed that the Bible was the verbatim word of God without any errors and mistakes. According to the Oxford dictionary ‘fundamentalism’ means ‘strict maintenance of ancient or fundamental doctrines of any religion, especially Islam’. Today the moment a person uses the word fundamentalist he thinks of a Muslim who is a terrorist.

5. Every Muslim Should Be a Terrorist

Every Muslim should be a terrorist. A terrorist is a person who causes terror. The moment a robber sees a policeman he is terrified. A policeman is a terrorist for the robber. Similarly, every Muslim should be a terrorist for the antisocial elements of society, such as thieves, dacoits and rapists.

Whenever such an anti-social element sees a Muslim, he should be terrified. It is true that the word 'terrorist' is generally used for a person who causes terror among the common people. But a true Muslim should only be a terrorist to selective people i.e. antisocial elements, and not to the common innocent people. In fact, a Muslim should be a source of peace for innocent people.

6. Different Labels Given to the Same Individual for the Same Action, I.E. 'Terrorist' and 'Patriot'

Before India achieved independence from British rule, some freedom fighters of India who did not subscribe to non-violence were labeled as terrorists by the British government. The same individuals have been lauded by Indians for the same activities and hailed as 'patriots'. Thus two different labels have been given to the same people for the same set of actions.

One is calling him a terrorist while the other is calling him a patriot. Those who believed that Britain had a right to rule over India called these people terrorists, while those who were of the view that Britain had no right to rule India called them patriots and freedom fighters.

It is therefore important that before a person is judged, he is given a fair hearing. Both sides of the argument should be heard, the situation should be analyzed, and the reason and the intention of the person should be taken into account, and then the person can be judged accordingly.

7. Islam Means Peace

Islam is derived from the word 'salaam' which means peace. It is a religion of peace whose fundamentals teach its followers to maintain and promote peace throughout the world.

Thus every Muslim should be a fundamentalist i.e. he should follow the fundamentals of the Religion of Peace: Islam. He should be a terrorist only towards the antisocial elements in order to promote peace and justice in the society.

Chapter 7 - Eating Non Vegetarian Food

Question:

Killing an animal is a ruthless act. Why then do Muslims consume non vegetarian food?

Answer:

‘Vegetarianism’ is now a movement the world over. Many even associate it with animal rights. Indeed, a large number of people consider the consumption of meat and other non-vegetarian products to be a violation of animal rights. Islam enjoins mercy and compassion for all living creatures.

At the same time Islam maintains that Allah has created the earth and its wondrous flora and fauna for the benefit of mankind. It is up to mankind to use every resource in this world judiciously, as a niyamat (Divine blessing) and amanat (trust) from Allah.

Let us look at various other aspects of this argument.

1. A Muslim Can Be a Pure Vegetarian

A Muslim can be a very good Muslim despite being a pure vegetarian. It is not compulsory for a Muslim to have non-vegetarian food.

2. Qur’an Permits Muslims To Have Non-Vegetarian Food

The Qur'an however permits a Muslim to have non-vegetarian food. The following Qur'an verses are proof of this fact:

“O ye who believe! Fulfill (all) obligations. Lawful unto you (for food) are all four-footed animals with the exceptions named.” [Al-Qur'an 5:1]

“And cattle He has created for you (men): from them Ye derive warmth, and numerous benefits, And of their (meat) ye eat.” [Al-Qur'an 16:5]

“And in cattle (too) ye have an instructive example: From within their bodies We produce (milk) for you to drink; there are, in them, (besides), numerous (other) benefits for you; and of their (meat) ye eat.” [Al-Qur'an 23:21]

3. Meat Is Nutritious and Rich in Complete Protein

Non-vegetarian food is a good source of excellent protein. It contains biologically complete protein i.e. all the 8 essential amino acid that are not synthesised by the body and should be supplied in the diet. Meat also contains iron, vitamin B1 and niacin.

4. Humans Have Omnivorous Set of Teeth

If you observe the teeth of herbivorous animals like the cow, goat and sheep, you will find something strikingly similar in all of them. All these animals have a set of flat teeth i.e. suited for herbivorous diet. If you observe the set

of teeth of the carnivorous animals like the lion, tiger, or leopard, they all have a set of pointed teeth i.e. suited for a carnivorous diet.

If you analyse the set of teeth of humans, you find that they have flat teeth as well as pointed teeth. Thus they have teeth suited for both herbivorous as well as carnivorous food i.e. they are omnivorous. One may ask, if Almighty God wanted humans to have only vegetables, why did He provide us also with pointed teeth? It is logical that He expected us to need and to have both vegetarian as well as non-vegetarian food.

5. Human Beings Can Digest Both Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian Food

The digestive system of herbivorous animals can digest only vegetables. The digestive system of carnivorous animals can digest only meat. But the digestive system of humans can digest both vegetarian and non-vegetarian food.

If Almighty God wanted us to have only vegetables, then why did He give us a digestive system that can digest both vegetarian as well as non-vegetarian food?

6. Hindu Scriptures Give Permission To Have Non-Vegetarian Food.

a. There are many Hindus who are strictly vegetarian. They think it is against their religion to consume non-vegetarian food. But the true fact is that the Hindu scriptures permit a person to have meat. The scriptures

mention Hindu sages and saints consuming non-vegetarian food.

b. It is mentioned in Manu Smruti, the law book of Hindus, in chapter 5 verse 30 “The eater who eats the flesh of those to be eaten does nothing bad, even if he does it day after day, for God himself created some to be eaten and some to be eater.”

c. Again next verse of Manu Smruti, that is, chapter 5 verse 31 says “Eating meat is right for the sacrifice, this is traditionally known as a rule of the gods.”

d. Further in Manu Smruti chapter 5 verse 39 and 40 says “God himself created sacrificial animals for sacrifice, therefore killing in a sacrifice is not killing.”

e. Mahabharata Anushashan Parva chapter 88 narrates the discussion between Dharmaraj Yudhishtira and Pitamah Bhishma about what food one should offer to Pitris (ancestors) during the Shraddha (ceremony of dead) to keep them satisfied.

Paragraph reads as follows: “Yudhishtira said, “O thou of great puissance, tell me what that object is which, if dedicated to the Pitiris (dead ancestors), become inexhaustible! What Havi, again, (if offered) lasts for all time? What, indeed, is that which (if presented) becomes eternal?” “Bhishma said, “Listen to me, O Yudhishtira, what those Havis are which persons conversant with the rituals of the Shraddha (the ceremony of dead) regard as suitable in view of Shraddha and what the fruits are that attach to each.

With sesame seeds and rice and barely and Masha and water and roots and fruits, if given at Shraddhas, the pitris, O king, remain gratified for the period of a month. With fishes offered at Shraddhas, the pitris remain gratified for a period of two months. With the mutton they remain gratified for three months and with the hare for four months, with the flesh of the goat for five months, with the bacon (meat of pig) for six months, and with the flesh of birds for seven.

With venison obtained from those deer that are called Prishata, they remain gratified for eight months, and with that obtained from the Ruru for nine months, and with the meat of Gavaya for ten months, With the meat of the buffalo their gratification lasts for eleven months. With beef presented at the Shraddha, their gratification, it is said, lasts for a full year. Payasa mixed with ghee is as much acceptable to the pitris as beef.

With the meat of Vadhrinasa (a large bull) the gratification of pitris lasts for twelve years. The flesh of rhinoceros, offered to the pitris on anniversaries of the lunar days on which they died, becomes inexhaustible. The potherb called Kalaska, the petals of kanchana flower, and meat of (red) goat also, thus offered, prove inexhaustible. So but natural if you want to keep your ancestors satisfied forever, you should serve them the meat of red goat.

7. Hinduism Was Influenced by Other Religions.

Though Hindu Scriptures permit its followers to have non-vegetarian food, many Hindus adopted the vegetarian system because they were influenced by other religions like Jainism.

8. Even Plants Have Life.

Certain religions have adopted pure vegetarianism as a dietary law because they are totally against the killing of living creatures. If a person can survive without killing any living creature, I would be the first person to adopt such a way of life. In the past people thought plants were lifeless. Today it is a universal fact that even plants have life. Thus their logic of not killing living creatures is not fulfilled even by being a pure vegetarian.

