

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss the Greatest Loss

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Contents

Indeed Allâh took a pledge from all of the prophets – peace & blessings be upon them- from Adam to `Eesaa (Jesus) that should the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ come to them they would believe in and succour him	12
When `Eesaa (Jesus) ﷺ descends before the hour he will rule according to the Law of Muhammadﷺ	13
Islâm means submission to Allâhﷻ by singling Him out for worship, yielding to Him in obedience, and disassociating oneself from polytheism and its adherents	15
It is incumbent upon every Muslim to have the same understanding of Islâm as the Companions (of Muhammadﷺ) did.....	16
The Companions (of Muhammadﷺ) – may Allâh be pleased with them – are a source of security for this Ummah (i.e. the Muslims)	20
This verse is a dire warning to whoever follows a path other than that of the Companions – may Allâh be pleased with them	22
The most eminent of those who turn in repentance and obedience, after the Prophets, are the Companions (may Allâh be pleased with them)	23
He will be from the saved sect regarding which the Prophetﷺ said,.....	23
Islâm dominates and is not dominated.....	24
The monotheistic religion of Islâm is the most beloved religion to Allâh.....	29
Islâm is the religion of easiness and facilitation	29
Excessiveness and exaggeration may manifest themselves in any one of several ways: .	32
It is mandatory for the slaves of Allâh to cling to Allâh's law.....	33
It is mandatory for the slaves of Allâh to hold fast to the religion with intensity of purpose	34
It is upon the slaves of Allâh to take upon themselves that which they are capable of performing (in worship).....	35
It is upon the slaves of Allâh to strive in attaining sincerity for the sake of Allâh and in emulating the Messenger of Allâh in their acts of worship	36
There is no religion better than Islâm	36
The religion of Islâm is all virtue.....	37
The religion of Islâm is upright and straight with no crookedness in it	38
The straight way is Islâm	39
The religion of Islâm is a religion of guidance and truth.....	40
Allâh ﷻ has guaranteed to preserve the religion of Islâm	42
Whoever acts according to Islâm is rightly guided.....	43
Whoever is pleased with the religion of Islâm as Allâh is pleased with it for His slaves	

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

shall savour the taste of faith and its sweetness.....	43
Whoever implements Islâm shall have a good, happy life	44
Whoever implements Islâm shall be successful in this world and the next.....	45
<i>Toobaa</i> to whoever implements Islâm	46
Whoever has his breast opened by Allâh to Islâm is upon light from his Lord.....	46
He that is not given this light is deprived	47
Islâm is a protection for the blood, honour and wealth of the Muslims	47
Islâm recognizes and protects the rights of both Creator and creation, as befits them, as demonstrated by abundant evidences.....	48
Whoever is pleased with Islâm and practises it will be of the inhabitants of Paradise.....	48
Whoever seeks a religion other than Islâm will never have it accepted of him, and he shall be of those who lose and perish (in the hereafter).....	49
Anyone in such a situation has reached the extreme of falsehood, ingratitude, and loss .	50
Likewise, any Muslim that renounces Islâm and embraces another religion, or no religion at all (otherwise known as secularism) or commits that which invalidates his Islâm, becomes a disbelieving, deviant, apostate, loser, whose deeds are invalidated. He may repent, but if he does not (the Islâmic ruling is that) he should be killed in that state (of disbelief). He will then be of the denizens of the hell-fire. May Allâh grant us refuge from that.....	52
So embracing a religion other than Islâm or renouncing Islâm is the greatest loss.....	54

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Verily All praise belongs to Allâh, we praise Him and seek His aid and we send *Salaat* and *Salaam* upon the Messenger of Allâh, His Family, Companions, and those who befriend him.

To Proceed:

The favours of Allâh ﷻ upon His slaves are many. In fact, they are too many to count or enumerate. Allâh ﷻ says:

﴿وَأِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ لَا تَحْصُوهَا إِنْ الْإِنْسَانُ لَظَلُومٌ كَفَّارٌ﴾

“...and were you to count the favours and blessings of Allâh, never would you be able to enumerate them; verily, man is indeed an extreme wrong doer, an extreme ingrate.”

(Ibraaheem 14:34)

All of these favours are from Allâh. Allâh ﷻ says:

﴿وَمَا يَكُم مِّن نِّعْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ﴾

“Whatever blessings and favours you have are from Allâh.”

(An-Nahl 16:53)

The most excellent and exalted of these favours is the blessing of Islâm. Allâh has perfected, completed, and chosen Islâm as our religion.

﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾

“This day, I have perfected for you your religion, completed my favour and blessing upon you, and chosen Islâm as your religion.”

(Al-Maa'idah 5:3)

﴿فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا﴾

“... so that you became, by His favour and blessing, brethren (in

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Islâm)."

(Aal-`Imraan 3:103)

i.e. the favour and blessing of Islâm.

Allâh ﷻ says:

﴿وَاذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَالْحِكْمَةِ
يَعِظُكُمْ بِهِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ﴾

"Remember Allâh's favours and blessings upon you (i.e. Islâm), and that which He sent down to you of the Book (i.e. the Qur'ân) and Al-Hikmah (the Prophet's Sunna) wherewith He instructs you. Fear Allâh, and know that Allâh is Omniscient."

(Al-Baqarah 2:231)

Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudreeؓ narrated that Mu`aawiyahؓ came upon a group in the mosque. He said, "What makes you sit here?" They said, "We sit and mention Allâh." He said, "I adjure you by Allâh, is this the only reason you have for sitting here?" "By Allâh," they said, "We sat for no other reason." He said (to them), "It was not because of any suspicion that I adjured you; no one that held my status with Allâh's Messengerؐ narrates as few hadiths as I. The Messenger of Allâhؐ once went out to a group of his Companions and said, "What makes you sit here?" They said: "We sit, remember Allâh, and praise Him for having guided us to Islâm and favoured us with it." He said, "I adjure you by Allâh, is this the only reason you have for sitting here?" "By Allâh," they said, "We sit for no other reason." He said (to them), "I did not adjure you because of any suspicion against you, rather, because Jibreel came to me and informed me that Allâhﷻ proudly displays you to the angels."¹

¹ Narrated by Muslim, (2701).

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

The relevant excerpt from this hadith is: “favoured us,” i.e. blessed and graced us.

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿ إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ﴾

“Truly, the true religion with Allâh is Islâm.”

(Aal-`Imraan 3:19)

Islâm is the true religion, for the first (of mankind) and the last, for the whole of Allâh’s creation. It is what all the prophets and messengers called to, even if their laws and ways differed, as Allâh ﷻ has stated:

﴿ لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شِرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا ﴾

“To each among you We have prescribed a law and a clear way.”

(Al-Maa’idah 5:48)

Nooh (Noah) عليه السلام said,

﴿ وَأُمِرْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

“and I have been commanded to be one of the Muslims (those who submit to Allâh's will).”

(Yunus 10:72)

Allâh ﷻ said about Ibrâheem (Abraham) عليه السلام:

﴿ إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَوَصَّى بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَبْنِي إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمُ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ أَمْ كُنتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتُ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِن بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهُهَا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾

“When his Lord said to him, ‘Submit (i.e. be a Muslim).’ He said, ‘I have submitted myself (as a Muslim) to the Lord of

the 'Alameen (mankind, jinns and all that exists). And Ibrâheem (Abraham) enjoined this (submission to Allâh in Islâm) upon his sons as did Ya'qûb (Jacob), (saying), 'O My sons, Allâh has chosen for you the (true) religion, then die not except as Muslims (upon the faith of Islâm).' Or were you witnesses when death approached Ya'qûb (Jacob) when he said unto his sons, 'What will you worship after me?' They said, 'We shall worship your god (Allâh) and the god of your fathers, Ibrâhim (Abraham), Ismâ'il (Ishmael), Is-hâq (Isaac), one god, and to Him we submit (in Islâm).'

(Al-Baqarah 2:131–133)

Yûsuf (Joseph) عليه السلام said,

﴿رَبِّ قَدْ آتَيْتَنِي مِنَ الْمُلْكِ وَعَلَّمْتَنِي مِنْ تَأْوِيلِ الْأَحَادِيثِ فَاطِرَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَنْتَ وَلِيِّ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ تَوَفَّنِي مُسْلِمًا وَأَلْحِقْنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ﴾

“My Lord, You have indeed bestowed on me sovereignty and taught me the interpretation of dreams. Creator of the heavens and the earth, You are my Walî (Protector, helper, Supporter, Guardian, etc.) in this world and in the hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim (one submitting to Your will) and join me with the righteous.”

(Yûsuf 12:101)

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا التَّوْرَةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ﴾

“Indeed it was We Who did send down the Torah to Mûsa (Moses); therein was guidance and light by which the Prophets, who submitted themselves to Allâh's will judged the Jews.”

