

Islam Simplified

Understanding Islam Through Its Goals

من برنامج
الإسلام
ببساطة



Dr. Tareq AlSuwaidan

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Preface

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ

In the name of Allah, The Most Compassionate, The Most-Merciful.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.

O Allah! Blessings upon Muhammad and the family of Muhammad.

Islam Simplified is based on a series of lectures in Arabic by Dr. Tareq AlSuwaidan. The Al-Islam Bi Basatah (الاسلام ببساطة) was aired during Ramadan 2020 on Dr. AlSuwaidan's new channel, suwaidan.tv, which is a digital platform focusing on **Leadership & Mastery**. The channel has been developed by Dr. AlSuwaidan to give you the flexibility of watching at your own pace.



But why another book on Islam? Why is this effort unique? The common prevalent way to present Islam is through the “What” and “How” of Islam. Islam is about the five pillars of Islam. Iman (Faith) is

about the 6 pillars of Iman. Then the focus is on “How” to say the Shahadah, “How” to pray, pay the Zakah, fast, and perform the Hajj Pilgrimage. This approach is practical and has many benefits. It is also deep in traditions. But when we ask the practicing Muslim and also Muslim scholars on the “Why” (purpose, goal, objective) of Islam, we get different and sometimes wrong answers. **Islam Simplified** introduces Islam simply and comprehensively by presenting the overall framework of Islam that highlights the goals of Islam and its major components. It takes a wholesome and goal-oriented view of Islam so that Muslims and non-Muslims will understand clearly the “Why” of Islam.

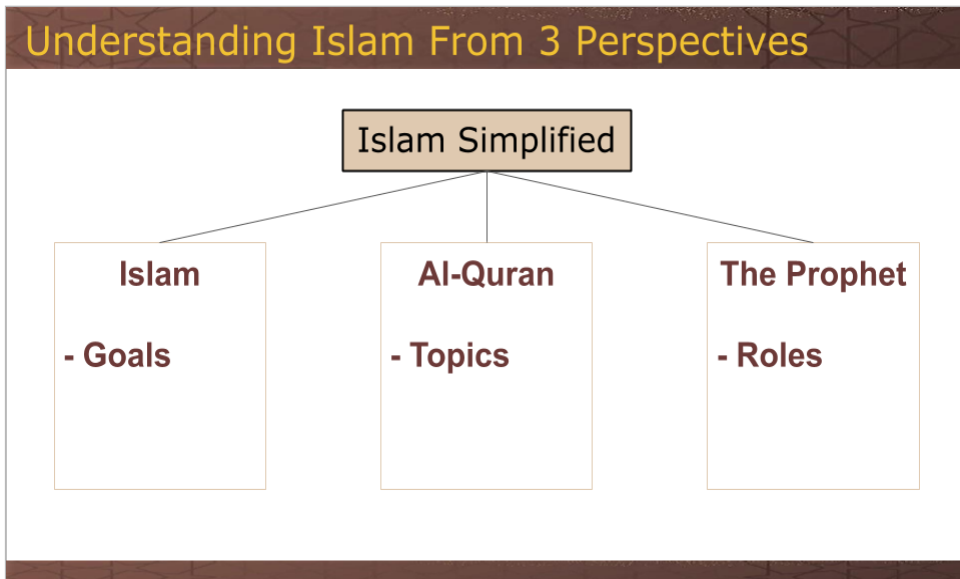
There is a trend today to talk about purpose and to find meaning in life and the things we do. With all the many other new trends and ideas, and proliferation of new technologies, we can be pulled along many different directions unless we get our purpose intact.



Islam has acknowledged this importance of purpose and meaning a long time ago. Unfortunately, this understanding has gotten lost when we Muslims debate and differ on detailed issues related to certain rulings in Islam or certain questions about the creed. Most

Muslims no longer understand the noble and lofty goals of Islam. This book intends to present again these goals in a unified and comprehensive manner.

Islam Simplified focuses on three perspectives:



1. The Goals of Islam (that differs from the basic legal objectives of Shariah or Islamic Law).
2. The Holy Quran (its main topics and subject matters)
3. The Prophet (SAW) (his various roles, how to distinguish between his roles and our obligation towards each of those roles).

We are presenting Islam differently by focusing on its goals but we are strongly guided by a wholesome and comprehensive view of Al-Quran and the life of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Thus this approach follows the approved methodology of the majority of Muslim scholars, old and new. This is not an unsupported innovation nor is it a deviation from mainstream Islamic thought and method.