9. Even Plants Can Feel Pain.

They further argue that plants cannot feel pain; therefore, killing a plant is a lesser crime as compared to killing an animal. Today science tells us that even plants can feel pain. But the cry of the plant cannot be heard by the human being. This is due to the inability of the human ear to hear sounds that are not in the audible range i.e. 20 Hertz to 20,000 Hertz.

Anything below and above this range cannot be heard by a human being. A dog can hear up to 40,000 Hertz. Thus there are silent dog whistles that have a frequency of more than 20,000 Hertz and less than 40,000 Hertz. These whistles are only heard by dogs and not by human beings. The dog recognises the master's whistle and comes to the master.

There was research done by a farmer in U.S.A. who invented an instrument which converted the cry of the plant so that it could be heard by human beings. He was able to realize immediately when the plant itself cried for water. Latest researches show that the plants can even feel happy and sad. It can also cry.

10. Killing a Living Creature With Two Senses Less Is Not a Lesser Crime.

Once a vegetarian argued his case by saying that plants only have two or three senses while the animals have five senses. Therefore, killing a plant is a lesser crime than killing an animal. Suppose your brother is born deaf and dumb and has two senses less as compared to other human beings.

He becomes mature and someone murders him. Would you ask the judge to give the murderer a lesser punishment because your brother has two senses less? In fact you would say that he has killed an innocent person, and the judge should give the murderer a greater punishment.

In fact, the Qur'an says:

“O ye people! Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good” [Al-Qur'an 2:168]

11. Over Population of Cattle.

If every human being was a vegetarian, it would lead to overpopulation of cattle in the world, since their reproduction and multiplication is very swift. Allah (swt) in His Divine Wisdom knows how to maintain the balance of His creation appropriately. No wonder He has permitted us to have the meat of the cattle.

12. Cost of Meat Is Reasonable Since all Aren't Non-Vegetarians.

I do not mind if some people are pure vegetarians. However, they should not condemn non-vegetarians as ruthless. In fact, if all Indians become non vegetarians than the present non-vegetarians would be losers since the prices of meat would rise.

Chapter 8 - Islamic Method of Slaughtering Animals Appear Ruthless

Question:

Why do Muslims slaughter the animal in a ruthless manner by torturing it and slowly and painfully killing it?

Answer:

The Islamic method of slaughtering animals, known as Zabiha has been the object of much criticism from a large number of people. One may consider the following points, which prove that the Zabiha method is not only humane but also scientifically the best:

1. Islamic Method of Slaughtering Animal

Zakkaytum is a verb derived from the root word Zakah (to purify). Its infinitive is Tazkiyah which means purification. The Islamic mode of slaughtering an animal requires the following conditions to be met:

a. Animal should be slaughtered with sharp object (knife). The animal has to be slaughtered with a sharp object (knife) and in a fast way so that the pain of slaughter is minimised.

b. Cut wind pipe, throat and vessels of neck Zabiha is an Arabic word which means 'slaughtered'. The 'slaughtering' is to be done by cutting the throat, windpipe and the blood vessels in the neck causing the animal's death without cutting the spinal cord.

c. Blood should be drained. The blood has to be drained completely before the head is removed. The purpose is to drain out most of the blood which would serve as a good culture medium for microorganisms. The spinal cord must not be cut because the nerve fibres to the heart could be damaged during the process causing cardiac arrest and stagnation of the blood in the blood vessels.

2. Blood Is a Good Medium for Germs and Bacteria

Blood is a good media of germs, bacteria, toxins, etc. Therefore, the Muslim way of slaughtering is more hygienic as most of the blood containing germs, bacteria, toxins, etc. that are the cause of several diseases are eliminated.

3. Meat Remains Fresh for a Longer Time

Meat slaughtered by Islamic way remains fresh for a longer time due to deficiency of blood in the meat as compared to other methods of slaughtering.

4. Animal Does Not Feel Pain

The swift cutting of vessels of the neck disconnects the flow of blood to the nerve of the brain responsible for pain. Thus the animal does not feel pain. While dying, the animal struggles, writhers, shakes and kicks, not due to pain, but

due to the contraction and relaxation of the muscles
deficient in blood and due to the flow of blood out of the
body.

Chapter 9 - Non Vegetarian Food Makes Muslims Violent

Question:

Science tells us that whatever one eats, it has an effect on one's behaviour. Why then, does Islam allow Muslims to eat non-vegetarian food, since eating of animals could make a person violent and ferocious?

Answer:

1. Only Eating of Herbivorous Animals Allowed

I agree that, what a person eats have an effect on his behaviour. This is one of the reasons why Islam prohibits the eating of carnivorous animals like lion, tiger, leopard, etc. who are violent and ferocious. The consumption of the meat of such animals would probably make a person violent and ferocious. Islam only allows the eating of herbivorous animals like cow, goat, sheep, etc. that are peaceful and docile. Muslims eat peaceful and docile animals because Muslims are peace loving and non-violent people.

2. The Qur'an Says Prophet Prohibits What Is Bad

The Qur'an says:

“The Prophet commands them what is just and prohibits what is evil”. “He allows them as lawful what is good (and pure) and prohibits them what is bad (and impure),” [Al-Qur’an 7: 157]

“So take what the Messenger assigns to you and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you.” [Al-Qur’an 59: 7]

For a Muslim, the Prophet’s statement is sufficient to convince him that Allah does not wish humans to eat some kinds of meat while allowing some other kinds.

3. Hadith Of Mohammad (Pbuh) Prohibiting Eating Of Carnivorous Animals

According to various authentic Hadith narrated in Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim including Hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas in Sahih Muslim, Book of hunting and slaughter, Hadith No. 4752 and Sunan Ibn-I Majah chapter 13 Hadith no. 3232 to 3234, the Holy Prophet (pbuh) prohibited the eating of:

a. Wild animals with canine teeth, i.e. meat eating carnivorous animals. These are animals belonging to the cat families such as lion, tiger, cats, dogs, wolfs, hyenas, etc.

b. Certain rodents like mice, rats, rabbits with claws, etc.

c. Certain reptiles like snakes, alligators, etc.

d. Birds of prey with talons or claws, like vultures, eagle, crows, owl, etc. There is no scientific evidence that proves

beyond doubt that eating non vegetarian food makes one violent.

Chapter 10 - Muslims Worship the Kaabah

Question:

When Islam is against idol worship why do the Muslims worship, and bow down to the Kaabah in their prayer?

Answer:

Kaaba is the Qiblah i.e. the direction Muslims face during their prayers. It is important to note that though Muslims face the Kaabah during prayers, they do not worship the Kaabah. Muslims worship and bow to none but Allah. It is mentioned in Quran:

“We see the turning of thy face (for guidance) to the heavens: now shall -We turn thee to a Qiblah that shall please thee. Turn then thy face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque: wherever ye are, turn your faces in that direction.” [Al-Qur’an 2:144]

1. Islam Believes in Fostering Unity

For instance, if Muslims want to offer Salat (Prayer), it is possible that some may wish to face north, while some may wish to face south. In order to unite Muslims in their worship of the One True God, Muslims, wherever they may be, are asked to face in only one direction i.e. towards the Kaabah. If some Muslims live towards the west of the

Kaabah they face the east. Similarly, if they live towards the east of the Kaabah they face the west.

2. Kaabah is at the Centre of the World Map

The Muslims were the first people to draw the map of the world. They drew the map with the south facing upwards and north downwards. The Kaabah was at the centre. Later, western cartographers drew the map upside down with the north facing upwards and south downwards. Yet, Alhamdulillah the Kaabah is at the centre of the world map.

3. Tawaf Around Kaabah for Indicating One God

When the Muslims go to Masjid-e-Haram in Makkah, they perform Tawaf or circumambulation round the Kaabah. This act symbolises the belief and worship of One God, since, just as every circle has one centre, so also there is only one Allah (swt) worthy of worship.