(Al-Maa'idah 5:44)

And He ﷻ says,

﴿وَإِذْ أَوْحَيْتُ إِلَى الْحَوَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا ءَامَنَّا وَأَشْهَدُ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾

“And when I (Allâh) put in the hearts of the disciples [of `Eesaa (Jesus)] to believe in Me and My messenger, they said, ‘We do believe; bear You witness that we are Muslims.”

(Al-Maa'idah 5:111)

﴿وَقَالَ مُوسَى يَقَوْمِ إِن كُنتُمْ ءَامَنُتُمْ بِاللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنتُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“And Mûsa (Moses) said, ‘O my people, if you have believed in Allâh, then put your trust in Him if you are Muslims.”

(Yunus 10:84)

Pharoah's sorcerers (after repenting and believing) said,

﴿وَمَا نُنْقِمْ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ ءَامَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَاءَنَا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“Our Lord, pour upon us endurance and cause us to die as Muslims.”

(Al-A'raaf 7:126)

Suleiman (Solomon) ﷻ said,

﴿قَالَ يَتَائِفُهَا الْمَلَأُوا أَيْكُمُ بِآيَاتِي بِعَرْشِهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَأْتُونِي مُسْلِمِينَ﴾

“O chiefs, which of you can bring me her (the Queen of Sheba's) throne before they come to me as Muslims.”

(An-Naml 27:38)

Allâh ﷻ goes on to say,

﴿ فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ ﴾

“When she came it was said to her, ‘Is your throne like this?’ She said, ‘It is as though it were the very same.’

Suleiman (Solomon) said, ‘Knowledge has been bestowed upon us before her and we were Muslims (submitted to Allâh).’

(An-Naml 27:42)

The Queen of Sheba said,

﴿ قَالَتْ رَبِّ إِنِّي ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِي وَأَسْلَمْتُ مَعَ سُلَيْمَانَ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

“My Lord, I have wronged myself and I submit myself (in Islâm) together with Suleiman (Solomon) to the Lord of Al-`Aalameen (mankind, jinns, and all that exists).”

(An-Naml 27:44)

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿ الَّذِينَ آمَنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ وَإِذَا تُلِيَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ الْقُلُوبُ أَمْنَ بِهِ إِنَّهُ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا

مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ أُولَئِكَ يُؤْتَوْنَ أَجْرَهُمْ مَرَّتَيْنِ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَبِذَرْنَاهُمْ بِالْحَسَنَةِ السَّيِّئَةِ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ

يُنْفِقُونَ ﴾

“Those to whom We gave the Scripture [i.e. the Torah and the Injeel (Gospel), etc.] before it, - they believe in it (the Qur'ân).

“And when it is recited to them, they say: ‘We believe in it. Verily, it is the Truth from our Lord. Indeed even before it we have been from those who submit themselves to Allâh (in Islâm) as Muslims.

“They will be given their reward twice over, because

they are patient, and repel evil with good, and spend (in charity) out of what We have provided them."

(Al-Qasas 28:52–54)

Allâh ﷻ said to the seal of the prophets and the leader of mankind,

﴿قُلْ إِن صَّلَاتِي وَنُكْحِي وَمَمَاتِي وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ

وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad): 'Verily, my Salât (prayer), my sacrifice, my life, and my death are for Allâh, the Lord of the 'Alameen (mankind, jinns and All that exists). He has no partner; this I have been commanded, and I am the first of the Muslims."

(Al-An`aam 6:162–163)

And He ﷻ says,

﴿هُوَ سَمَّكُمْ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِنْ قَبْلُ﴾

"It is He that named you Muslims aforetime."

(Al-Hajj 22:78)

It has been narrated in the hadith of Al-Haarith Al-Ash`aree ﷺ that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever calls to the way of pre-Islamic ignorance, will be from the coals (fuel) of hell." A man said, "O Messenger of Allâh ﷻ, even if he performs salât and fasts?" The Messenger of Allâh ﷻ said, "even if he performs salât and fasts; so call to the way of Allâh who named you Muslims, Believers, and Slaves of Allâh."²

Abu Hureirah ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "The prophets are children - and in another narration - brothers from fellow-wives; they have different mothers but their religion is one."³

² Narrated by Tirmithe (2863), Ahmad, and others; this is an authentic narration.

³ Narrated by Bukhaaree (3442, 3443) and Muslim (2365).

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Fellow wives are co-wives⁴. The hadith means that their religion is one (i.e. Islâm) and they are in unison regarding the fundamentals of singling Allâh out for worship and differ only in their laws and ways as stated by Allâh ﷻ:

﴿لِكُلِّ جَعَلْنَا مِنْكُمْ شَرْعَةً وَمِنْهَاجًا﴾

“To each among you We have prescribed a law and a clear way.”

(Al-Maa'idah 5:48)

Ibn `Abbaas ؓ explained “law and clear way” to mean “path and tradition or example of the Prophet.” However, the law given unto our Prophet Muhammad ﷺ abrogates all the previous laws. It is obligatory to follow it, and it is impermissible to follow the desires of those who know not. Allâh ﷻ has said,

﴿ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ إِنَّهُمْ لَن

يُغْنُوا عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُتَّقِينَ﴾

***“Then we put you (O Muhammad) on a plain way of
(Our) Commandment [like the one which We
commanded Our Messengers before you] so follow
that, and follow not the desires of those who know
not.***

***Verily, they can be of no avail to you against Allâh,
and verily, the wrong-doers are allies of one another,
but Allâh is the Walee (Helper, Protector, Ally) of the
pious.”***

(Al-Jaathiyah 45: 18–19)

Ibn Katheer commented in his exegesis of Surah Al-Maa'idah, verse 48,

***“But Allâh, Most High, gave unto every Prophet his own distinct
law which would later be partially or totally abrogated by the***

⁴ (i.e. in a polygynous marriage)

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

law of a subsequent Prophet. All previous laws were abrogated by the Law that Allâh sent with Muhammad ﷺ, His servant and Messenger, whom Allâh sent to all the people of earth as the Final Prophet."

Amongst the proofs for this is Allâh's ﷻ statement,

﴿ قُلْ يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا ﴾

"Say (O Muhammad): 'O mankind, verily I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allâh.'"

(Al-A`raaf 7: 158)

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا كَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَلَنَكُنَّ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴾

"And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) except as a giver of glad tidings and a warner to all mankind, but most of mankind know not."

(Saba' 34: 28)

﴿ وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴾

"And We have sent you (O Muhammad) only as a mercy for the 'Alamîn (mankind, jinns and all that exists)."

(Al-Anbiyaa' 21: 107)

Jaabirؓ reported that the Prophetﷺ said:

*"I have been given five things which were not given to any of the Prophets before me..." He then mentioned, "...Every Prophet was sent exclusively to his nation, but I have been sent to the whole of mankind."*⁵

⁵ Narrated by Bukhaaree (438) and Muslim (521).

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Muslim reported (153), on the authority of Abu Hureirah رضي الله عنه that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

“By Him in whose hand is the life of Muhammad, there is none amongst the Jews or Christians that hears about me then dies not having believed in that with which I have been sent, but shall be one of the denizens of Hell-Fire.”

Indeed, Allâh took a pledge from all of the prophets – peace & blessings be upon them- from Adam to `Eesaa (Jesus) that should the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ come to them they would believe in and succour him

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذَ اللَّهُ مِيثَاقَ النَّبِيِّينَ لَمَّا آتَيْنَاكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابٍ وَحِكْمَةٍ ثُمَّ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مُصَدِّقٌ لِمَا مَعَكُمْ لَتُؤْمِنُنَّ بِهِ وَلَتَنْصُرُنَّهُ قَالَ أَأَقْرَرْتُمْ وَأَخَذْتُمْ عَلَىٰ ذَٰلِكُمْ إِصْرِي قَالُوا أَقْرَرْنَا قَالَ فَاشْهَدُوا وَأَنَا مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الشَّاهِدِينَ﴾

“And (remember) when Allâh took the Covenant of the Prophets, saying: ‘Take whatever I gave you from the Book and Hikmah (understanding of the laws of Allâh, etc.), and afterwards there will come to you a messenger (Muhammad) confirming what is with you; you must then believe in him and succour him.’ Allâh said: ‘Do you agree (to it) and will you take up My covenant (which I conclude with you)?’ They said: ‘We agree.’ He said: ‘Then bear witness and I am with you among the witnesses (for this).’

(Aal -`Imraan 3:81)

When `Eesaa (Jesus) ﷺ descends before the hour he will rule according to the Law of Muhammad ﷺ

Bukhaaree and Muslim reported, on the authority of Abu Hureirahؓ, that the Messenger of Allâhﷺ said,

“By He whose hand my soul is in, `Eesaa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) is about to descend amongst you as a just ruler. He shall break the cross...”

** (An-Nawawee commented in his exposition of Muslim:

“Ruler” means that he will descend, not with his own message and abrogating laws, rather, he shall rule according to this sharia and be one of the rulers of this ummah (the Muslims).”