عَنْ مَالِكٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ تَرَكْتُ فِيكُمْ أَمْرَيْنِ لَنْ تَضِلُّوا

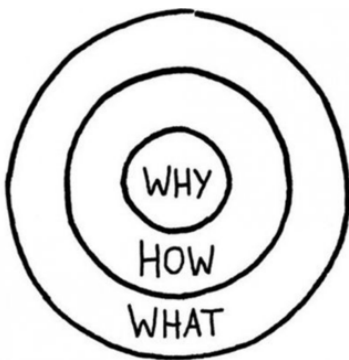
مَا تَمَسَّكْتُمْ بِهِمَا كِتَابَ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةَ نَبِيِّهِ

Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “I have left you with two matters which will never lead you astray, as long as you hold to them: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of his Prophet.” [Al-Muwatta’, Sahih]

We introduce the comprehensive picture of Islam, which we present through the goals of Islam supported by the main topics of the Holy Quran and the main roles of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Explaining Islam, especially to Non-Muslims, should be done this way. Through the comprehensive image of Islam first and not through the detailed whats and hows of Islam; like Islam is praying, fasting, Zakah, and pilgrimage or like pork and alcohol are forbidden (Haram). We should not start from the branches, but by the fundamentals, the whole and comprehensive picture of the goals of Islam.

Modern leadership literature abundantly discusses the need and benefits for humans to be purpose-driven. Understanding the “Why” or purpose behind anything will inspire action, increase loyalty and commitment, and provide enough momentum to turn an idea into a social movement [1].

Reading Quote



The book, *Start with Why*, by Simon Sinek identifies the interplay between *what*, *how*, and *why* as the Golden Circle. It gives the insight to help frame how most people behave and communicate. Most of us can describe *what* we do and *how* we do something, but few of us can explain *why* we do what we do. *What* we do is easiest to describe, this is where most people and organizations begin.

They start where their understanding is the clearest and then they move into the circle, where their understanding is fuzzier. The tendency is to explain *what* is the result of actions and then *how* the actions are taken to realize a belief. Sometimes revealing why, and sometimes not.

Leaders that inspire and bring change flip this around. They think, act, and communicate from the inside out, starting with *why* and moving out from there. They don't start with *what* they do, they begin with their purpose, their cause, their beliefs, their goals. Knowing *what* is important, but understanding *why* is more important.

People don't buy *what* you do – they buy *why* you do it.

Islam has the potential to change the world for better - making better people, better communities, better environment - the (***why***) - by inspiring the Muslims to achieve the noble goals of Islam while being committed to the pristine teachings of the Holy Quran as properly exemplified by the Noble Prophet (SAW) - (the ***how***) - through performing (***what***) is prescribed by the Shariah!

In this book, we will build and explain the **Islam Simplified** framework below. We will discuss it in sufficient detail, Insha Allah.

<p style="text-align: center;">الإسلام - Islam End goal of Islam is (الفلاح) Falah, salvation of the human soul in this life and the Hereafter.</p>		
<p>(Iman, Faith) Principal Goal of Iman is (التوحيد) Tauheed or Monotheism, Oneness of Allah</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge of Allah (معرفة الله) 2. Oneness of Allah (توحيد الله) 3. Worship of Allah (عبادة الله) 4. Closeness to Allah (التقرب إلى الله) 5. Comfort of the heart (اطمئنان القلب) <p style="text-align: right;">1</p>	<p>(Akhlaq, Morals) Principal Goal of Akhlaq is the Realization of (الرحمة) Mercy and (العدل) Justice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perfects Morals based on the Fitrah 2. Motivated for the pleasure of Allah (مرضات الله) 3. Balance between human, society and creation 4. Premise that Everything belongs to Allah (الملك لله) 5. Social responsibility <p style="text-align: right;">2</p>	<p>(Shareeah, Law) Principal Goal of Shariah is (الحكم لله), Rule is for Allah</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preserving the Essentials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Al-Din (الدين) - Al-Nafs (النفس) - Al-Mal (المال) - Al-'Aql (العقل) - Al-Nasl (النسل) 2. Meeting the Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitating the Essentials 3. Embellishments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make life and religion beautiful <p style="text-align: right;">3</p>

Please share and help us spread this humble work. We believe it will make Muslims appreciate Islam better and thus become more committed to Islam while at the same time be more balanced, open, just, merciful, and tolerant of others. I hope this book will enable Muslims and non-Muslims alike to understand Islam in a simple yet profound way. Simplicity does not mean superficial. Simplicity means to make something easy and simple. So, I hope our dear readers will appreciate the simple yet profound understanding of Islam that this book will present.

Please accept our most sincere thanks and best wishes. May Allah Guide us all to the deeds that please Him!



Foreword By Author

Islam Simplified introduces Islam simply and comprehensively by presenting the overall framework of Islam that highlights the goals of Islam and its major components. It takes a wholesome and goal-oriented view of Islam so that Muslims and non-Muslims will understand clearly the “Why” of Islam.

There is a background story to the program, along with its unique name, that resulted in this book. I was invited to present a series about Islam that could be uploaded on the Internet. The series was supposed to present Islam to foreign non-Muslims. It was supposed to be in English and I prepared this program. Eventually, it was not recorded, but as I was preparing its concepts, I wished I had learned these concepts earlier. I realized that explaining Islam through its goals was not available in the popular literature. It existed in bits and pieces and limited to scholarly discussions.