4. Hadith of Umar (May Allah Be Pleased With Him)

Regarding the black stone, Hajr Aswad, there is a Hadith (tradition), attributed to the illustrious companion of the Prophet Muhammed (pbuh), Umar (may Allah be pleased with him).

According to Sahih Bukhari, Volume 2, book of Hajj, chapter 56, H.No. 675. Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) said, “I know that you are a stone and can neither benefit nor harm. Had I not seen the Prophet (pbuh) touching (and kissing) you, I would never have touched (and kissed) you”.

5. People Stood on Kaabah and Gave the Adzaan

At the time of the Prophet, people even stood on the Kaabah and gave the 'Adzaan' or the call to prayer. One may ask those who allege that Muslims worship the Kaabah; which idol worshipper stands on the idol he worships?

Chapter 11 - Non Muslims Not Allowed in Makkah

Question:

Why are non-Muslims not allowed in the Holy cities of Makkah and Madinah?

Answer:

It is true that non-Muslims are not allowed in the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, by law. The following points will serve to elucidate the possible reasoning behind such a restriction.

1. All Citizens Are Not Permitted in the Cantonment Area

I am a citizen of India. Yet, I am not permitted to enter certain restricted areas like the cantonment. In every country there are certain areas where a common citizen of that country cannot enter. Only a citizen who is enrolled in the military or those who are connected with the defence of the country are allowed in the cantonment area.

Similarly, Islam is a Universal Religion for the entire world and for all human beings. The cantonment areas of Islam are the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah. Here only those who believe in Islam and are involved in the defense of Islam i.e. the Muslims are allowed.

It would be illogical for a common citizen to object against the restriction on entering a cantonment area. Similarly, it is not appropriate for non-Muslims to object against the restriction on non-Muslims against entering Makkah and Madinah.

2. Visa To Enter Makkah and Madinah

a. Whenever a person travels to a foreign country he has to first apply for a visa i.e. the permission to enter that country. Every country has its own rules, regulations and requirements for issuing a visa. Unless their criteria are satisfied they will not issue a visa.

b. One of the countries which are very strict in issuing a visa is the United States of America, especially when issuing visas to citizens of the third world. They have several conditions and requirements to be fulfilled before they issue a visa.

c. When I visited Singapore, it was mentioned on their immigration form - death to drug traffickers. If I want to visit Singapore, I have to abide by the rules. I cannot say that death penalty is a barbaric punishment. Only if I agree with their requirements and conditions will I be permitted to enter the country.

d. The Visa - The primary condition required for any human being to enter Makkah or Madina is to say with his lips, La ila ha illallah Muhammed ur Rasulullah meaning that 'there is no God but Allah and Muhammed (pbuh) is His Messenger.'

Chapter 12 - Pork Forbidden

Question:

Why is the eating of pork forbidden in Islam?

Answer:

The fact that consumption of pork is prohibited in Islam is well known. The following points explain various aspects of this prohibition:

1. Pork Prohibited In Qur'an

The Qur'an prohibits the consumption of pork in no less than 4 different places. It is prohibited in 2:173, 5:3, 6:145 and 16:115.

“Forbidden to you (for food) are: dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which hath been invoked the name of other than Allah.” [Al-Qur'an 5:3]

The above verses of the Holy Qur'an are sufficient to satisfy a Muslim as to why pork is forbidden.

2. Pork Prohibited in the Bible

The Christian is likely to be convinced by his religious scriptures. The Bible prohibits the consumption of pork, in the book of Leviticus

“And the swine, though he divides the hoof, and be cloven footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean to you”. “Of their flesh shall ye not eat, and their carcass shall ye not touch, they are unclean to you.” [Leviticus 11:7-8]

Pork is also prohibited in the Bible in the book of Deuteronomy

“And the swine, because it divideth the hoof, yet cheweth not the cud, it is unclean unto you. Ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcass.” [Deuteronomy 14:8]

A similar prohibition is repeated in the Bible in the book of Isaiah chapter 65 verse 2-5.

3. Consumption of Pork Causes Several Diseases

The other non-Muslims and atheists will agree only if convinced through reason, logic and science. Eating of pork can cause no less than seventy different types of diseases. A person can have various helminths like roundworm, pinworm, hookworm, etc.

One of the most dangerous is *Taenia Solium*, which is in lay man’s terminology called tapeworm. It harbours in the intestine and is very long. Its ova i.e. eggs, enter the blood stream and can reach almost all the organs of the body.

If it enters the brain it can cause memory loss. If it enters the heart it can cause heart attack, if it enters the eye it can

cause blindness, if it enters the liver it can cause liver damage. It can damage almost all the organs of the body.

Another dangerous helminths is *Trichura Tichurasis*. A common misconception about pork is that if it is cooked well, these ova die. In a research project undertaken in America, it was found that out of twenty-four people suffering from *Trichura Tichurasis*, twenty-two had cooked the pork very well. This indicates that the ova present in the pork do not die under normal cooking temperature.

4. Pork Has Fat Building Material

Pork has very little muscle building material and contains excess of fat. This fat gets deposited in the vessels and can cause hypertension and heart attack. It is not surprising that over 50% of Americans suffer from hypertension.

5. Pig Is One of the Filthiest Animals on Earth

The pig is one of the filthiest animals on earth. It lives and thrives on muck, faeces and dirt. It is the best scavenger that I know that God has produced. In the villages they don't have modern toilets and the villagers excrete in the open air. Very often excreta are cleared by pigs.

Some may argue that in advanced countries like Australia, pigs are bred in very clean and hygienic conditions. Even in these hygienic conditions the pigs are kept together in sties. No matter how hard you try to keep them clean they are filthy by nature. They eat and enjoy their own as well as their neighbours excreta.

6. Pig Is the Most Shameless Animal

The pig is the most shameless animal on the face of the earth. It is the only animal that invites its friends to have sex with its mate. In America, most people consume pork. Many times after dance parties, they have swapping of wives; i.e. many say “you sleep with my wife and I will sleep with your wife.” If you eat pigs, then you behave like pigs.

Chapter 13 - Prohibition of Alcohol

Question:

Why is the consumption of alcohol prohibited in Islam?

Answer:

Alcohol has been the scourge of human society since time immemorial. It continues to cost countless human lives, and causes terrible misery to millions throughout the world. Alcohol is the root cause of several problems facing society. The statistics of soaring crime rates, increasing instances of mental illnesses and millions of broken homes throughout the world bear mute testimony to the destructive power of alcohol.

1. Prohibition of Alcohol in the Al-Quran

The Glorious Qur'an prohibits the consumption of alcohol in the following verse:

“O ye who believe! Intoxicants and Gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an Abomination - of Satan's handiwork; eschew such (abomination), that ye may prosper.” [Al-Qur'an 5:90]

2. Prohibition of Alcohol in the Bible

The Bible prohibits the consumption of alcohol in the following verses:

a. *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.” [Proverbs 20:1]*

b. *“And be not drunk with wine.” [Ephesians 5:18]*

3. Alcohol Inhibits the Inhibitory Centre

The human beings possess an inhibitory centre in their brains. This inhibitory centre prevents the person from doing things that he considers wrong. For instance, a person does not normally use abusive language while addressing his parents or elders. If he has to answer the call of nature, his inhibitory centre will prevent him from doing so in public, therefore he uses the toilet.

When a person consumes alcohol, the inhibitory centre itself is inhibited. That is precisely the reason that an inebriated person is often found to be indulging in behaviour that is completely uncharacteristic of him. For instance, the intoxicated person is found to use abusive and foul language and does not realise his mistake even if he is addressing his parents.

Many even urinate in their clothes. Neither do they neither talk nor walk properly. They even misbehave.

4. Cases of Adultery, Rape, Incest and AIDS Are Found More Among Alcoholics

According to National Crime Victimization Survey Bureau of Justice (U.S. Department of Justice) in the year 1996 alone everyday on an average 2,713 rapes took place. The statistics tell us that the majority of the rapists were intoxicated while committing the crime. The same is true in cases of molestation.

According to statistics, 8% of Americans commit incest i.e. one in every twelve to thirteen persons in America is involved in incest. Almost all the cases of incest are due to intoxication of one or both the persons involved.