Al-Haafith, in “Fat-hul Baaree”, made a similar explanation.)

The hadith of Abu Hureirahؓ is further proof; he said that the Messenger of Allâhﷺ said,

“How will you be when the son of Maryam (Mary) (i.e. `Eesaa (Jesus)) descends amongst you and judges by the Law of the Qur’an (and not by the law of the Gospel).” ⁶

It has been narrated in Muslim (156): On the authority of Jaabirؓ, that he heard the Prophetﷺ say,

“`Eesaa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) will descend (upon the

⁶ (Agreed upon.)

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Muslims) and their emir will say, 'Come and lead us in salât,' but `Eesaa will reply, 'No, you are to lead yourselves,' as an honour from Allâh to this ummah (the Muslims)."

Al-Haafith reported in "Fat-hul-baaree", that Ibn At-Teen explained:

"The meaning of his statement, 'you are to lead yourselves' is that the sharia of Muhammad shall remain valid until the Day of Resurrection and that every era will have its people of knowledge."

At-Tabaraanee reported, in "Al-Awsat", on the authority of `Abdullah ibn Mughaffalؓ, that the Messenger of Allâhﷺ said,

"Then `Eesaa ibn Maryam (Jesus son of Mary) will descend, confirming Muhammad and following his religion, a rightly guided leader and a just ruler who will kill the Dajjaal (Antichrist)."

This chain of narration is *hasan*.

The Qur'aan that was sent down upon Muhammadﷺ was sent down with truth, corroborates the scripture that preceded it, and is a trustworthy authority over it, as stated by Allâhﷻ,

﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَيْهِ﴾

"And we have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the Book (this Qur'ân) in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it and Muhayminan (as a trustworthy judge and witness) over it (old Scriptures)."

(Al-Maa'idah 5: 48)

Islâm means submission to Allâhﷻ by singling Him out for worship, yielding to Him in obedience, and disassociating oneself from polytheism and its adherents

It is composed of three levels: Islâm (submission), *Eemaan* (faith), and *Ihsaan* (excellence in worship). Individually, however, each level can be used to refer to Islâm as a whole.

The level of Islâm consists of five pillars, the level of *eemaan* (faith), of six pillars⁷, and the level of *ihsaan*, of one single pillar. The total number of pillars then, is eleven. They are all mentioned in the well-known “*Hadith of Jibreel*” as reported by Muslim, on the authority of `Umar ibn Al-Khattaabؓ, that Jibreel asked the Prophetﷺ about Islâm. The Prophetﷺ answered:

“Islâm is that you testify that nothing has the right to be worshipped other than Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, and that you establish the prayer, fast (the month of) Ramadhân, and perform Hajj to the House (in Mecca) if able to do so.”

He also asked him about *eemaan* (faith) and he answered:

“It is that you believe in Allâh, His angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day and believe in the (divine) pre-decree, be it good or bad.”

He asked him about *ihsaan* (excellency of worship), to which he answered:

“It is that you worship Allâh as though you see Him and if you do not see Him, then He certainly sees you.”

At the end of the hadith the Prophetﷺ said, “*That was Jibreel who came to*

⁷ Otherwise referred to in English as articles of faith.

teach you your religion.”

The like of this was narrated by Abu Hureirahؓ in “Bukhaaree” (50) and “Muslim” (9).

The Prophetﷺ said in a hadith narrated by Ibn `Umarؓ:

“Islâm is built upon five (pillars): Testimony that nothing has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, establishing the salât, giving zakât, performing Hajj, and the fast of Ramadhân.⁸”

It is incumbent upon every Muslim to have the same understanding of Islâm as the Companions (of Muhammadﷺ) did

They remained unblemished (in their religion), as stated by the Prophetﷺ, *“This Ummah of yours (the Muslims) has had its well-being granted to it in its early days; its latter days shall be smitten with trials and affairs which you shall denounce.”*⁹ The aforementioned ‘well-being’ includes their hearts, tongues, understanding, intentions and *deen* (religion).

It has been narrated on the authority of `Abdullah ibn Mas`oodؓ that he said,

“Verily, Allâh looked into the hearts of His slaves and saw the heart of Muhammadﷺ to be the best of hearts, so He chose him for Himself and sent him with His message. He then looked into the hearts of His slaves after Muhammad, and found the best of them to be the hearts of the Companions of

⁸ Narrated by Bukhaaree (8) and Muslim (16).

⁹ Narrated by Muslim (1844) on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Amr.

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Muhammad, so He appointed them helpers to His Prophet to fight for his religion; so whatever the Muslims consider good is considered good by Allâh, and whatever the Muslims consider bad is considered bad by Allâh.¹⁰

** The context here clearly lends itself to the definite article in his statement, “so whatever the Muslims consider good...” making specific reference to the Companions (of Muhammad ﷺ). This hadith then refers specifically to the consensus of the Companions and in no way includes the consensus of others, much less the mere hypotheses of a limited few. Moreover, the hadith is the statement of a Companion, not of the Prophet ﷺ himself, as stated by As-Sindee in “*Haashiyat Al-Musnad*” (6/85) and (as is apparent) in the chapter heading for “*Chapter treating of consensus*” in “*Kashf Al-Astaar*” (1/81) by Al-Haythamee and “*Majma` Az-Zawaa'id*” (1/177).

So it is in no way a proof for those who condone innovation. All innovations are deviations as stated by the Prophet ﷺ, “*Every innovation is a deviation.*”

Allâh ﷻ praises the Companions profusely both in the Qur’aan and on the tongue of His Prophet ﷺ.

By way of illustration:

﴿وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَا يَسْتَوِي مَنكُم مَّنْ أَنْفَقَ مِن قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ

وَقَتْلِ أُولَئِكَ أَعْظَمُ دَرَجَةً مِّنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِن بَعْدِ وَقَتْلُوا كُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ﴾

“Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the conquest (of Makkah) (to those among you who did so later); such are higher in degree than those who spent and fought afterwards, but to all Allâh has promised the best (reward).”

(Al-Hadeed 57:10)

¹⁰ Narrated by Ahmad and others with a hasan chain of narration.

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Allâh ﷻ made them a general promise of ‘the best reward’. The best reward is nothing but *Jannah* (Paradise).

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿وَالسَّابِقُونَ السَّابِقُونَ أُولَئِكَ الْمُقَدَّمُونَ وَالْأُولَئِكَ الْأُولُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَنٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ﴾

“And the foremost in embracing Islâm of the Muhâjirûn (those who migrated from Makkah to Al-Madinah) and the Ansâr (the citizens of Al-Madinah who helped and gave aid to the Muhâjirûn) and also those who followed them exactly (in faith), Allâh is well-pleased with them and they are well-pleased with Him. He has prepared for them gardens (of Paradise) under which (the overhanging branches of which) rivers flow, to dwell therein forever; that is the supreme success.”

(At-Tawbah 9:100)

Allâh ﷻ informs us that He is pleased with the aforementioned ‘foremost’ and those that follow them in faith, be they in temporal proximity to them or not. He has prepared for them gardens (of Paradise). This shows that they are adherents of the truth and that those that are in opposition to them are adherents of falsehood and error.

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ﴾

“What else can there be, after the truth, save error?”

(Yunus 10:32)

Ibn Taymiyyah said,

“He is pleased, until the Day of Resurrection, with those that follow those who were foremost. This shows that whoever follows them is engaged in an action that is pleasing to Allâh, and Allâh is pleased only by truth, not falsehood.”¹¹

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَفَازَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَى عَلَى سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا﴾

“Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, and those who are with him are severe against the disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking bounty from Allâh and (His) good pleasure. Their marks (i.e. of their Faith) are on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of prostration (during prayers). This is their description in the Torah; their description in the Injeel (Gospel) is that of a (sown) seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong. It then thickens, and stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers (thus did He make them) that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allâh has promised those among them who believe and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a great reward (i.e. Paradise).”

¹¹ “Majmoo` Al-Fataawa” (19/ 178)

(Al-Fat-h 48:29)

The Companions (of Muhammadﷺ) – may Allâh be pleased with them – are a source of security for this Ummah (i.e. the Muslims)

The Prophetﷺ said,

“The stars are a source of security for the sky¹²; when the stars disappear, the evil which it has been promised shall befall it. I am a source of safety and security to my Companions; when I go, the evil which (my Companions) have been promised shall befall them. My Companions are a source of security for the Ummah (i.e. the rest of the Muslims); when they go, the evil which my Ummah have been promised shall befall them.”

(Narrated by Muslim, on the authority of Abu Moosa Al-Ash`areeؓ.)

Imam Nawawee explained in his exposition of “*Saheeh Muslim*”, saying:

“The meaning of the Prophet’sﷺ statement, ‘My Companions are a source of security for the Ummah; when they go there shall befall my Ummah that which they have been promised,’ refers to the advent of innovations, tribulations and turmoil in the religion, the appearance of Shaytaan’s (Satan’s) horn, the triumphing of the Romans against them and the violation of Makkah and Al-Madinah etc. These are all from his signs.”