During Ramadan 2020, I completed a video series in Arabic entitled Al-Islam bi Basatah (الاسلام ببساطة), Simply Islam, or Islam Simplified. As I worked on the video series I was determined to repeat it in English. But, Alhamdulillah, over the years Allah (SWT) has helped me with a network of excellent brothers and sisters. We share the same values and vision to rebuild the future Khilafah for the Muslim ummah. A group of brothers from Malaysia whom I've known when we studied in North America during the 1980s, volunteered to rewrite the Arabic lecture series in English. They have done a wonderful job to detail out the lectures in an e-book format. I am pleased with the outcome.

Although the lecture series has 30 episodes, we decided to release the first part on Islam which covers the first 12 episodes. It will be

made available freely as an e-book so as to quickly and widely reach our target readership, the younger generation of Muslims. Insha Allah, the follow-up sequel will be ready soon.

I would like to sincerely thank all those involved in producing this book. Let us all remain sincerely committed to building the future Muslim civilization based on the way of the beloved Messenger (SAW) and rightly guided Caliphs. May Allah Guide us all to the deeds that please Him!



Dr. Tareq AlSuwaidan

Foreword By Editor

It is an honor to be part of Dr. Tareq's team and network in his enduring commitment to build a better future for the Muslim Ummah. I first met him during the Islamic Society of North America annual conference in 1981. Since then he has been a brother, friend, teacher, and leader to many Malaysians who studied in North America during the 1980s. Sharing the same values and vision for Islam has kept us working together all these years.

It is obvious that as Muslims, we have a lot to work on and change.. But what are the priority areas of change? In an earlier work, Dr. Tareq summarized five major crisis factors that the Muslim ummah faces today; Behavior and ethics, Backwardness, Effectiveness, Leadership, and Thought/Ideology. Upon further analysis, he concluded that the first three crises are a reflection of the crises in thought and leadership. Poor leadership and some flaws in our thought and ideology are the two cornerstones of our crisis. Thus the priority is to solve our thought (Fikrah) and leadership crisis.

Islam Simplified is a major Fikrah contribution to help Muslims understand Islam through its goals. There is a trend today to talk about purpose and to find meaning in life and the things we do. Understanding the "Why" or purpose behind anything will inspire action, increase loyalty and commitment. This book discusses the "Why" of Islam and its main components; Iman, Akhlaq, and Shariah. It will help Muslims and non-Muslims understand the noble and lofty goals of Islam, beyond the details of its rituals that form the face of Islam.

LeadUS is a newly established think tank in Malaysia that seeks to promote fikrah (thought) and leadership capabilities for the younger Muslims. The core members of LeadUS were mostly active as student leaders in the middle 1970s through the 1990s with a specific interest in promoting Islam. We continued to carry this interest in our various endeavors involving politics, government, corporate business, social work, academia, entrepreneurship and others. With this abundant wealth of shared experience and continual learning of Islam, we feel we have something unique to offer the young generation of Muslim activists in terms of ideas, thoughts and leadership.

Please share and help us spread this humble work. We believe it will make Muslims appreciate Islam better and thus become more committed to Islam while at the same time be more balanced, open, just, merciful, and tolerant of others. I hope this book will enable Muslims and non-Muslims alike to understand Islam in a simple yet profound way.

Islam Simplified also covers the Holy Quran and the Roles of the Prophet (SAW) for which we are preparing the English version.

Wallahu al-Mustaan (وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ). And Allah it is Whose help is to be sought.



Dr. Azman Hussin, LeadUS

Comments From Early Reviewers

We asked from the LeadUS network of former student activists in North America to review the final draft of this book. It has been more than thirty years since we started on the journey of learning about Islam and endeavouring to operationalize Islam in our personal lives and society. Here are some selected comments chosen by the editor.

Alumni	
Dr. Sabariah Baharun is a retired Mathematics lecturer. She is currently the Honorary Secretary General, National Council of Women's Organisations Malaysia (NCWO). She is also the Deputy Women Head, Pertubuhan IKRAM Malaysia. She studied at Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN.	Acknowledging the purpose of one's life is the real essence of a prosperous and a meaningful life anyone would wish for. This book is highly recommended to attain such dreams.
Dr. Rozhan Othman was a former President of MISG US & Canada. He studied at Ohio University, Athens, OH. He is still active as a management consultant.	Islam sometimes becomes like bureaucracies. It is made difficult, mind boggling, burdensome and confusing by people who are supposedly serving it. There is no shortage of narrow and misguided interpretations that are the product of ignorance. Sometimes arrogance, bigotry and ill intention also contaminate interpretations of Islam. As a result what is supposed to be a straight path sometimes becomes a long, winding and bumpy road. Dr Tareq AlSuwaidan has done an outstanding job in Islam Simplified: Understanding Islam Through Its Goals by peeling through the layers of confusion and distortions to reveal the core of Islam, pure and simple. Some of us will find that this book provides the clarity we've been seeking. Some of us will find that this book confirms what our intuition and reasoning have always