One of the major factors associated with the spread of AIDS, the most dreaded disease, is alcoholism.

5. Every Alcoholic Was Initially a Social Drinker

Many may argue in favour of liquor by calling themselves 'social drinkers'. They claim that they only have one or two pegs and they have self-control and so never get intoxicated. Investigations reveal that every alcoholic started as a social drinker. Not a single alcoholic or drunkard initially starts drinking with the intention of becoming an alcoholic or a drunkard. No social drinker can say that I have been having alcohol for several years and that I have so much self-control that I have never been intoxicated even a single time.

6. If a person is intoxicated just once and commits something shameful, it will remain with him for a lifetime. Suppose a 'social drinker' loses his self-control just once. In a state of intoxication, he commits rape or incest. Even if the act is later regretted, a normal human being is likely to

carry the guilt throughout his life. Both the perpetrator and the victim are irreparably and irreversibly damaged.

7. Alcohol is Prohibited in the Hadith. The Prophet of Islam Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

a. In Sunan Ibn Majah Volume 3, Book of Intoxicants, Chapter 30 Hadith No. 3371.

“Alcohol is the mother of all evils and it is the most shameful of evils.”

b. In Sunan Ibn-I-Majah Volume 3, Book of Intoxicants, Chapter 30 Hadith No. 3392

“Anything which intoxicates in a large quantity is prohibited even in a small quantity.” Thus there is no excuse for a nip or a tot.

c. Not only those who drink alcohol are cursed but also those who deal with them directly or indirectly are cursed by Allah. According to Sunan Ibn-I-Majah Volume 3, Book of Intoxicants, Chapter 30 Hadith No. 3380. It was reported by Anas (may Allah be pleased with him), that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said:

“God’s curse falls on ten groups of people who deal with alcohol. The one who distills it, the one for whom it has been distilled, the one who drinks it, the one who transports it, the one to who it has been brought, the one whom serves it, the one who sells it, the one who utilises money from it, the one who buys it and the one who buys it for someone else.”

8. Diseases Associated With Alcoholism

There are several scientific reasons for the prohibition of consumption of intoxicants i.e. alcohol. The maximum number of deaths in the world related to any one particular cause is due to the consumption of alcohol. Millions of people die every year only because of intake of alcohol. I need not go into the details of all the ill-effects of alcohol since most of them are commonly known. Below is a simple list of few of the alcohol related illnesses:

1. Cirrhosis of Liver is the most well-known alcohol associated disease.

2. Others are Cancer of Esophagus, Cancer of Head and Neck, Cancer of Liver (Hepatoma), Cancer of Bowel, etc.

3. Esophagitis, Gastritis, Pancreatitis and Hepatitis are linked with alcohol consumption.

4. Cardiomyopathy, Hypertension, Coronary Atherosclerosis, Angina and Heart Attacks are linked with heavy alcohol intakes.

5. Strokes, Apoplexy, Fits and different types of Paralysis are linked with alcohol intake.

6. Peripheral Neuropathy, Cortical Atrophy, Cerebellar Atrophy are well-known syndromes caused by alcohol consumption.

7. Wernicke - Korsakoff syndrome with amnesia of recent events, confabulations and retainment of memory to old events with different types of paralysis are mainly due to thiamine deficiency due to excessive alcohol intake.

8. Beriberi and other deficiencies are not uncommon among alcoholics. Even Pellagra occurs in alcoholics.

9. Delirium Tremens is a serious complication that may occur during recurrent infection of alcoholics or post operatively. It also occurs during abstention as a sign of withdrawal effect. It is quite serious and may cause death even if treated in well-equipped centres.

10. Numerous Endocrine Disorders have been associated with alcoholism ranging from Myxedema to Hyperthyroidism and Florid Cushing Syndrome.

11. Hematological ill effects are long and variable. Folic acid deficiency, however, is the most common manifestation of alcoholic abuse resulting in Macrocytic Anaemia. Zeive's syndrome is a triad of Hemolytic Anemia, Jaundice and Hyperlipaedemia that follows alcoholic binges.

12. Thrombocytopenia and other platelet abnormalities are not rare in alcoholics.

13. The commonly used tablet metronidazole (flagyl) interacts badly with alcohol.

14. Recurrent infection is very common among chronic alcoholics. The resistance to disease and the immunological defence system are compromised by alcohol intake.

15. Chest infections are notorious in alcoholics. Pneumonia, Lung Abscess, Emphysema and Pulmonary Tuberculosis are all common in alcoholics.

16. During acute alcoholic intoxication, the drunken person usually vomits; the cough reflexes which are protective are paralysed. The vomitus thus easily passes to the lung causing Pneumonia or Lung Abscess. Occasionally it may even cause suffocation and death.

17. The ill effects of alcohol consumption on women deserve special mention. Females are more vulnerable to alcohol-related Cirrhosis than men. During pregnancy alcohol consumption has a severe detrimental effect on the foetus. Foetal Alcohol Syndrome is being recognised more and more in the medical profession.

18. Skin diseases are also related to alcohol indulgence.

19. Eczema, Alopecia, Nail Dystrophy, Paronychia (infection around the nails) and Angular Stomatitis (inflammation of the angle of the mouth) are common diseases among alcoholics.

9. Alcoholism is a 'disease'

Medical doctors have now turned liberal towards alcoholics and call alcoholism a disease rather than an addiction.

The Islamic Research Foundation has published a pamphlet that says:

If alcohol is a disease, it is the only disease that:

- Is sold in bottles
- Is advertised in newspapers, magazines, on radio and television
- Has licensed outlets to spread it
- Produces revenue for the government
- Brings violent deaths on the highways
- Destroys family life and increases crime
- Has no germs or viral cause

Alcoholism is not a disease - it is Satan's handiwork.

Allah (swt) in His Infinite Wisdom has warned us against this snare of Satan. Islam is called the "Deen-ul-Fitrah" or the natural religion of Man. All its injunctions are aimed at preserving the natural state of man. Alcohol is a deviation from this natural state, for the individual as well as for society. It degrades man to a level below that of the beasts

he claims to be superior to. Hence the consumption of alcohol is prohibited in Islam.

Chapter 14 - Equality of Witnesses

Question:

Why are two witnesses who are women, equivalent to only one witness who is a man?

Answer:

1. Two female witnesses not always considered equal to one male witness. There are no less than three verses in the Qur'an which speak about witnesses without specifying man or woman.

a) While making a will of inheritance, two just persons are required as witnesses. In chapter 5 verse 106, the Glorious Qur'an says:

“Oh you who believe! When death approaches any of you, (take) witnesses among yourself when making bequests, - two just persons of your own (brotherhood) or others from outside if you are journeying through the earth and the chance of death befalls you.” [Al-Qur'an 5:106]

b) Two Persons Endued With Justice in Case of Talaq.

“And take for witness two persons from among you, endued with justice, and establish the evidence (as) before Allah”. [Al-Qur'an 65:2]

c) Four Witnesses Are Required in Case of Charge Against Chaste Women

“And those who launch a charge against chaste women, and produce not four witnesses (to support their allegations) flog them with eighty stripes; and reject their evidence even after: for such men are wicked transgressors” [Al-Qur’an 24:4]

2. Two Female Witnesses Is Equal to Male Witness Only in Financial Transaction

It is not true that two female witnesses are always considered as equal to only one male witness. It is true only in certain cases. There are about five verses in the Qur’an that mention witnesses, without specifying male or female. There is only one verse in the Qur’an that says two female witnesses are equal to one male witness. This chapter 2 verse 282. This is the longest verse in the Qur’an and deals with financial transactions.

It says: “Oh! ye who believe! When ye deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligation in a fixed period of time reduce them to writing and get two witnesses out of your own men and if there are not two men, then a man and two women, such as ye choose, for witnesses so that if one of them errs the other can remind her.” [Al-Qur’an 2:282]

This verse of the Qur’an deals only with financial transactions. In such cases, it is advised to make an agreement in writing between the parties and take two witnesses, preferably both of which should be men only. In

case you cannot find two men, then one man and two women would suffice.