Allâhﷻ says,

¹² That is, as long as the stars remain, then the sky will also remain, but the scattering of the stars (on Judgement Day) will herald the waning and splitting asunder of the sky.

﴿كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ ءَامَنَ أَهْلُ الْكِتَابِ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِّنْهُمْ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَأَكْثَرُهُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ﴾

“You are the best of peoples ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin the good, forbid the evil, and believe in Allâh. Were the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) to believe, it would be better for them; among them are some who have faith (in the Qur’an), but most of them are rebellious (against Allâh's commands).”

(Aal-`Imraan 3:110)

The Companions are the first to whom this verse is applicable.

The Prophet ﷺ said, *“The best of people are my generation, then those that follow them, then those that follow them...”*¹³ For this reason Allâh made faith like unto theirs a prerequisite for attaining guidance.

He ﷺ says,

﴿فَإِنْ ءَامَنُوا بِمِثْلِ مَا ءَامَنُتُمْ بِهِ فَقَدْ اهْتَدَوْا وَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّمَا هُمْ فِي شِقَاقٍ فَسَيَكْفِيكَهُمُ اللَّهُ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ﴾

“So if they believe in the like of that which you believe, then they are rightly guided.”

He then mentions that whosoever turns away from their path will be in opposition - that is, in opposition to the truth and its adherents. He says, in completion of the previous verse,

¹³ Narrated by Bukhaaree (2652, 3651, 6429) and Muslim (2533).

“but if they turn away, then they are only in opposition, so Allâh will suffice you against them. He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower.”

(Al-Baqarah 2:137)

Allâh ﷻ also says,

﴿وَمَنْ يُشَاقِقِ الرَّسُولَ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا بُيِّنَ لَهُ الْهُدَىٰ وَيَتَّبِعْ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ تُوَلِّهِ مَا تَوَلَّىٰ وَنُصْلِهِ جَهَنَّمَ ۖ وَسَاءَتْ مَصِيرًا﴾

“And whosoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger (Muhammad) after the right path has been shown clearly to him, and follows other than the way of the believers, We shall leave him to that which he has chosen, and burn him in Hell - what an evil destination.”

(An-Nisaa’ 4: 115)

This verse is a dire warning to whoever follows a path other than that of the Companions – may Allâh be pleased with them

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ﴾

“...follow the path of those who turn to Me in repentance and obedience.”

(Luqmaan 38: 15)

The most eminent of those who turn in repentance and obedience, after the Prophets, are the Companions (may Allâh be pleased with them)

So whoever strictly adheres to the path of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions and is upon the likes of what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ and his Companions were upon in creed, methodology, worship, and conduct, then, he is from the succoured faction about which the Prophet ﷺ said,

“A faction of my followers will remain obedient to Allâh's orders. They shall remain unharmed by those who forsake or oppose them, till Allâh's order comes upon them while they are still prevailing over the people.”¹⁴

He will be from the saved sect regarding which the Prophet ﷺ said,

“This Ummah (the Muslims) shall divide into seventy three sects, all but one shall enter the hell-fire.” They said, “Messenger of Allâh, who are they?” He said, “The jamaa`ah.”

Thus was it narrated on the authority of Mu`aawiyah ؓ and others. The meaning of “jamaa`ah” is that they group upon implementation of the Book and Sunna in accordance to the methodology of Allâh ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. This is made clear in the hadith of `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Al-`Aas ؓ in which they said, “Messenger of Allâh, who are they?” He said,

“Whoever is upon what I and my Companions are upon today.”

This hadith, despite having been narrated by Al-Afreeqee (a weak narrator), is substantiated by other corroborative narrations. So this sect, by the permission of Allâh ﷻ, shall be safe in this world, from associating anything

¹⁴ Narrated by Bukhaaree (3641) and Muslim (1037). (This particular wording was narrated by Muslim) on the authority of Mu`aawiyah ؓ and others.

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

with Allah ﷻ in worship, innovations, and fabrications; and in the hereafter, from the fire. We ask Allâh ﷻ, by His Grace, Munificence, Beneficence, and Excellence to make us from them.

This is a distinguishing characteristic of the *Salafis, Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah*. They understand Islâm according to the understanding of the Companions and their righteous followers. The different sects and factions that adhere to their desires and innovations, be it in present-day or of old, understand Islâm according to the understanding of their founder, and have consequently misguided both themselves and others.

It has been remarked most excellently that,

*"All good lies in following the predecessors
And all evil lies in the innovation of their successors."*

Fine indeed is the statement of Imam Malik,

"The latter part of this Ummah (the Muslims) shall never be rectified except by that which rectified the first part."

Islâm dominates and is not dominated

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ﴾

"It is He Who has sent his Messenger (Muhammad) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islâm), to make it ascendant over all religions even though the Polytheists hate it."

(At-Tawbah 9: 33)

﴿وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَمُهَيْمِنًا عَلَيْهِ﴾

"And We have sent down to you (O Muhammad) the

Book (this Qur'ân) in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it and Muhayminan (as a trustworthy judge and witness) over it (i.e. the old Scriptures)."

(Al-Maai'dah 5: 48)

At-Tahaawee, in “*Sharh Ma`anee Al-Aathaar*” (3/ 257), Ibn Hazm in “*Al-Muhalla*” (Chapter treating of jihad: issue 939), and Ibn Zanjawaih in “*Al-Amwaal*”, all narrate on the authority of Hammaad ibn Zaid, from Ayyoob, from `Ikrimah, from Ibn `Abbaasؓ regarding a Christian or Jewish woman embracing Islâm whilst married to a Christian or Jew: he said, “They are to be separated. Islâm assumes ascendancy and is not ascended.” Narrated with an authentic chain of narration¹⁵.

This has also been narrated directly from the Prophetﷺ on the authority of several Companions:

Of the proofs that show us the ascendancy and superiority of Islâm is that whoever adheres to it shall establish ascendancy and superiority. Allâhﷻ says,

﴿وَلَا تَهِنُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ﴾

“So do not weaken (against your enemy), nor be sad, and you will be ascendant (in victory) if you are indeed (true) believers.”

(Aal-`Imraan 3: 139)

﴿إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَعْيسَى ابْنُ مَرْيَمَ مَتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ

¹⁵ Abu `Ubayd narrated it in “*Al-Amwaal*” (327). He said, “It was narrated to me by Husheim who said, ‘I was informed by Khaalid,’ from `Ikrimah, I think, from Ibn `Abbaasؓ, who said, ‘Islam assumes ascendancy and is not ascended.’ This is an authentic chain of narration; the said Husheim is Husheim ibn Basheer and Khaalid is the one otherwise known as “*Al-Hath-thaa*’ (The cobbler)”.

فَوَقَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأَحْكُم بَيْنَكُمْ فِيمَا كُنْتُمْ فِيهِ تَخْلَفُونَ ﴿٥٥﴾

“And (remember) when Allâh said: "O 'Eesaa (Jesus), I will take you and raise you unto Myself and clear you [of the forged statement that 'Eesaa (Jesus) is Allâh's son] of those who disbelieve, and I will make those who follow you (who worship nothing but Allâh) ascendant over those who disbelieve [in Allâh's sole right to worship, or in any of His Messengers, e.g. Muhammad , 'Iesa (Jesus), Mûsa (Moses), etc., or in any of His Books, e.g. the Torah, the Injeel (Gospel), the Qur'ân] till the Day of Resurrection. Then you will return to Me and I will judge between you in that in which you used to differ.”

(Aal-`Imraan 3:55)

﴿ زَيْنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَيَسْخَرُونَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ وَاللَّهُ

يَرْزُقُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ ﴿٢١٢﴾

“Beautified is the life of this world to those who disbelieve and they mock those who believe, but those who obey Allâh's orders and keep away from what He has forbidden shall be above them on the Day of Resurrection. And Allâh bestows without limit upon whomsoever He wills.”