	<p>suspected.</p> <p>Of course, there will also be those who disagree with the arguments and inferences in this book. One thing for sure, this book has something for all of us to reflect upon. Keep an open mind. Read it with the intention of seeking guidance from Allah.</p>
<p>Dr. Abdul Rahim Ghouse was a former President of MISG US & Canada. He studied at Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL and Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL. He currently advises organizations on strategic issues.</p>	<p>The “why” in “Islam Simplified” generates intentional living to practice Islam and brings purpose and clarity to those who wish to understand Islam. This book also shows that within the Islamic traditions there are practical choices that you can make which are adaptable and livable across all societies. A must read for the youths.</p>
<p>Nurul Izzah Anwar is a Malaysian political activist and current Member of Parliament for Permatang Pauh. She graduated as an electrical & electronics engineer and earned her Masters in International Relations from SAIS, Johns Hopkins University.</p>	<p>Islam Simplified provides much insight and direction in navigating these deeply challenging and trying times.</p> <p>It might not be a sufficient replacement for the powerful, compelling and charismatic lectures by Dr. AlSuwaidan; but in a present time characterised by lockdowns, it has become an important second choice. I urge readers to take advantage of the lessons offered in this book. May it help us strengthen our resolve in facing the uncertain, albeit always, opportune, future.</p>
<p>Dr. Wan Muhamad Hasni Wan Sulaiman was a former President of MISG US & Canada. He studied at Iowa University, Iowa City, IA. He currently works mainly on data science.</p>	<p>People understand things which are simplified. Islam Simplified is a first known modern day attempt at elucidating Islamic principles in a concise and accurate manner.</p> <p>A must read for Muslims and non-Muslims who seek to have a better and deeper understanding of Islam</p>
<p>Dr. Mohamad Pauzi Zakaria is a Visiting Professor at Qatar University, Qatar. He also an Associate Member, Institute of Ocean and Earth Sciences (IOES) University of Malaya Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.</p>	<p>It’s a book to read over and over again. Wholly engrossing, profound, and gorgeously written.</p>

He studied at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI and University of Massachusetts, Boston, MA.	
Dr. Salleh Jaafar was a Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Universiti Putra Malaysia and held a very senior post on higher education in the Ministry of Education Malaysia. He studied at Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.	It is a superb book about Islam. Many miss the "why", hence the big picture of Islam. Once understood, it will give more meaning to the "what" and "how" we do things in Islam.

Abbreviations

	English	Arabic
RA	An expression that Muslims use whenever the name of a male Companion of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is mentioned or written. It means: “May Allah Be Pleased With Him”.	رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ
RA	An expression that Muslims use whenever the name of a female Companion of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is mentioned or written. It means: “May Allah Be Pleased With Her”.	رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا
SAW	An expression that Muslims use whenever the name of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is mentioned or written. It means: "May the blessings and the peace of Allah be upon him (Muhammad)".	صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
SWT	When writing the name of God (Allah), Muslims often follow it with the abbreviation ‘SWT’. These letters stand for the Arabic words "Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala," or "Glory to Him, the Exalted”, “May He be praised and exalted”.	سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى

Glossary

Term	Arabic	Meaning
‘Adl	عدل	Justice, Fairness
‘Aql	العقل	Mind, Intellect
Ahlu as-Sunnah wal Jamaah	أهل السنة و الجماعة	Followers of the Sunnis (in Shariah and Iman)
Akhlaq	الاخلاق	Morals
Amirul Mu’minin	أمير المؤمنين	Commander of the Faithful (Believers). Title accorded to the leader of the believers starting from the second Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab.
Ansar	أنصار	The Helpers or Supporters. The Companions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from the first generation of Muslims who were residents of Madinah, accepted Islam, provided support and protection to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and fellow Immigrant Muslims.
Baitul Mal	بيت المال	Treasury (of the Muslim state). A financial institution responsible for the administration of taxes particularly in the early Islamic Caliphate.
Burhan	برهان	Proof
Daf al-Mafasid	دفع المفساد	Removal of degrading factors and constraints. Term used in Shariah.
Daruriyyat	الضروريات	Essentials, Necessities
Din	الدين	Religion

Dua'	دعاء	Supplication, asking Allah (SWT).
Falah	الفلاح	Salvation, prosperity
Fikrah	فكرة	Thought, Idea or Understanding of Islam
Fiqh Aulawiyat	فقه الأولويات	Jurisprudence of priorities. Deciding a religious ruling based on priorities.
Fitrah	الفطرة	Common human nature
Ghaib	الغيب	The Unseen. Used in the context of “al-Ghaib wa al-Shahadah”.
Hadith	حديث	Narration that quotes a saying or explains an action of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). They are collected, verified and documented by scholars of Hadith. Among the famous collections of Hadith are Sahih Al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.
Hadith Qudsi	حديث قُدسي	A narration (Hadith) which, from the perspective of its meaning, is from Allah (SWT) and from the perspective of its wording, from the Prophet (SAW). Prophet Muhammad (SAW) would receive the meaning from Allah, by way of inspiration or dream, and then he (SAW) would relate this in his own words. This is contrary to the remaining Hadith as the Prophet (SAW) would not attribute them to his Lord, nor relate them from Him. The Quran are the exact words of Allah (SWT) as revealed to Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
Haj	حَجُّ	Pilgrimage to Makkah. One of the five pillars of Islam.
Hajiyyat	الحاجيات	Needs, Complementaries