For instance, suppose a person wants to undergo an operation for a particular ailment. To confirm the treatment, he would prefer taking references from two qualified surgeons. In case he is unable to find two surgeons, his second option would be one surgeon and two general practitioners who are plain MBBS doctors. Similarly, in financial transactions, two men are preferred. Islam expects men to be the breadwinners of their families.

Since financial responsibility is shouldered by men, they are expected to be well versed in financial transactions as compared to women. As a second option, the witness can be one man and two women, so that if one of the women errs the other can remind her.

The Arabic word used in the Qur'an is 'Tazil' which means 'confused' or 'to err'. Many have wrongly translated this word as 'to forget'. Thus financial transactions constitute the only case in which two female witnesses are equal to one male witness.

3. Two Female Witnesses Equal to One Male Witness Even in the Case of Murder

However, some scholars are of the opinion that the feminine attitude can also have an effect on the witness in a murder case. In such circumstances a woman is more terrified as compared to a man. Due to her emotional condition she can get confused. Therefore, according to some jurists, even in cases of murder, two female witnesses

are equivalent to one male witness. In all other cases, one female witness is equivalent to one male witness. In all other cases, one female witness is equivalent to one male witness.

4. Qur'an Clearly Specifies That One Female Witness Equal to One Male Witness

There are some scholars who are of the opinion that the rule of two female witnesses equal to one male witness should be applied to all the cases. This cannot be agreed upon because one particular verse of the Qur'an chapter 24, verse 6 clearly equates one female witness and one male witness:

“And those who launch a charge against their spouses, and have (in support) no evidence but their own - their solitary evidence can be received.” [Al-Qur'an 24:6]

5. Solitary Witness of Ayesha (May Allah Be Pleased With her) Is Sufficient for Hadith To Be Accepted

Ayesha (May Allah be pleased with her) the wife of the beloved Prophet has narrated no less than 2220 Hadith which are considered authentic only on her solitary evidence. This is sufficient proof that one witness of a woman can also be accepted. Many jurists agree that even one witness of a woman is sufficient for the sighting of the crescent of the moon.

Imagine one woman witness is sufficient for one of the pillars of Islam, i.e. fasting and the whole Muslim community of men and women agree and accept her

witness! Some jurists say that one witness is required at the beginning of Ramadhan and two witnesses at the end of Ramadhan. It makes no difference whether the witnesses are men or women.

6. Female Witnesses Are Preferred in Some Cases

Some incidents require only female witness and that of a male cannot be accepted. For instance, in dealing with the problems of women, while giving the burial bath i.e. 'ghusl' to a woman, the witness has to be a woman. The seeming inequality of male and female witnesses in financial transactions is not due to any inequality of the sexes in Islam. It is only due to the different natures and roles of men and women in society as envisaged by Islam.

Chapter 15 - Inheritance

Question:

Under Islamic law, why is a woman's share of the inherited wealth only half that of a man?

Answer:

1. Inheritance in the Qur'an. The Glorious Qur'an contains specific and detailed guidance regarding the division of the inherited wealth, among the rightful beneficiaries. The Qur'an verses that contain guidance regarding inheritance are:

- Surah Baqarah, chapter 2 verse 180
- Surah Baqarah, chapter 2 verse 240
- Surah Nisa, chapter 4 verse 7-9
- Surah Nisa, chapter 4 verse 19
- Surah Nisa, chapter 4 verse 33 and
- Surah Maidah, chapter 5 verse 106-108

2. Specific Share of Inheritance for the Relatives

There are three verses in the Qur'an that broadly describe the share of close relatives i.e. Qur'an chapter 4 verses 11, 12 and 176. The translations of these verses are as follows:

“Allah (thus) directs you as regards your children’s (inheritance): to the male, a portion equal to that of two females, if only daughters, two or more, their share is two-thirds of the inheritance; If only one, her share is a half. For parents, a sixth share of the inheritance to each, if the deceased left children; If no children, and the parents are the (only) heirs, the mother has a third; if the deceased left brothers (or sisters) the mother has a sixth. (The distribution in all cases is) after the payment of legacies and debts. Ye know not whether your parents or your children are nearest to you in benefit. These are settled portions ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise. In what your wives leave, your share is half if they leave no child; but if they leave a child, ye get a fourth; after payment of legacies and debts. In what ye leave, their share is a fourth, if ye leave no child; but if ye leave a child, they get an eighth; after payment of legacies and debts. If the man or woman whose inheritance is in question, has left neither ascendants nor descendants, but has left a brother or a sister, each one of the two gets a sixth; but if more than two, they share in a third; after payment of legacies and debts; so that no loss is caused (to anyone). Thus it is ordained by Allah; and Allah is All-Knowing Most Forbearing” [Al-Qur’an 4:11-12]

“They ask thee for a legal decision. Say: Allah directs (them) about those who leave no descendants or ascendants as heirs. If it is a man that dies, leaving a sister but no child, she shall have half the inheritance. If (such a deceased was) a woman who left no child, Her brother takes her inheritance. If there

are two sisters, they shall have two thirds of the inheritance (between them). If there are brothers and sisters, (they share), the male having twice the share of the female. Thus doth Allah (swt) makes clear to you (His knowledge of all things). [Al-Qur'an 4:176]

3. Female Sometimes Inherits Same or More Than Male Counter Part

In most of the cases, a woman inherits half of what her male counterpart inherits. However, this is not always the case. In case the deceased has left no ascendant or descendent but has left the uterine brother and sister, each of the two inherits one sixth. If the deceased has left children, both the parents that is mother and father get an equal share and inherit one sixth each. In certain cases, a woman can also inherit a share that is double that of the male. If the deceased is a woman who has left no children, brothers or sisters and is survived only by her husband, mother and father, the husband inherits half the property while the mother inherits one third and the father the remaining one sixth. In this particular case, the mother inherits a share that is double that of the father.

4. Female Usually Inherits Half the Share of That of the Male Counterpart.

It is true that as a general rule, in most cases, the female inherits a share that is half that of the male. For instance, in the following cases:

- a. Daughter inherits half of what the son inherits.

- b. Wife inherits $\frac{1}{8}$ th and husband $\frac{1}{4}$ th if the deceased has no children.
- c. Wife inherits $\frac{1}{4}$ th and husband $\frac{1}{2}$ if the deceased has children.
- d. If the deceased has no ascendant or descendent, the sister inherits a share that is half that of the brother.
- e. 5. Male inherits double than the female because he financially supports the family

In Islam a woman has no financial obligation and the economical responsibility lies on the shoulders of the man. Before a woman is married it is the duty of the father or brother to look after the lodging, boarding, clothing and other financial requirements of the woman. After she is married it is the duty of the husband or the son. Islam holds the man financially responsible for fulfilling the needs of his family.

In order to do be able to fulfil the responsibility the men get double the share of the inheritance. For example, if a man dies leaving about Rupees One Hundred and Fifty Thousand, for the children (i.e. one son and one daughter) the son inherits One Hundred Thousand rupees and the daughter only Fifty Thousand rupees.

Out of the one hundred thousand which the son inherits, as his duty towards his family, he may have to spend on them almost the entire amount or say about eighty thousand and thus he has a small percentage of inheritance, say about twenty thousand, left for himself. On

the other hand, the daughter, who inherits fifty thousand, is not bound to spend a single penny on anybody. She can keep the entire amount for herself. Would you prefer inheriting one hundred thousand rupees and spending eighty thousand from it, or inheriting fifty thousand rupees and having the entire amount to yourself?

Chapter 16 - Hereafter - Life after Death

Question:

How can you prove the existence of hereafter, i.e. life after death?

Answer:

1. Belief in the Hereafter Is Not Based on Blind Faith?

Many people wonder as to how a person with a scientific and logical temperament, can lend any credence to the belief of life after death. People assume that anyone believing in the hereafter is doing so on the basis of blind belief. My belief in the hereafter is based on a logical argument.

