

In accordance with Islamic belief, all the prophets from Adam to Muhamed (p.b.u.t.) had proclaimed no religion but Islam. We also believe that God had sent 124,000 prophets and Adam was the first and Muhamed was the last. There are the names of about 30 prophets mentioned in the Holy Quran who include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus (p.b.u.t.). Some prophets for certain areas only.

Anyone who claims to be a prophet after Muhamed is denounced by us as heretic and therefore we will not accept any belief as to be a religion if the claimant is after Muhamed. However any religion before Islam (as now known) is not to be insulted.

Our religious book is the Holy Quran which is in the words of God as revealed to Prophet Muhamed (p.b.u.h.) through Gabriel. The miracle of the Quran is it is the same as it was revealed – it has neither been revised nor abridged. Not a word has been added or deleted. Neither has the order of words in the verses been changed.

God has promised that He will protect His book.

Islamic is a monotheistic religion and our belief is in one God who has declared in chapter 112 of the Holy Quran, “In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Say: You may be sure that Allah is one: He is needless (independent). He begot none, nor was He begotten. There is none like Him.”

The concept that the Muslims are strongly advised to follow is that of Tawheed. i.e. oneness of God. Whenever this concept is understood and accepted all other powers will be meaningless. Human dignity will then be elevated and injustice will not be tolerated.

God has also declared, “the noblest of you before Allah is the most pious of you (49:13)”. Therefore kings, queens, presidents and prime ministers cannot demand leadership and respect. They have to earn these through piety. Muslims are also required to encourage each other with carrying out good deeds and forbid evil.

The belief includes salaah, fasting, Haj, zakat, dooms day. Having briefly introduced Islam, I would now deal with aspects of Islam which the enemies of Islam and orientalist have tried to either hide or distort. In dealing with this I will only give examples on justice and Islamic principles.

When Ali was appointed the caliph of Islamic government, as far as adherence to the principles was concerned or entrusting positions of responsibility to individuals was concerned, when advised not to remove the men of influence from their positions of power, his reaction was he was not interested in victory achieved through suppressing those people whose responsibility was entrusted to him. His reaction was, “You mean to say that I should act contrary to the Islamic principles and value in order to hasten my defeat? I would not do such a thing and would not be cruel to my people for the purpose of achieving victory.”

Islam has a clear opinion about rulers. The ruler has no more rights than other individuals. As an example, I will quote a case in which Ali was the ruler (caliph) and plaintiff. The defendant was a Jew who had taken possession of the suit of armour belonging to Ali. Ali claimed the ownership but the Jew denied his claim. According to Islamic religious principles, Ali had to produce evidence and witnesses in support of his claim. When he failed to do so, the judge (even though appointed by Ali), passed a verdict in favour of the Jew. In spite of his loss, Ali was satisfied because justice in Islamic society requires that equality should exist between the ruler and subjects. There is no immunity for the ruler.

Islamic law provides that non-Muslims shall pay taxes to the government. Among other responsibilities, one is that the government shall provide protection to the non-Muslims.

Muslims had conquered a part of Roman territory occupied by Christians. The Romans mobilized a large army and were ready to attack the Muslims. The Christians who had been treated kindly by the Muslims on finding out the Roman plan, informed the Muslims. The Muslims realized the might of the Romans. The commander informed all governors who ruled over Christian inhabitants ordering them to refund the taxes as these were for their defence and in view of the size of the Roman army, the Muslims were not able to do so. The Christians were told that the Muslims would leave the cities, would continue fighting, and if they became victorious, then the same conditions as existed before would be operative again. To the surprise of the Christians, the taxes were refunded and noted that the Romans would not have acted in the same way under similar circumstances and would have asked for more money from the general public.

Now let us examine the materialist world of today. The powerful, wherever they may be, use their power for personal gain, except those very few who think and toil for their own people.

National riches are under the control of the powerful who do not have the interest of their people at heart.

I will conclude by quoting Ali (a.s.) on piety (page 7).