Halal	حلال	Lawful, Permitted. A legal ruling on an action.
Haram	حرام	Unlawful, Forbidden. A legal ruling on an action that is sinful and punishable when done but will be rewarded if abstained from..
Hasan	حسن	Good, Sound. Applies to the grade of authenticity of a Hadith. It is second to the Sahih (authentic) Hadith.
Hifz	حفظ	Protection, Preservation. This is used to describe the Daruriyyat mentioned in this book.
Hudud	حدود	Refers to the specific punishments for specific crimes in Islam like public flogging Hudud literally means borders or limits.
Hukm (plural Ahkam)	حُكْم (أحكام)	Legal ruling, law, value, or ordinance for any action as deduced from Shariah (Islamic law). Five major categories; Wajib, Mandub, Mubah, Makruh, Haram.
Ibadah	عبادة	Worship, Obedience.
Imam	إمام	Refers to a religious leader or scholar. The one who leads the congregational prayer in Islam is called an Imam. Renowned scholars in Islam normally have the title Imam preceding their name like Imam Ahmad, Imam Syafi'i, etc.
Iman	إيمان	Faith, Belief
'Ird	عرض	Honor, Dignity. Some scholars consider it as a separate Daruriyyat. In this book, we consider it as part of Hifz an-Nafs.
Jalb al-Masalih	جلب المصالح	Attainment and enhancement of benefits. Term used in Shariah.

Jannah	جَنَّة	Paradise, Heaven
Khaira Ummah	خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ	The best ummah. It is one of the descriptions in the Quran for the Muslim ummah (see Chapter 3, Verse 110)
Khilafah	خِلَافَة	Succession, Vicegerency.
Makruh	مَكْرُوه	Detestable, Hateful. A legal ruling on an action that is not sinful but will not be rewarded.
Mal	المال	Wealth, Property
Mandub	مَنْدُوب	Encouraged. A legal ruling on an action that will be rewarded when done but not sinful if neglected.
Mantiq	مَنْطِق	Logic
Maqasid	مَقَاصِد	Purpose, Intent, Objective
Maslahah	مَصْلَحَة	Interest, Benefit
Mubah	مُبَاح	Permissible. A legal ruling on an action that is permissible and neutral in terms of reward for doing or being sinful if neglected.
Muhajirun	مُهَاجِرُونَ	The Immigrants. The Companions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) from the first generation of Muslims who migrated from Makkah to Madinah.
Muhkamat	مُحْكَمَاتٌ	Decisive
Mutashabihat	مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ	Allegorical
Mutawatir	مُتَوَاتِر	Recurrent, Multiple, Frequent
Muttaqi	مُتَّقِي	Pious person (Person with Taqwa)

Nafs	النفس	Life, Soul
Nas	النص	Text, Evidence
Nasl	النسل	Progeny, Offspring
Qadi	قاضي	Judge (of the Islamic courts and as such must be conversant with Islamic law)
Qat'iy	قطعي	Certain
Rahmah	الرحمة	Mercy
Riba	ربا	Interest, Usury
Rukhsah (Plural Rukhas)	رخصة (رخص)	An exception to a general law, granted to preserve life or remove hardship, such as the allowance for a sick person to skip the obligatory fasting.
Sahih	صحيح	Correct, Authentic. Applies to the grade of authenticity of a Hadith. It is the first grade of authentic Hadith.
Salaf	سلف	The Salaf are the people of the first three generations whom Prophet Muhammad (SAW) mentioned in a Hadith narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, and others, "The best of people are my generation, then those who come after them, then those who come after them.". These first three generations that Prophet Muhammad testified that they are good and righteous are the Salaf.
Salam	سلام	Saying the salutation Assalamu 'alaikum. Salaam literally means "peace".
Salat	الصلاة	Prayers. The second of the 5 pillars of Islam. The mandatory ritual prayer of Muslims is performed five times daily at specifically prescribed times and form.