2. Hereafter a Logical Belief

There are more than a thousand verses in the Glorious Qur'an; containing scientific facts (refer my book "Qur'an and Modern Science-Compatible or Incompatible?"). Many facts mentioned in the Qur'an have been discovered in the last few centuries. But science has not advanced to a level where it can confirm every statement of the Qur'an.

Suppose 80% of all that is mentioned in the Qur'an has been proved 100% correct. About the remaining 20%, science makes no categorical statement, since it has not advanced to a level, where it can either prove or disprove these statements. With the limited knowledge that we have, we cannot say for sure whether even a single percentage or a single verse of the Qur'an from this 20% portion is wrong. Thus when 80% of the Qur'an is 100% correct and the remaining 20% is not disproved, logic says that even the 20% portion is correct. The existence of the hereafter, which is mentioned in the Qur'an, falls in the 20% ambiguous portion which my logic says is correct.

3. Concept of Peace and Human Values Is Useless Without the Concept of Hereafter

Is robbing a good or an evil act? A normal balanced person would say it is evil. How would a person who does not believe in the hereafter convince a powerful and influential criminal that robbing is evil? Suppose I am the most powerful and influential criminal in the world.

At the same time I am an Intelligent and a logical person. I say that robbing is good because it helps me lead a luxurious life. Thus robbing is good for me. If anybody can put forward a single logical argument as to why it is evil for me, I will stop immediately. People usually put forward the following arguments:

- a. The person who is robbed will face difficulties

Some may say that the person who is robbed will face difficulties. I certainly agree that it is bad for the person who is robbed. But it is good for me. If I rob a thousand dollars, I can enjoy a good meal at a 5-star restaurant.

b. Someone may rob you

Some people argue that someday I may be robbed. No one can rob me because I am a very powerful criminal and I have hundreds of bodyguards. I can rob anybody but nobody can rob me. Robbing may be a risky profession for a common man but not for an influential person like me.

c. The police may arrest you

Some may say, if you rob, you can be arrested by the police. The police cannot arrest me because I have the police on my payroll. I have the ministers on my payroll. I agree that if a common man robs, he will be arrested and it will be bad for him, but I am an extraordinarily influential and powerful criminal. Give me one logical reason why it is bad for me and I will stop robbing.

d. It's easy money

Some may say it's easy money and not hard-earned money. I agree completely that it is easy money, and that is one of the main reasons why I rob. If a person has the option of earning money the easy as well as the hard way, any logical person would choose the easy way.

e. It is against humanity

Some may say it is against humanity and that a person should care for other human beings. I counter argue by asking as to who wrote this law called 'humanity' and why should I follow it? This law may be good for the emotional and sentimental people but I am a logical person and I see no benefit in caring for other human beings.

f. It is a selfish act

Some may say that robbing is being selfish. It is true that robbing is a selfish act; but then why should I not be selfish? It helps me enjoy life.

4. No logical reason for robbing being an evil act

Hence all arguments that attempt to prove that robbing is an evil act are futile. These arguments may satisfy a common man but not a powerful and influential criminal like me. None of the arguments can be defended on the strength of reason and logic. It is no surprise that there are so many criminals in this world. Similarly raping, cheating etc. can be justified as good for a person like me and there is no logical argument that can convince me that these things are bad.

5. A Muslim can convince a powerful and influential criminal

Now let us switch sides. Suppose you are the most powerful and influential criminal in the world, who has the police and the ministers on his payroll. You have army of thugs to protect you. I am a Muslim who will convince you

that robbing; raping, cheating, etc. are evil acts. Even if I put forth the same arguments to prove that robbing is evil the criminal will respond the same way as he did earlier. I agree that the criminal is being logical and all his arguments are true only when he is the most powerful and influential criminal.

6. Every human being wants justice

Each and every human being desires justice. Even if he does not want justice for others he wants justice for himself. Some people are intoxicated by power and influence and inflict pain and suffering on others. The same people, however, would surely object if some injustice was done to them. The reason such people become insensitive to the suffering of others is that they worship power and influence. Power and influence, they feel, not only allows them to inflict injustice on others but also prevents others from doing likewise to them.

7. God is Most Powerful and Just

As a Muslim I would convince the criminal about the existence of Almighty God (refer to answer proving the existence of God). This God is more powerful than you and at the same time is also just. The Glorious Qur'an says:

“Allah is never unjust in the least degree” [Al-Qur'an 4:40]

8. Why does God not punish me?

The criminal, being a logical and scientific person, agrees that God exists, after being presented with scientific facts from the Qur'an. He may argue as to why God, if He is Powerful and Just, does not punish him.

9. The people who do injustice should be punished

Every person who has suffered injustice, irrespective of financial or social status, almost certainly wants the perpetrator of injustice to be punished. Every normal person would like the robber or the rapist to be taught a lesson. Though a large number of criminals are punished, many even go scot-free.

They lead a pleasant, luxurious life, and even enjoy a peaceful existence. If injustice is done to a powerful and influential person, by someone more powerful and more influential than he, even such a person would want that person perpetrators of injustice to be punished.

10. This life is a test for the hereafter

This life is a test for the hereafter. The Glorious Qur'an says:

“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” [Al-Qur'an 67:2]

11. Final justice on Day of Judgment

The Glorious Qur'an says:

“Every soul shall have a taste of death: and only on the Day of Judgment shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved far from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained the object (of life): for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception.” [Al-Qur’an 3:185]

Final justice will be meted out on the Day of Judgment. After a person dies, he will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment along with the rest of mankind. It is possible that a person receives part of his punishment in this world. The final reward and will only be in the hereafter.

God Almighty may not punish a robber or a rapist in this world but he will surely be held accountable on the Day of Judgment and will be punished in the hereafter i.e. life after death.

12. What punishment can the human law give Hitler?

Hitler incinerated six million Jews during his reign of terror. Even if the police had arrested him, what punishment can the human law give Hitler for justice to prevail? The most they can do is to send Hitler to the gas chamber. But that will only be punishment for the killing of one Jew. What about the remaining five million, nine hundred and ninety nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine Jews?

13. Allah can burn Hitler more than six million times in hellfire.

Allah says in the Glorious Qur'an:

“Those who reject Our signs, We shall soon cast into the Fire; as often as their skins are roasted through, We shall change them for fresh skins, that they may taste the penalty: for Allah is Exalted in Power, Wise” [Al-Qur'an 4:56]

If Allah wishes he can incinerate Hitler six million times in the hereafter in the hellfire.

14. No concept of human values or good and bad without concept of hereafter.

It is clear that without convincing a person about the hereafter, i.e. life after death, the concept of human values and the good or evil nature of acts is impossible to prove to any person who is doing injustice especially when he is influential and powerful.

Chapter 17 - Why Are Muslims Divided Into Sects / Different School of Thoughts?

Question:

When all the Muslim follow one and the same Qur'an then why are there so many sects and different schools of thoughts among Muslims?

Answer:

1. Muslims Should Be United

It is a fact that Muslims today, are divided amongst themselves. The tragedy is that such divisions are not endorsed by Islam at all. Islam believes in fostering unity amongst its followers. The Glorious Qur'an says:

“And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves;” [Al-Qur'an 3:103]

Which is the rope of Allah that is being referred to in this verse? It is the Glorious Qur'an. The Glorious Qur'an is the rope of Allah which all Muslims should hold fast together. There is double emphasis in this verse. Besides saying 'hold fast all together' it also says, 'be not divided'. Qur'an further says,

“Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger” [Al-Qur’an 4:59]

All the Muslim should follow the Qur’an and authentic Hadith and be not divided among themselves.

2. It Is Prohibited To Make Sects and Divisions in Islam. The Glorious Qur’an Says:

“As for those who divide. Their religion and break up into sects, thou hast no part in them in the least: Their affair is with Allah: He will in the end tell them the truth of all that they did.” [Al-Qur’an 6:159]

In this verse Allah (swt) says that one should disassociate oneself from those who divide their religion and break it up into sects. But when one asks a Muslim, “who are you?” the common answer is either ‘I am a Sunni, or ‘I am Shia’. Some call themselves Hanafi, or Shafi or Maliki or Humbali. Some say ‘I am a Deobandi’, while some others say ‘I am a Bareilvi’.