(Al-Baqarah 2:212)

When Moosa (Moses) عليه السلام petitioned his Lord ﷻ to send his brother, Haaroon (Aaron) عليه السلام, with him as a helper and aide in his proselytization of Fir'aun (Pharoah) and his people Allâh ﷻ said (to him),

﴿ قَالَ سَنَشُدُّ عَضُدَكَ بِأَخِيكَ وَنَجْعَلُ لَكُمَا سُلْطٰنًا فَلَا يَصِلُونَ إِلَيْكُمَا بِأَيْنِيتَا أَنْتُمَا وَمَنِ اتَّبَعَكُمَا

الْغَلْبُونَ

***“We shall strengthen your arm through your brother,
and give you both power so they shall not be able to
harm you. With Our signs, it is you two and those
who follow you that shall be the victors.”***

(Al-Qasas 28:35)

Ibn `Abbaasؓ narrated that a man came to the Messenger of Allâhﷺ and said, “Last night I saw in a dream an umbrageous¹⁶ cloud, dripping butter and honey. I saw the people gathering the butter and honey in their hands; some in plenty and others in moderation. There was a rope extending from the earth to the sky. I saw you cling to it and ascend. Another man then clung to it and ascended. Another man then clung to it and ascended. Another (fourth) man then clung to it; it snapped but was re-connected.” Abu Bakrؓ said, “By Allâh, Messenger of Allâh - may my father be ransomed for you – you must allow me to interpret this dream.” ‘Interpret it,’ said the Prophetﷺ. Abu Bakrؓ said, ‘The umbrageous¹⁷ cloud symbolizes Islâm; the butter and honey dripping from it symbolize the Qur’aan and its sweetness dripping (is its knowledge) being acquired in plenty by some and in moderation by others. The rope extended from the sky to the earth is the truth that you are upon; you cling to it and Allâh gives you ascendancy by it. Another man shall then cling to it and ascend; then another shall cling to it and ascend. Yet another shall cling to it and it shall break but be re-connected and he shall then ascend. Messenger of Allâh, inform me – may my father be ransomed for you – am I right or wrong?” The Prophetﷺ replied, “You are right in some and wrong in some.” Abu Bakrؓ said, “Messenger of Allâh, by Allâh, you must tell me what I was wrong in.” The Prophetﷺ said, “Do not swear.”¹⁸ Thus was it narrated by most of the narrators from Az-Zuhree... See “Fat-hul Baaree” by Ibn Hajar.

¹⁶ Providing shade

¹⁷ See previous footnote

¹⁸ Narrated by Bukhaaree (7046) and Muslim (2269).

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“A group of my followers will remain obedient to Allâh's orders. They shall remain unharmed by those who forsake or oppose them, till Allâh's order comes upon them while they are still prevailing over the people.”¹⁹

In another narration, “A group of the Muslims shall not cease to fight upon the Truth and be prevalent against those who are hostile to them until the Day of Resurrection.”

Thawbaan رضي الله عنه said that the Prophet ﷺ said:

‘A group from my Ummah (the Muslims) shall continue to prevail on the truth; they shall remain unharmed by those that forsake them until the decree of Allâh comes and they are in that state.’²⁰

Al-Mugheerah ibn Shu`bah رضي الله عنه said, “I heard the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ say,

‘Some people from my Ummah (the Muslims) will continue to prevail over the people until the decree of Allâh comes upon them in that state.’²¹

Jaabir رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said,

“A group of my Ummah (the Muslims) shall continue to fight for the truth, in ascendancy, until the Day of Resurrection.”²²

¹⁹ Narrated by Bukhaaree (3641) and Muslim (1037); (this particular wording was narrated by Muslim) on the authority of Mu`aawiyah رضي الله عنه.

²⁰ Narrated by Muslim (1920).

²¹ Narrated by Muslim (1921) and Bukhaaree (3640).

²² Narrated by Muslim (1923).

The monotheistic religion of Islâm is the most beloved religion to Allâh

As narrated in the hadith of Ibn `Abbaasؓ, who narrated that the Prophetﷺ said, *“The most beloved of religions to Allâh is the facilitated haneefiyah (Islâmic monotheism).”*²³

Islâm is the religion of easiness and facilitation

Allâhﷻ has said,

﴿وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ مِّلَّةَ أَبِيكُمْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ﴾

“He has not laid upon you in religion any hardship, it is the religion (Islâmic Monotheism) of your father Ibraaheem (Abraham).”

(Al-Hajj 22:78)

Allâhﷻ describes the Qur’aan by saying,

﴿وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ لِلذِّكْرِ فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ﴾

“And we have indeed made the Qur’aan easy to understand and remember; is there any then, that will remember (or receive admonition)?”

(Al-Qamar 54: 17)

Bukhaaree reports in his *“Saheeh”*, on the authority of Abu Hureirahؓ, that the Prophetﷺ said:

²³ Narrated by Ahmad, Al-Bazzaar, At-Tabaraanee, and others; it has corroborative narrations which raise it to the level of a valid proof.

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

"The religion (of Islâm) is easy but whoever is excessive in the religion (of Islam) shall be overcome. So adopt a middle accurate way (in worship), do your utmost, and receive glad tidings (that you will be rewarded), and gain strength by worshipping in the mornings, afternoons and some of the night."

Ahmad and others narrate, on the authority of Bureidah ibn Hasseeb Al-Aslameeؓ that the Messenger of Allâhﷺ said, *"Take the middle way, for verily, whoever is excessive in the religion shall be overcome."* (5/ 350). He repeated, *"Take the middle way"* three times."

Al-Haafith explained in *"Fat-h Al-Baaree"*, in his exposition of the hadith of Abu Hureirahؓ:

"... It means that whoever is excessive in his practice of the religion shall discontinue and find himself incapable. Ibn Al-Muneer commented:

'This hadith contains a sign of the Prophethood. Both we and those before us have seen that those who are excessive discontinue (their worship). This (hadith) is not a prohibition from doing ones utmost in worship, for that is laudable, rather, it prohibits excessiveness, for it (eventually) leads to weariness. It prohibits exaggeration in supererogatory acts of worship, for it results in neglect of that which is better and in delaying obligatory acts of worship from their prescribed time, as is the case with one that resists sleep and prays all night then falls into a deep slumber in the last part of the night and misses the dawn prayer with the congregation, or in its preferred time, or sleeps until sunrise, thereby missing it completely.' End of quote.

The excessiveness (in worship) condemned by the Prophetﷺ is mentioned in the hadith of Anas ibn Maalikؓ who said:

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

“Three men came to the houses of the Prophet’s ﷺ wives asking about his worship. When they were informed about it, they considered (their own worship) insufficient and said, ‘Who are we in comparison to the Prophet ﷺ? His past and future sins have been forgiven.’ One of them said, ‘I shall offer the prayer throughout the night forever.’ The other said, ‘I will fast throughout the year and never break my fast.’ The third said, ‘I will shun women and never marry.’ When the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to them he said, ‘Are you the ones that said so-and-so? By Allâh, I am more submissive to Allâh and fear Him more than you. Yet I fast and break my fast, I sleep and also marry women. So he who does not follow my tradition in religion, is not from me (not one of my followers).”²⁴

Anasؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ entered the mosque (and found) a rope tied between two pillars. *“What is this?”* he asked. They said, *“It is for Zainab. She prays and when she slackens or feels tired she holds it.”* The Prophet ﷺ said, *“Untie it. Let one pray as long as one feels fresh; when one slackens or tires he should sit.”²⁵*

There is also the hadith narrated by `Aai’shah – may Allah be pleased with her- who said:

“The Prophet entered upon me while I had a woman in my company. He said, ‘Who is she?’ I replied, ‘So and so; she does not sleep at night but prays.’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Work deeds within your capacity; for verily, Allâh does not get tired (of giving rewards) but you will get tired. The most beloved worship in the sight of Allâh is that which is performed with consistency.”²⁶

In another narration Muslim reported that `Aa’ishah, wife of the Prophet ﷺ, informed him about Hawlaa’ bint Tuwait ibn Habeeb ibn Asad ibn `Abdil-

²⁴ Reported by Bukhaaree (5063) and Muslim (1401).

²⁵ Reported by Muslim (784).

²⁶ Narrated by Bukhaaree (43) and Muslim (785) (This particular wording was reported by Muslim).

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

‘Uzzaa. Hawlaa’ passed by while the Prophet ﷺ was with her. She said, *“This is Hawlaa’ bint Tuwait. They say she does not sleep at night.”* He said, *“She does not sleep at night? Take upon yourselves deeds within your capacity; for verily, Allâh does not tire (of giving rewards) but you may tire (of worshipping Him).”*

There is also the hadith narrated by Abu Hureirah ؓ from the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ who said,

“If any of you stands at night in prayer and finds that he is unable to recite the Qur’an and knows not what he is saying, let him lie down.”²⁷

Excessiveness and exaggeration may manifest themselves in any one of several ways:

1. By adding to that which is (Islâmically) prescribed.
2. By burdening oneself with more than one is capable of.
3. By overemphasizing the importance of a certain act of worship so that it leads to neglect of that which is more important, as has been said (in the dictum), *‘Whoever is busied by the mandatory from performing the supererogatory is excuplated, but whoever is busied by the supererogatory from performing the mandatory is deluded.’²⁸*
4. By elevating the permissible to the level of recommendable or mandatory.
5. By elevating the recommendable to the level of mandatory.
6. By making that which is permissible disliked or haram.

²⁷ Reported by Muslim (787).