Seerah	سيرة	Life history of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).
Shahadah	الشهادة	The Seen. Used in the context of “al-Ghaib wa al-Shahadah”.
Shahadatain	الشهادتين	Verbal declaration of the two articles of Faith as the first pillar of Islam. أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ “I witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah”
Shariah	شريعة	Islamic law or system of jurisprudence that governs not only religious rituals, but aspects of day-to-day life in Islam. Shariah literally means "the way." It is derived from the main sources of Islamic knowledge, particularly the Quran and the Hadith.
Sunnah	سُنَّة	Example or “the way” of the Prophet (SAW). It is recorded as a saying, a doing or an act, and his (SAW) approval.
Tahsiniyyat	التحسينات	Embellishments, Enhancements
Tafseer	تفسير	Book(s) on the commentary and interpretation of the Quran.
Taqwa	التقوى	God-consciousness, Piety
Tauheed	التوحيد	Monotheism, Oneness of Allah (SWT)
Thubut	ثبوت	Degree of Certainty
Ummah	الأمة	The Muslim nation
Wajib	واجب	Mandatory, Obligatory. A legal ruling on an action that will be rewarded when done while sinful and punishable if neglected.
Zakah	الزكاة	Mandatory alms made annually under Islamic law on certain kinds of property and used for

		specifically prescribed purposes. One of the 5 pillars of Islam that immediately follows prayer (Salat) in importance.
Zanni	ظَنِّي	Uncertain
Zulm	ظَلَم	Injustice, Oppression

Introduction

Our objective is to explain and understand Islam through its goals. This is unlike the way it has been presented for a long time; explaining Islam partially through its various pillars. I know that most Muslims, even the scholars, explain Islam by saying that Islam is believing in Allah (SWT), the Angels, the Holy Books, the Prophets, and the Day of Resurrection. In addition to the Shahadah (two declarations of faith), Islam is about prayers, Zakah, fasting in Ramadan, and performing the Hajj pilgrimage.

This approach is not wrong but Islam has goals behind all these. When talking about believing in Angels, it has big goals. It is not proper to tackle these issues without talking about their goals. This is pretty much like making a TV program without knowing its goals. Or writing a book without knowing its goals. It is not acceptable to talk or write without a goal.

Islam Simplified introduces Islam simply and comprehensively by presenting the overall framework of Islam that highlights the goals of Islam and its major components. It takes a wholesome and goal-oriented view of Islam so that Muslims and non-Muslims will understand clearly the “Why” of Islam. When we understand the comprehensive image, every detail of that image will be seen better, then we shall better understand and appreciate all the details. Some people think that tackling the details makes people better understand. But hard evidence shows that introducing the whole image first helps people better understand and appreciate the details. They can now see the context of the details. This approach

moves us from a partial understanding of Islam through its details toward the comprehensive image of Islam.

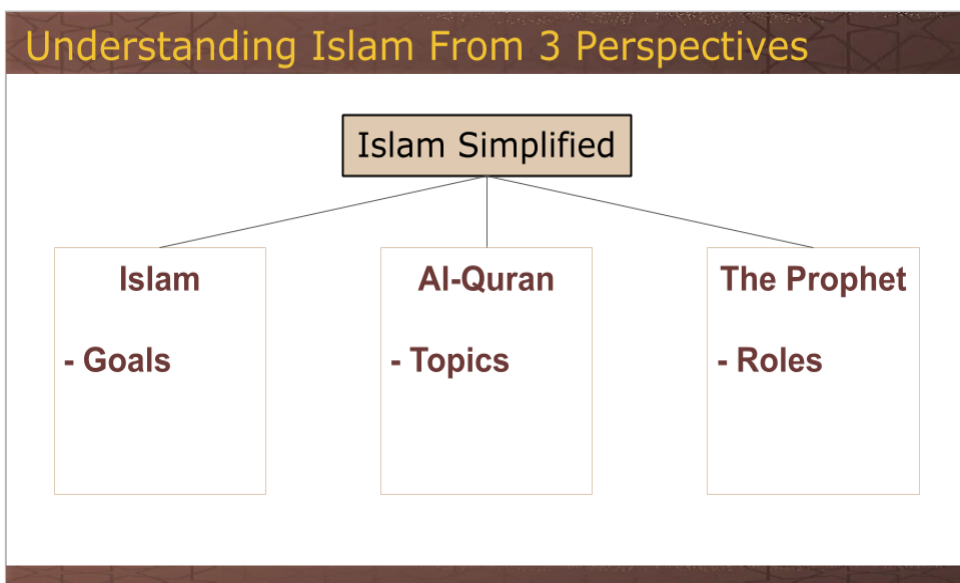
There is a background story to the program, along with its unique name, that resulted in this book. I was invited to present a series about Islam that could be uploaded on the Internet. The series was supposed to present Islam to foreign non-Muslims. It was supposed to be in English and I prepared this program. Eventually, it was not recorded, but as I was preparing its concepts, I got that feeling that I wish I had learned these concepts when I was young, and even when I am grown up. I came to realize that Islam is presented from bottom to top; what is presented are the laws of Islam, the permissible (Halal), and the forbidden (Haram). But, what is the whole image of Islam? The whole image, upon which the Halal and the Haram, are premised?

When scholars used to teach us Islamic Jurisprudence, for example, they told us that tattooing is forbidden (Haram). But why is tattooing forbidden? They provided no answer about the reason. This law has a purpose. And so does all laws of Islam. We must keep that in mind. There are purposes behind all laws.

Moreover, Islam has general and inclusive goals that is applicable, not only for Muslims, but also for Non-Muslims. So, I decided to present Islam from another perspective. Not Islam from bottom to top, starting by laws, and then moving to what Islam is, but a comprehensive view of what I term as Islam Simplified. Based on this comprehensive view, all the laws and their details and a lot more, will make sense when we understand Islam Simplified.