3. Our Prophet Was a Muslim

One may ask such Muslims, “Who was our beloved prophet (pbuh)? Was he a Hanafi or a Shafi, or a Humbali or a Maliki?” No! He was a Muslim, like all the other prophets and messengers of Allah before him.

It is mentioned in chapter 3 verse 52 of Al-Qur’an that Jesus (pbuh) was a Muslim. Further, in chapter 3 verse 67, Al-Qur’an says that “Ibrahim (pbuh) was not a Jew or a Christian but was a Muslim”.

4. Qur'an Says Call Yourselves Muslim

a. If anyone poses a Muslim the question who are you, he should say "I am a MUSLIM, not a Hanafi or a Shafi". The Qur'an chapter 41 verse 33 says:

"Who is better in speech than one who calls (men) to Allah, works righteousness, and says, 'I am of those who bow in Islam (Muslim)?" [Al-Qur'an 41:33]

The Qur'an says "Say I am of those who bow in Islam". In other words, say, "I am a Muslim".

b. The Prophet (pbuh) dictated letters to non-Muslim kings and rulers inviting them to accept Islam. In these letters he mentioned the verse of the Qur'an chapter 3 verse 64: Say ye:

"Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will)." [Al-Qur'an 3:64]

5. Respect all the Great Scholars of Islam

We must respect all the great scholars of Islam, including the four Imams', Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Shafi, Imam Humal and Imam Malik (may Allah be pleased with them all). They were great scholars and may Allah reward them for their research and hard work. One can have no objection if someone agrees with the views and research of Imam Abu Hanifa or Imam Shafi, etc. But when posed a

question, ‘who are you?’ the reply should only be ‘I am a Muslim’.

Some may argue by quoting the Hadith of our beloved Prophet from Sunan Abu Dawood Hadith No. 4579. In this Hadith the prophet (pbuh) is reported to have said, “My community will be split up into seventy-three sects.”

This Hadith reports that the prophet predicted the emergence of seventy-three sects. He did not say that Muslims should be active in dividing themselves into sects. The Glorious Qur’an commands us not to create sects. Those who follow the teachings of the Qur’an and Sahih Hadith, and do not create sects are the people who are on the true path.

According to Tirmidhi Hadith No. 171, the prophet (pbuh) is reported to have said, “My Ummah will be fragmented into seventy-three sects, and all of them will be in Hell fire except one sect.” The companions asked Allah’s messenger which group that would be. Where upon he replied, “It is the one to which I and my companions belong.”

The Glorious Qur’an mentions in several verses, “Obey Allah and obey His Messenger”. A true Muslim should only follow the Glorious Qur’an and the Sahih Hadith. He can agree with the views of any scholar as long as they conform to the teachings of the Qur’an and Sahih Hadith. If such views go against the Word of Allah, or the Sunnah of His Prophet, then they carry no weight, regardless of how learned the scholar might be.

If only all Muslims read the Qur'an with understanding and adhere to Sahih Hadith, Insyallah most of these differences would be solved and we could be one united Muslim Ummah.

Chapter 18 - All Religions Teach People to be Righteous, then Why Follow Only Islam?

Question:

All religions basically teach followers to do good deeds. Why should a person only follow Islam? Can he not follow any of the religions?

Answer:

1. Major difference between Islam and most other religions. All religions basically exhort mankind to be righteous and eschew evil. But Islam goes beyond that. It guides us towards practical ways of achieving righteousness and eliminating evil from our individual and collective lives. Islam takes into account human nature and the complexities of human society. Islam is guidance from the Creator Himself. Therefore, Islam is also called the Deenul-Fitrah (the natural religion of Man).

2. Example - Islam commands us to shun robbery and also prescribes method of eliminating robbery

a. Islam Prescribes Method of Eliminating Robbery

All major religions teach that theft is an evil act. Islam teaches the same. So what is the difference between Islam and the other religions? The difference lies in the fact that

Islam, besides teaching that robbing is evil, shows a practical way of creating a social structure in which people will not rob.

b. Islam Prescribes Zakat

Islam prescribes a system of Zakat (obligatory annual charity). Islamic law prescribes that every person who has a saving that exceeds the Nisab level i.e. more than 85 grams of gold, should give 2.5% of that saving every lunar year in charity. If every rich person in the world gave Zakat sincerely, poverty will be eradicated from this world. Not a single human being would die of hunger.

c. Chopping Off the Hands as Punishment for Robbery

Islam prescribes chopping off the hands of the convicted robber. The Glorious Qur'an says in:

“As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands: a punishment by way of example, from Allah, for their crime: and Allah is Exalted in power, full of wisdom.” [Al-Qur'an 5:38]

The non-Muslim may say, “Chopping off the hands in this 20th century. Islam is a barbaric and ruthless religion!”

d. Results Achieved When Islamic Shariah Implemented

America is supposed to be one of the most advanced countries in the world. Unfortunately, it also has one of the highest rates of crime, theft, and robbery. Suppose the Islamic Shariah is implemented in America i.e. every rich person gives Zakat (2.5% of his savings in charity above 85

grams of gold every lunar year), and every convicted robber has his or her hands chopped off as a punishment.

Will the rate of theft and robbery in America increase, remain same or decrease? Naturally it will decrease. Moreover, the existence of such a stringent law would discourage many a potential robber.

I agree that the amount of theft that takes place in the world today is so tremendous that if you chop off the hands of all the thieves, there will be tens of thousands of people whose hands will be chopped off. The point here is that the moment you implement this law the rate of theft will decline immediately.

The potential robber would give it a serious thought before jeopardising his limbs. The mere thought of the punishment itself will discourage majority of the robbers. There will barely be a few who would rob. Hence only a few people's hands would be chopped off but millions would live peacefully without fear of being robbed. Islamic Shariah is therefore practical, and achieves results.

3. Example: Islam prohibits the molestation and rape of women. It enjoins Hijaab and prescribes capital punishment for a convicted rapist.

a. Islam prescribes method of eliminating molestation and rape. All the major religions declare the molestation and rape of women as grave sins. Islam teaches the same. What then is the difference between Islam and the other religions? The difference lies in the fact that Islam does not merely preach respect for women, or abhor molestation

and rape as serious crimes, but also gives clear guidance as to how society can eliminate such crimes.

b. Hijaab for Men

Islam has a system of Hijaab. The Glorious Qur'an first mentions Hijaab for the men and then for the women. Hijaab for the men is mentioned in the following verse:

“Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: and Allah is well acquainted with all that they do.” [Al-Qur'an 24:30]

The moment a man looks at a woman and if any brazen or unashamed thought comes to his mind, he should lower his gaze.

c. Hijaab for Women

Hijaab for women is mentioned in the following verse:

“And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands' fathers, their sons....” [Al-Qur'an 24:31]

The extent of Hijaab for a woman is that her complete body should be covered. The only part that can be seen, are the face and the hands up to the wrists. If they wish to

cover, they can even cover these parts of the body. However, some Islamic scholars insist that even the face should be covered.

d. Hijaab Prevents Molestation

The reason why Allah has prescribed Hijaab for the women is given in the Qur'an:

“O Prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad): that is most convenient, that they should be known (as such) and not molested. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, most Merciful.” [Al-Qur'an 33:59]

The Qur'an says that Hijaab has been prescribed for the women so that they are recognised as modest women this would prevent them from being molested.

e. Example of Twin Sisters

Suppose two sisters who are twins and who are equally beautiful, walk down a street. One of them is wearing the Islamic Hijaab i.e. the complete body is covered except for the face and the hands up to the wrists, and the other twin is wearing a mini skirt or shorts.

Around the corner there is a hooligan who is waiting for an opportunity to tease a girl. Who will he tease? The girl wearing the Islamic Hijaab or the girl wearing the mini skirt or shorts? Dresses that expose more than they conceal, are an indirect temptation to the opposite sex for teasing,

molestation and rape. The Qur'an rightly says that the Hijaab prevents women from being molested.

f. Capital Punishment for Rapist

The Islamic Shariah prescribes capital punishment for a convicted rapist. The non-Muslim may be horrified at such a stringent punishment in this age. Many accuse Islam of being ruthless and barbaric. I have asked a common question to hundreds of non-Muslim men. Suppose God forbid, someone rapes your wife, your mother or your sister and you are made the judge.