²⁸ From «الأربعين في إرشاد السائر إلى منازل المتقين» “*Al-Arba`een fi Irshad As-Saa`ireen ila Manaazil Al-Muttaqeen*”, by Abul-Futooh, Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn `Ali At-Taa`ee (475 – 555 H). Ath-Thahabee said about him, in his biography, in “*Siyar A`laam An-Nubalaa`*”, “The righteous sheikh, imam, admonisher, and scholar of hadith...”

7. By making the disliked haram.

Sheikh-ul-Islâm Ibn Taymiyyah said in *“Iqtidhaa’ As-Siraat Al-Mustaqeem”*:

“Excessiveness may assume the form of taking acts of worship that are neither mandatory nor desirable to be mandatory or desirable, or by taking things that are neither haram nor undesirable, but permissible and good, to be haram or undesirable.”

It is mandatory for the slaves of Allâh to cling to Allâh’s law

Allâh ﷻ has said,

﴿ فَاسْتَمْسِكْ بِالَّذِي أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ وَإِنَّهُ لَذِكْرٌ لَّكَ وَلِقَوْمِكَ وَسَوْفَ تُسْأَلُونَ ﴾

“So hold you (O Muhammad) fast to that which is revealed to you; verily, you are on a straight path. And verily, this (the Qur’ân) is indeed a reminder for you (O Muhammad) and your people (Quraish people, or your followers), and you will be questioned (about it).”

(Az-Zukhruf 43:43–44)

This is the quintessence of righteousness, the reward of which Allâh does not suffer go to waste. As He ﷻ has stated,

﴿ وَالَّذِينَ يَمْسِكُونَ بِالْكِتَابِ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّا لَا نَضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُصْلِحِينَ ﴾

“And as to those who hold fast to the Book (i.e. act on its teachings) and perform As-Salât, certainly, we shall never waste the reward of those who do righteous deeds.”

(Al-A`raaf 7:170)

It is mandatory for the slaves of Allâh to hold fast to the religion with intensity of purpose

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿يُحْيِي خُذِ الْكِتَابَ بِقُوَّةٍ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا﴾

“(it was said to Zakariyya’s son): ‘O Yahyaa (John), hold fast the Scripture (Torah),’ and we gave him wisdom while yet a child.”

(Maryam 19:12)

Allâh ﷻ said, regarding Moosa (Moses) عليه السلام,

﴿وَكَتَبْنَا لَهُ فِي الْأَلْوَاحِ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْعِظَةً وَتَفْصِيلًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَخُذْهَا بِقُوَّةٍ وَأْمُرْ قَوْمَكَ يَأْخُذُوا بِأَحْسَنِهَا سَأُرِيكُمْ دَارَ الْفَاسِقِينَ﴾

“And We wrote for him on the tablets the lesson to be drawn from all things and the explanation of all things (and said): ‘hold unto these with firmness and enjoin your people to take the best of that therein. I shall show you the abode of those disobedient to Allâh.”

(Al-A`raaf 7:145)

Allâh ﷻ also says,

﴿خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَاذْكُرُوا مَا فِيهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

“(O Children of Israel,): Hold fast to that which We have given you, and remember that which is therein that you may become pious.”

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

(Al-Baqarah 2:63)

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِيثَاقَكُمْ وَرَفَعْنَا فَوْقَكُمُ الطُّورَ خُذُوا مَا آتَيْنَاكُمْ بِقُوَّةٍ وَأَسْمِعُوا﴾

“(O Children of Israel,): (remember) when We took your covenant and raised above you the mount (saying), ‘Hold firmly to what We have given you and hear (Our Word).”

(Al-Baqarah 2:93)

The Prophet ﷺ said:

“Hold fast to my Sunna and the Sunna of the rightly guided Caliphs who shall succeed me. Bite on to it with your molars. And beware of new affairs (in religion), for verily, every innovation is a deviation.”

(This narration is authentic and reported by Tirmithi and others on the authority of Al-`Irbaadh ibn Saariyah.)

It is upon the slaves of Allâh to take upon themselves that which they are capable of performing (in worship)

as stated in the aforementioned hadith of `Aa'ishah and in the following statement of Allâh ﷻ,

﴿فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ﴾

“Keep your duty to Allâh and fear Him as much as you can.”

(At-Taghaabun 64:16)

It is upon the slaves of Allâh to strive in attaining sincerity for the sake of Allâh and in emulating the Messenger of Allâh in their acts of worship

This is the middle accurate way that we have been ordered to adopt in the aforementioned hadith of Abu Hureirah رضي الله عنه.

It is not, however, permissible to be remiss in implementing the Sharia proofs under the pretext of “easiness” or “facilitation”. Amongst the proofs regarding Islâm’s facilitation is the aforementioned hadith of `Abdullah ibn `Abbaas رضي الله عنه.

There is no religion better than Islâm

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿وَمَنْ أَحْسَنُ دِينًا مِّمَّنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ وَاتَّبَعَ مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَاتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ

إِبْرَاهِيمَ خَلِيلًا﴾

“And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face (himself) to Allâh (in Islâm) and is a doer of good”

(An-Nisaa’ 4:125)

Ibn Taymiyyah commented in his Qur’anic explanation:

“Allâh negates that any religion should be better than this religion and contests any who would affirm the existence of a religion better than it, for this is an interrogative disapprobation. It is a prohibitive and condemnatory disapprobation upon anyone who would consider any religion better than this one.”

The religion of Islâm is all virtue

Whoever Allâhﷻ wants good for, He will bring Islâm to him. It has been narrated in hadiths, *“Whose Islâm is the best?”* and *“What sort of deeds (or what qualities) of Islâm are good?”*, such as in the hadith of `Abdullah ibn Al-`Aas ibn `Amrﷺ wherein a man asked the Prophetﷺ, *“What is the best of Islâm?”* He replied, *“To feed (the poor) and greet (with salaam) those you know and those you do not know.”*²⁹

******(The meaning here is, “What are the best virtues in Islâm?”)

In the hadith of Abu Moosa Al-Ash`areeﷺ some people asked the Messenger of Allâhﷻ, ‘what is the best in Islâm?’ He replied, ‘*He whose hands and tongue the Muslims are safe from.*’³⁰

****** (Al-Haafith explained in “*Fat-hul Baaree*”:

“Islâm is singular, and ‘which’ (in Arabic grammar) only refers to plurals. The explanation is that part of the phrase has been omitted. Its implied meaning is, ‘Which is the best (of virtues) amongst the adherents of Islâm?’ This is corroborated by the narration reported by Muslim, ‘Which of the Muslims are best?’”

There is also the hadith of `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Al-`Aasﷺ that a man asked the Messenger of Allâhﷻ, *“Which of the Muslims are best?”* He replied, *“He whose tongue and hands the Muslims are safe from.”*³¹

²⁹ Reported by Bukhaaree (12) and Muslim (39).

³⁰ Reported by Bukhaaree (11) and Muslim (42).

³¹ Reported by Muslim (40).

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Abu Hureirahؓ narrated that the Prophetﷺ said:

“Faith consists of sixty odd branches; the uppermost is to state that nothing has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and the lowermost is the removal of anything harmful from the path.”
(Agreed upon)

Imam Ahmad reported on the authority of Kurz ibn `Alqamah Al-Khuzaa`eeؓ, that a man asked, “Messenger of Allâh, will Islâm know an end? The Messenger of Allâhﷺ replied, “Any house Allâh wants good for, be they Arabs or Non-Arabs, Allâh shall place Islâm into their midst.” He asked, “Then what?” The Prophetﷺ said, “Then there shall be tribulations like unto umbrageous³² clouds.” He said, “No, by Allâh, it shall not be, if He wills.” “Yes, indeed, you shall then lapse, becoming like unto black snakes rearing their heads, smiting one another’s necks.”

These evidences and others of their likes are also proof against those deviants that divide religious issues into inconsequentialities and essentials.

The religion of Islâm is upright and straight with no crookedness in it

Allâh ﷻ orders His Prophet ﷺ,

﴿قُلْ إِنِّي هَدَيْتَنِي رَبِّيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ دِينًا قِيمًا مِلَّةَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ حَنِيفًا وَمَا كَانَ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ﴾

“Say (O Muhammad): ‘Truly, my Lord has guided me to a straight path, a right religion, the religion of Ibrâhim (Abraham), Haneef [i.e. the true Islâmic Monotheism] and he was not of the Polytheists.’

(Al-An`aam 6:161)

³² Providing shade

﴿وَأَنَّ هَذَا صِرَاطِي مُسْتَقِيمًا فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا السُّبُلَ فَتَفَرَّقَ بِكُمْ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّيْكُمْ بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ﴾

“And verily, this (i.e. Allâh's Commandments) is My straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths, for they will separate you away from His path; this He has ordained for you that you may become pious.”

(Al-An`aam 6:153)

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ood رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ traced a line with his hand then said:

“This is Allâh’s straight path.” He then traced lines to the right and left and said, *“These are the (other) paths; there is not one of them except there is a shaytaan (devil) on it calling to himself.”* He then recited, *“And verily, this (i.e. Allâh's Commandment) is My straight path, so follow it, and follow not (other) paths...”*³³

In Surah Al-Fatihah Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ﴾

“Guide us to the straight way.”