These days we routinely use modern management tools like planning to be more effective in our work as individuals, teams, and organizations. Setting goals and knowing the end game are very important elements of good planning. We should know where we are

today and where we want to be in the future. We define our minor and major goals. We determine the direction we are heading to and what are our roles and positions in this plan. Islam also has a similar planning metaphor that unfortunately most Muslims are unaware of. Muslims are aware of the isolated deeds and laws in Islam but they are not told how these deeds and laws fit together, comprehensively moving them toward defined goals. This is what I intend to clarify in this book. As shown in the simple diagram below, I will explain Islam through three major perspectives or entry points.



The goals of Islam are, of course, derived from the Holy Quran and the examples of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Muslims read the Holy Quran as a ritual act of worship. But the Quran has its goals. These are great and fundamentally important goals, but again many of us are unaware of these goals. When we read The Holy Quran we go through verses related to an article of faith. Then, suddenly, we jump to some stories of the Prophets. Then, we come across a juristic law. Then, we go back to the Prophetic Biography (Seerah) or some verse about The Unseen (Al-Ghaib) or the Jinn.

What connects all of these? Is there a connection? Of course, there is a connection. I will explain these through the **Islam Simplified** framework.

Likewise with our Prophet Muhammad (SAW), his Sunnah (sayings and examples), and Prophetic Biography (Seerah). There is a proper methodology on how we should emulate the Messenger (SAW) as a role model. We must understand his different roles so we can appreciate why and in what capacity he said or did certain things. We find numerous incidents in the Seerah that the Messenger (SAW) gave some directions while some of his companions objected to his orders. Were the companions disobedient to the Messenger? Of course not. They understood the different roles of the Messenger (SAW) and so did the early generation of our scholars. This appreciation led them to conclude wise rulings and opinions on religious issues that happened during their times. We must regain that proper understanding of the Messenger's Sunnah and Seerah. We will explain some of these roles in Islam Simplified.

This book and its related series will explain these three main perspectives in detail. In this book, I will particularly elaborate on the goals of Islam. Many people talk about the Goals of Shariah (Islamic law). But, are the Goals of Shariah the same as the goals of Islam? Of course not. Unfortunately, when I ask some scholars on what are the goals of Islam, and they answer by the Goals of Shariah. This answer represents a big misconception between Islam and Shariah. In the next chapters we will explain all these in its proper context.

Why do we have this Final Revelation and this eternal message? What are the goals that Allah (SWT) seeks from Muslims and non-Muslims? We will conclude this book with the answers, Insha Allah.

Islam is simply not a religion, certainly not in the same way the west and other nations understand religion. This is a common mistake in people's understanding. According to the Arabic terminology, it is absolutely a religion. But we should never ever simply compare Islam and Christianity because whereas Christianity is a mere religion, Islam is both a religion and a complete way of life. A way of life for Muslims and non-Muslims, for the community and the country. It is an inclusive and comprehensive system. It is not just a religion in terms of acts of worship and rituals. For example, we cannot compare Islam to Buddhism. There is a big misconception in this matter. We cannot appreciate these unless we understand Islam Simplified.

This book will elaborate on what the goals of Islam are, a fundamental and big subject. The first perspective of Islam Simplified is summarized in the overall framework below. We will build and explain the framework below in sufficient detail, Insha Allah.

<p style="text-align: center;">الإسلام - Islam End goal of Islam is (الفلاح) Falah, salvation of the human soul in this life and the Hereafter.</p>		
<p>(Iman, Faith) Principal Goal of Iman is (التوحيد) Tauheed or Monotheism, Oneness of Allah</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge of Allah (معرفة الله) 2. Oneness of Allah (توحيد الله) 3. Worship of Allah (عبادة الله) 4. Closeness to Allah (التقرب الى الله) 5. Comfort of the heart (اطمئنان القلب) <p style="text-align: right;">1</p>	<p>(Akhlaq, Morals) Principal Goal of Akhlaq is the Realization of (الرحمة) Mercy and (العدل) Justice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perfects Morals based on the Fitrah 2. Motivated for the pleasure of Allah (مرضات الله) 3. Balance between human, society and creation 4. Premise that Everything belongs to Allah (الملك لله) 5. Social responsibility <p style="text-align: right;">2</p>	<p>(Shariah, Law) Principal Goal of Shariah is (الحكم لله), Rule is for Allah</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preserving the Essentials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Al-Din (الدين) - Al-Nafs (النفس) - Al-Mal (المال) - Al-'Aql (العقل) - Al-Nasl (النسل) 2. Meeting the Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitating the Essentials 3. Embellishments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make life and religion beautiful <p style="text-align: right;">3</p>