The rapist is brought in front of you. What punishment would you give him? All of them said, "we would put him to death." Some went to the extent of saying, "we would torture him to death", If your wife or your mother is raped you want the rapist to be put to death. But if someone else's wife or mother is raped, capital punishment is a barbaric law. Why the double standards?

g. U.S.A. has One of the Highest Rate of Rape

The United States of America is supposed to be one of the most advanced countries of the world. An F.B.I report in the year 1990 says that 102,555 cases of rape were reported. It further says that only 16% of the cases of rapes are reported. Thus, in order to know the actual number of rapes that took place in 1990, the reported figure should be multiplied by 6.25.

We get a total of 640,968 rape cases that took place in the year 1990. If the total is divided by 365 the number of days

in a year, we get an average of 1,756 rape incidents every day.

Later another report said that an average of 1900 cases of rape is committed in U.S.A every day. According to National Crime Victimization Survey Bureau of Justice Statistics (U. S. Dept. of Justice) in 1996 alone 307,000 cases of rape were reported. Only 31% of the actual cases of rape were reported. Thus, $307,000 \times 3.226 = 990,322$ rapes took place in 1996. That is, an average of 2,713 cases of rape took place every day in America in 1996.

Every 32 seconds one rape is taking place in America. Maybe American rapists got bolder. The FBI report of 1990 continues and says that out of the rape cases that were reported only 10% of the rapists were arrested, that is only 1.6% of the actual rapes committed. Out of those arrested, 50% were let free before the trial. This would mean that only 0.8% of the rapists faced a trial. In other words, if a person commits 125 rapes the chances that he will get a punishment for rape is only once. Many would consider this a good gamble.

And the report says that of those people who faced trial 50% received sentences of less than a year's imprisonment though the American law says rape carries a seven year sentence of imprisonment. For a rapist, the judge is lenient to first time offenders. Imagine a person commits 125 rapes and the chances of being convicted is only once, and 50% of the time the judge will grant leniency and give a sentence of less than a year!

h. Results achieved when Islamic Shariah Implemented
Suppose the Islamic Shariah is implemented in America. Whenever a man looks at a woman and if any brazen or unashamed thought comes to his mind, he lowers his gaze.

Every woman wears the Islamic Hijaab that is the complete body is covered except the face and the hands up to the wrists. After this if any man commits rape, he gets capital punishment. The question is, will the rate of rape in America increase, will it remain the same or will it decrease? Naturally it will decrease. Islamic Shariah gets results.

4. Islam has Practical Solutions for the Problems of Mankind

Islam is the best way of life because its teachings are not doctrinaire rhetoric but practical solutions for the problems of mankind. Islam achieves results both at the individual and collective levels. Islam is the best way of life because it is a practical, universal religion not confined to any ethnic group or nationality.

Chapter 19 - Vast Experience Difference Between Islam and the Actual Practice of Muslims

Question:

If Islam is the best religion, why are many of the Muslims dishonest, unreliable, and involved in activities such as cheating, bribing, dealing in drugs, etc.?

Answer:

1. Media Maligns Islam

a. Islam is without doubt the best religion but the media is in the hands of the westerners who are afraid of Islam. The media is continuously broadcasting and printing information against Islam. They provide misinformation about Islam, misquote Islam or project a point out of proportion, if any.

b. When any bomb blasts take place anywhere, the first people to be accused without proof are invariably the Muslims. This appears as headlines in the news. Later, when they find that non-Muslims were responsible, it appears as insignificant news' item.

c. If a 50-year-old Muslim marries a 15-year-old girl after taking her permission, it appears on the front page but when a 50-year-old non-Muslim rapes a 6 year old girl, it may appear in the news in the inside pages as ‘news briefs’. Every day in America on an average 2,713 cases of rape take place but it doesn’t appear in the news, since it has become a way of life for the Americans.

2. Black Sheep in Every Community:

I am aware that there are some Muslims who are dishonest, unreliable, who cheat, etc. but the media projects this as though only Muslims are involved in such activities. There are black sheep in every community. I know Muslims who are alcoholics and who can drink most of the non-Muslims under the table.

3. Muslims Best as a Whole:

In spite of all the black sheep in the Muslim community, Muslims taken on the whole, yet form the best community in the world. We are the biggest community of teetotallers as a whole, i.e. those who don’t imbibe alcohol. Collectively, we are a community which gives the maximum charity in the world.

There is no community as a whole in the world which can show even a candle to the Muslims where modesty is concerned; where sobriety is concerned; where human values and ethics are concerned.

4. Don’t Judge a Car by its Driver:

If you want to judge how good is the latest model of the “Mercedes” car and a person who does not know how to drive sits at the steering wheel and bangs up the car, who will you blame? The car or the driver? But naturally, the driver. To analyse how good, the car is, a person should not look at the driver but see the ability and features of the car.

How fast is it, what is its average fuel consumption, what are the safety measures, etc.? Even if I agree for the sake of argument that the Muslims are bad, we can’t judge Islam by its followers? If you want to judge how good Islam is then judge it according to its authentic sources, i.e. the Glorious Qur’an and the Sahih Hadith.

5. Judge Islam by its Best Follower I.E. Prophet Mohammed (Pbuh):

If you practically want to check how good a car is put an expert driver behind the steering wheel. Similarly, the best and the most exemplary follower of Islam by whom you can check how good Islam is, is the last and final messenger of God, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Besides Muslims, there are several honest and unbiased non-Muslim historians who have acclaimed that prophet Muhammad was the best human being. According to Michael H. Hart who wrote the book, ‘The Hundred Most Influential Men in History’, the topmost position, i.e. the number one position goes to the beloved prophet of Islam, Muhammad (pbuh). There are several such examples of non-Muslims paying great tributes to the prophet, like Thomas Carlyle, La-Martine, etc.

Chapter 20 - Non Muslims Referred as Kafirs

Question:

Why do Muslims abuse non-Muslims by calling them Kafirs?

Answer:

Kafirs means one who rejects. 'Kafirs' is derived from the word 'kufr', which means to conceal or to reject. In Islamic terminology, 'Kafirs' means one who conceals or rejects the truth of Islam and a person who rejects Islam is in English called a 'non-Muslim'.

If a 'non-Muslim' considers being called a 'non-Muslim' or 'Kafirs', which are one and the same, an abuse, it is due to his misunderstanding about Islam. He or she needs to reach out to proper sources of understanding Islam and Islamic terminology, and not only will he not feel abused but appreciate Islam in the proper perspective.

About the Author

Mohamad Idrakisyah is passionate about building people as they would help build the business. When people learn to manage themselves, they are capable of managing others, and in the process are better positioned to manage and build the business. He has fervently shared his knowledge, skills and experience with different level of audiences, during his years in the corporate world and later as professional trainer and consultant, specialising in the areas of business management, leadership and talent development.

He has served in public listed companies in senior management positions, both in Malaysia and in countries abroad. He has developed a flair for managing and developing people from various educational, religious and cultural backgrounds. His thoughts and ideas have influenced many young and aspiring individuals, who in turn, have strived to make their own positive contributions at their workplaces.

Mohamad Idrakisyah also writes regularly, contributing articles of interests to the print and electronic media. He concentrates his writings on matters related to personal development, in connection to business, management, leadership, religion and related topics. In addition, he is a regular speaker at corporate companies, schools and universities, sharing his thoughts to help develop human capital to its highest potential.

Mohamad Idrakisyah is an ardent believer in lifelong learning. He graduated in automotive engineering, has a master's degree in business administration and is currently pursuing his doctorate in business and management.

Mohamad Idrakisyah endeavours to enrich the lives of others through knowledge, so they in return could enhance the lives of others in their own unique way. It would be in keeping with God's will for His creations, to live life to its fullest, in service to Him and all His creations.