(Al-Fatihah 1: 6)

The straight way is Islâm

An-Nawwaas ibn Sam`aan Al-Ansaaree رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

³³ Reported by Ahmad and Al-Haakim with an authentic chain of narration.

“Allâh sets forth a parable of a straight path; on either side of the path there is a wall with unlocked doors covered by drapes. On the gate of the path there is a caller calling, ‘O people, enter the path and do not halt’. Whenever a person wishes to open a door a caller above the path calls, ‘Woe to you, do not open it, for if you open it you shall enter it.’ The path is Islâm, the two walls are the limits set by Allâh, and the unlocked doors are that which Allâh has forbidden. The caller at the head of the path is the Book of Allâh and the caller above the path is an admonisher (guardian angel) from Allâh to the heart of every Muslim.”³⁴

The religion of Islâm is a religion of guidance and truth

Allâh ﷻ says,

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٩٣﴾

“It is He who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islâm), to make it ascendant over all religions, even though the Polytheists hate (it).”

(At-Tawbah 9:33 and As-Saff 61:9)

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا ﴿٩٤﴾

“He it is who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islâm), that He may make it (Islâm) ascendant over all religions and All-Sufficient is Allâh as a witness.”

³⁴ Reported by Ahmad (3/ 182), At-Tabaree, and others, and is an authentic narration.

(Al-Fath 48:28)

﴿وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَءَامَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَىٰ مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ كَفَّرَ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ وَأَنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْحَقَّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ﴾

“But those who believe, work good deeds, and believe in that which has been sent down to Muhammad - for it is the truth from their Lord - He will expiate their sins, and make good their condition. That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood, while those who believe follow the truth from their Lord.”

(Muhammad 47:2-3)

Abu Moosa رضي الله عنه narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said,

“The example of the guidance and knowledge with which Allâh has sent me is like unto a deluge of rain falling on the earth; some of the soil is fertile and absorbs the water bringing forth vegetation and grass in abundance. Another tract of it is hard and holds the rain water, yet Allâh benefits the people with it -- they drink, water their animals, and graze (their flocks). Another portion of it is barren -- it neither retains water nor brings forth vegetation. This is the example of the person who comprehends Allâh's religion, derives advantage (from the knowledge) that Allâh has sent me with, learns, and then teaches others. The last example is that of a person who does not pay it the slightest attention and does not accept the guidance from Allâh that I have been sent with. (i.e. he is like that barren land.)”³⁵

³⁵ Reported by Bukhaaree (79) and Muslim (2282). (This particular wording was reported by Muslim).

Allâh ﷻ has guaranteed to preserve the religion of Islâm

He ﷻ says

﴿ إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ ﴾

“Verily, it is We who have sent down the Thikr (i.e. the Qur'ân) and surely, We will guard it (from corruption).”

(Al-Hijr 15:9)

Whoever keeps Allâh's commandments by clinging to this magnificent religion, Allâh will keep and preserve him in this world and the hereafter, in proportion to his keeping and preservation of the religion of Allâh and his adherence to it.

The Prophet ﷺ said to `Abdullah ibn `Abbasؓ,

“Boy, I shall teach you some words: Keep Allâh's commandments and He shall have you in His keeping. Keep Allâh's commandments and you shall find Him before you.”³⁶

Whilst the Prophet ﷺ was mounted on a journey he dozed off three times and nearly fell off (his mount) on the third. Every time, it was Abu Qataadahؓ that held him up. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, *“May Allâh have you in His keeping for having had His Prophet in your keeping.”³⁷*

******(Safeguarding the Prophet of Allâh ﷻ is part of safeguarding the religion of Allâh.)

³⁶ Reported by Tirmithe (2516) and others; this hadith is authentic on the strength of its corroborative narrations.

³⁷ Reported by Muslim.

Whoever acts according to Islâm is rightly guided

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿فَإِنْ أَسْلَمُوا فَقَدِ اهْتَدَوْا﴾

“If they submit themselves (to Allâh in Islâm), they will then be rightly guided.”

(Aal-`Imraan 3:20)

﴿فَمَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ يَشْرَحْ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ﴾

“And whomsoever Allâh wills to guide, He opens his breast to Islâm.”

(Al-An`aam 6:125)

Whoever is pleased with the religion of Islâm as Allâh is pleased with it for His slaves shall savour the taste of faith and its sweetness

`Abbaas ibn `Abdil-Muttalibؓ heard the Prophetﷺ say,

“Whoever is pleased with Allâh as his Lord, Islâm as his religion, and with Muhammad as his messenger shall savour the flavour of faith.”³⁸

****To be ‘pleased’ here means that one is content and satisfied and does not seek to add to it.**

It is reported in “Bukhaaree” and “Muslim”, on the authority of Anasؓ, that

³⁸ Reported by Muslim (34).

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

the Prophet ﷺ said:

“Whoever possesses three qualities shall savour the sweetness of faith: he to whom Allâh and His Messenger are dearer than all else, he who loves a man for the sake of Allâh alone, and he who has as great an abhorrence of returning to disbelief after Allâh has rescued him from it as he has of being cast into Hell.”

Whoever implements Islâm shall have a good, happy life

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيٰوةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾

“Whoever works righteousness, be he male or female, and is a true believer, verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and We shall indeed pay them a reward in proportion to the best of what they used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter).”

(An-Nahl 16:97)

He shall be far removed from deviation and misery.

﴿فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ﴾

“Then whoever follows My guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into misery.”

(Taha 20:123)

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

Ibn `Abbaasؓ explained, *“He shall neither go astray in this world nor fall into misery in the hereafter.”*

He shall be far removed from fear regarding that which he shall confront in the hereafter.

Allâhﷻ says,

﴿فَمَنْ تَبِعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

“Whoever follows My guidance, there shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve.”

(Al-Baqarah 2:38)

﴿فَمَنْ ءَامَنَ وَأَصْلَحَ فَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ﴾

“Whosoever believes and does righteous good deeds, upon such shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.”

(Al-An`aam 6:48)

Whoever implements Islâm shall be successful in this world and the next

Muslim reported (1054), on the authority of `Abdullah ibn `Amrؓ, that the Messenger of Allâhﷻ said,

“Successful is he who accepts Islâm, is provided with that which is sufficient for his wants, and is content with what Allâh gives him.”

Toobaa to whoever implements Islâm

Tirmitheer reported, with an authentic chain of narration, on the authority of Fadhaalah ibn `Ubayd رضي الله عنه, that he heard the Prophet ﷺ say, “Toobaa³⁹ to whoever is guided to Islâm, is provided with that which is sufficient for his wants, and is content.”

Whoever has his breast opened by Allâh to Islâm is upon light from his Lord

﴿أَفَمَنْ شَرَحَ اللَّهُ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ فَهُوَ عَلَى نُورٍ مِّن رَّبِّهِ ۖ فَوَيْلٌ لِلْقَاسِيَةِ قُلُوبُهُم مِّن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

“Is he whose breast Allâh has opened to Islâm, so that he is upon light from his Lord (as he who is non-Muslim)? So, woe to those whose hearts are hardened against remembrance of Allâh; they are in manifest error.”

(Az-Zumar 39:22)

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَآمِنُوا بِرَسُولِهِ يُؤْتِكُمْ كِفْلَيْنِ مِن رَّحْمَتِهِ وَيَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ﴾

“O You who believe [in Mûsa (Moses) (i.e. Jews) and 'Iesa (Jesus) (i.e. Christians)] fear Allâh, and believe too in His Messenger (Muhammad); (if you do) He

³⁹ Ibn Al-Atheer, in “An-Nihaayah”, explained Toobaa saying, “It is one of the names of Paradise; some also hold that it is the name of a tree therein.” End of quote. Al-Munaawee, in “Faydh Al-Qadeer”, in his explanation of the hadith of ‘Toobaa to Sham,’ said, “It means that ease and a good life are to be had in Sham.” End of quote. It has also been narrated, on the authority of `Utbaah ibn `Abd-As-Sulma رضي الله عنه, that the Prophet ﷺ said, “In it (i.e. Paradise) there is a tree named Toobaa.” Reported by Ahmad (29/ 191). There is no inconsistency or contradiction between these different meanings, for whoever submits to Allah both outwardly and inwardly shall lead a good life. When he dies he shall be of the denizens of Paradise and be granted of its bliss, its trees being a part thereof.

shall give you a double portion of His Mercy, give you light by which you shall walk (straight), and forgive you; and Allâh is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

(Al-Hadeed 57:28)

He that is not given this light is deprived

﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَجْعَلِ اللَّهُ لَهُ نُورًا فَمَا لَهُ مِنْ نُّورٍ﴾ النور: ٤٠

“... and he for whom Allâh has not appointed light, for him there is no light.”

(An-Nur 24:40)

Islâm is a protection for the blood, honour and wealth of the Muslims

Ibn `Umar رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

“I have been ordered (by Allâh) to fight the people until they testify that nothing has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh, and offer the prayers perfectly and give the zakât. If they perform that, they have protected their lives and property from me - except for (any infringement of) Islâmic laws - their reckoning (accounts) will then be done by Allâh.”⁴⁰

Abu Hureirah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said,

“I have been ordered (by Allâh) to fight the people until they testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and

⁴⁰ Reported by Bukhaaree (25) and Muslim (22).

believe in me and in that which I bring. If they do so, they will have protected their lives and property from me - except for (any infringement of) Islâmic laws - then their reckoning (accounts) will be done by Allâh.”⁴¹

Islâm recognizes and protects the rights of both Creator and creation, as befits them, as demonstrated by abundant evidences

Whoever is pleased with Islâm and practises it will be of the inhabitants of Paradise

The Prophet ﷺ ordered Bilal ؓ to announce,

“None shall enter Paradise but a Believer.”⁴²

Abu Sa`eed Al-Khudhree ؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ said:

“Abu Sa`eed, whoever is pleased with Allâh as his Lord, Islâm as his religion and Muhammad as his Prophet will enter Paradise.” Abu Sa`eed ؓ marveled and said, *“Messenger of Allâh, repeat it to me!”* The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ did so and then said, *“There is another deed which elevates the position of a man in Paradise by one hundred grades, the distance between each grade being equal to the expanse between heaven and earth.”* Abu Sa`eed ؓ asked, *“What is that deed?”*

⁴¹ Reported by Bukhaaree (2946) and Muslim (21); (this particular wording was narrated by Muslim. It has also been reported by him on the authority of Jaabir ؓ.)

⁴² Reported by Bukhaaree (3062) and Muslim (111) on the authority of Abu Hureirah.

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss

He replied, "*Jihad in the way of Allâh, jihad in the way of Allâh.*"⁴³

Whoever seeks a religion other than Islâm will never have it accepted of him, and he shall be of those who lose and perish (in the hereafter)

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿ وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾

"And whoever seeks a religion other than Islâm, will never have it accepted of him, and in the hereafter he will be of the losers."

(Aal-`Imraan 3:85)

﴿ لَهُ مَقَالِيدُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴾

"To Him belong the keys of the heavens and the earth and those who disbelieve in the signs of Allâh, it is they who will be the losers."

(Az-Zumar 39:63)

﴿ وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكَتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ﴾

"And indeed it has been revealed to you (O Muhammad), as it was to those (Allâh's Messengers) before you: 'If you join others in worship with Allâh, then surely (all) of your deeds will be invalidated, and you will certainly be among the losers."

(Az-Zumar 39:65)

⁴³ Reported by Muslim (1884).

﴿ أَفَغَيْرَ دِينِ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ

يُرْجَعُونَ ﴾

“Do they seek other than the religion of Allâh (worshipping none but Allâh alone), while to Him submit all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly and to Him shall they all be returned?”

(Aal-`Imraan 3:83)

Ibn Katheer commented:

“Allâh rebukes those who prefer a religion other than the religion that He sent in His Books and with His Messengers, i.e. the worship of Allâh alone without partners, to Whom “submit all creatures in the heavens and the earth, willingly, or unwillingly.”

Anyone in such a situation has reached the extreme of falsehood, ingratitude, and loss

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿ قُلْ كَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ شَهِيدًا ^{بِ}يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا

بِالْبَاطِلِ وَكَفَرُوا بِاللَّهِ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ ﴾

“and those who believe in falsehood (all false deities other than Allâh), and disbelieve in Allâh and (in His sole right to worship), it is they who are the losers.”

(Al-`Ankabut 29:52)

﴿الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَصَدُّوا عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَضَلَّ أَعْمَلُهُمْ﴾

“Those who disbelieve (in Allâh’s sole right to worship and in the message of Prophet Muhammad) and hinder (men) from the path of Allâh, He will render their deeds vain.”

(Muhammad 47:1)

He ﷺ goes on to say,

﴿ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا اتَّبَعُوا الْبَاطِلَ﴾

“That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood...”

(Muhammad 47:3)

Allâh ﷻ also describes the people of the Book (Christians and Jews) as,

﴿وَلَا يَدِينُونَ دِينَ الْحَقِّ﴾

“those who acknowledge not the Religion of Truth (i.e. Islâm)...”

(At-Tawbah 9:29)

Likewise, any Muslim that renounces Islâm and embraces another religion, or no religion at all (otherwise known as secularism) or commits that which invalidates his Islâm, becomes a disbelieving, deviant, apostate, loser, whose deeds are invalidated. He may repent, but if he does not (the Islâmic ruling is that) he should be killed in that state (of disbelief). He will then be of the denizens of the hell-fire. May Allâh grant us refuge from that

Allâh ﷻ says,

﴿وَمَنْ يَرْتَدِدْ مِنْكُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِۦٓ فَيَمُتْ وَهُوَ كَافِرٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ حَبِطَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا
وَالْآخِرَةِ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ ۖ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ۝﴾

“...and whosoever of you turns back from his religion and dies as a disbeliever, then his deeds will be lost in this life and in the hereafter, and they will be the dwellers of the fire; they will abide therein forever.”

(Al-Baqarah 2:217)

﴿وَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالْآيَاتِ فَقَدْ حَبِطَ عَمَلُهُۥٓ وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ ۝﴾

“...and whosoever disbelieves in Allâh’s sole right of worship and in the other Articles of faith [i.e. Allâh's angels, Books, Messengers, the Day of Resurrection and Divine Pre-ordainment], then fruitless are his

works, and in the hereafter he will be among the losers.”

(Al-Maa'idah 5:5)

﴿وَمَنْ يَتَبَدَّلِ الْكُفْرَ بِالْإِيمَانِ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ﴾

“...and whosoever exchanges faith for disbelief has indeed strayed from the right way.”

(Al-Baqarah 2:108)

Ibn `Abbaasؓ narrated from the Messenger of Allâhﷺ that he said,

*“Whomsoever changes his religion, kill him.”*⁴⁴

Abu Burdah narrated that Mu`aath ibn Jabalؓ arrived in Yemen to find Abu Moosaؓ with another man. He asked, *“Who is this?”* Abu Moosaؓ answered, *“A Jew that embraced Islâm then returned back to Judaism. We have been trying to bring him back to Islâm for (I think, he said two months).”* Mu`aath said, *“By Allâh, I shall not dismount until he is beheaded.”* The man was beheaded. Mu`aath then said, *“Allâh and His Messengerﷺ have pronounced their judgement, ‘whoever turns back from his religion, kill him’ or ‘Whoever changes his religion, kill him.’”*⁴⁵

Ibn Mas`oodؓ narrated that the Messenger of Allâhﷺ said,

*“The blood of a Muslim who testifies that nothing has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and that I am His Messenger, is not to be shed except in three cases: a (currently or previously) married adulterer, a life for a life, and the one who renounces his religion (Islâm) and leaves the Muslims.”*⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Reported by Bukhaaree (3017).

⁴⁵ Reported by Ahmad (36/ 343 - 344); it has a chain of narration that despite meeting conditions for authenticity stops short of the Prophet. It has, however, also been reported by Bukhaaree (6923) and Muslim (1733) with a complete chain of narration.

⁴⁶ Reported by Bukhaaree (6878) and Muslim (1676); (this particular wording was narrated by Muslim).

So embracing a religion other than Islâm or renouncing Islâm is the greatest loss

Allâh has informed about the losers and their end. He says,

﴿فَاعْبُدُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِي ۚ قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيهِمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ أَلَا ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ لَهُمْ مِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمِنْ تَحْتِهِمْ ظُلَلٌ ۚ ذَلِكَ يُخَوِّفُ اللَّهَ بِهِ عِبَادَهُ ۚ يَعْبَادُونَ فَاتَّقُونِ﴾

“So worship what you like besides Him. Say (O Muhammad): ‘The losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection; indeed, that will be the manifest loss.

“They shall have coverings of fire above them and coverings (of fire) beneath them; with this does Allâh frighten his slaves: ‘Fear Me, therefore, O my slaves.”

(Az-Zumar 39:15-16)

Finally, I ask Allâh to grant us and all the Muslims refuge from tribulations, be they apparent or hidden, and to keep us firm with the word that stands firm in this world (i.e. to keep on worshipping Allâh alone and nothing else), and in the hereafter, and that He take our souls while we are upon Islâm and the Sunna.

Written as a reminder to himself and his Muslim brothers by Jameel ibn `Abduh ibn Qaayid As-Silwee at

Daar Al-Hadeeth, Dammaaj
7th Jumaada Al-Oola, 1430

Islam, the Greatest of Blessings, and its Opposite, the Greatest Loss