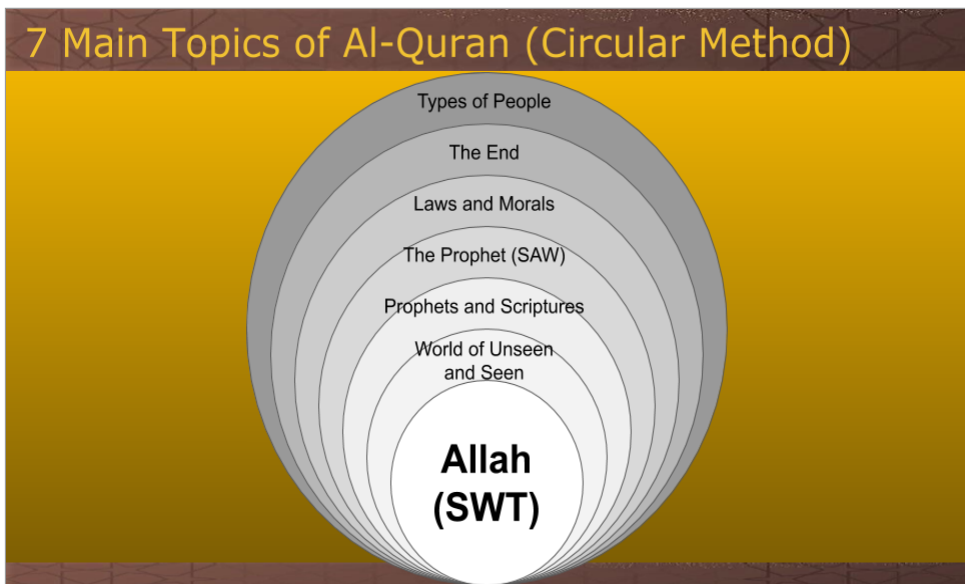
The second big subject that will be presented in Islam Simplified is to understand the Quran. We will not understand Islam without understanding the Quran. The Quran by itself is, of course, comprehensive and includes everything Allah (SWT) wants from His servants. These inclusive goals are mentioned in detail in the Holy Quran. The Prophetic Seerah and Sunnah verify, explain, and exemplify the Quran by giving more details. But all the fundamentals are there in the Quran. Of course we cannot do without the

Prophetic Seerah and Sunnah, unlike what some misguided “Quranists” claim. It is a twisted and misguided belief to claim that all we need is the Quran since one of the major topics or subject matters of the Quran is Prophet Muhammad (SAW). But all the fundamentals of Islam are there in the Holy Quran. As we understand the Quran, we will see the reflections of the goals of Islam.

Let me just say a couple of introductory words about the Quran. The Holy Quran is a book. Books in the world can be simply categorized into three types. All the books in this world are either children's books, stories and novels, or knowledge books. So, In which category does the Holy Quran fall? People will get confused by this universal division. Should we rank it with stories? Stories make about one-third of The Holy Quran. Is it a knowledge book? Surely since it gives us guidance and information. It contains the knowledge of space, politics, commerce, social relationships, etc. Is it suitable for children? Of course. Even children can memorize and understand many parts of it. So, what is the type of this Book?

We will be explaining all these when we discuss the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran is closer to knowledge books despite having many beautiful stories in it but the focus of the stories is its lessons and guidance. Now when we come to knowledge books, most of them follow a certain structure. They are arranged by main topics or subject matters with each main topic further divided into chapters and sections. So, what are the main topics of the Holy Quran? What are the chapters of this Book? Is it, in the first place, categorized? Is the categorization of the known Suras the same as that of the main topics and chapters? The answer is, of course, not because the Quran has its own unique arrangement even as a knowledge book. So, what are the main topics and the detailed chapters in The Holy Quran? The following diagram is a summary of what we will discuss in detail

when we elaborate on the perspective of the Holy Quran in our Islam Simplified framework.



The third perspective in understanding Islam Simplified is the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Yes, he is a Prophet and Messenger of Allah, in fact, the last and final Prophet and Messenger. This was his main role. But he had other different roles, not just one role. If we do not understand these roles, we will understand neither The Prophetic Practices (Sunnah) nor the Prophetic Biography (Seerah). We will not be able to understand them without comprehending the roles of The Messenger (SAW). These roles are diverse and generate different lessons from the Sunnah and Seerah. Some of his (SAW) practices we must emulate precisely. Some of his rulings we must adopt without change. But depending on the context of his different roles, some of his practices, opinions, decisions, and even rulings we can adapt to our own realities in life. The following table shows some of the roles we will discuss under this perspective.

Some Unique Roles of the Prophet (SAW)

نُبُوَّة (نبي - رسول)	Prophethood (Prophet, Messenger)
انسان	Human
تشريع	Legislation
فتوى	Issuing edicts
قضاء	Adjudication
إمارة	Political leadership of the state
هدي	Guidance
صلح	Conciliation
إشارة	Advice to those seeking his opinion
نصيحة	Counselling

All that we will be presenting in this book have a strong body of evidence from the two primary sources of Islamic knowledge, the Quran and the Sunnah. We want to assure all readers that Islam Simplified has strong, legitimate Islamic roots. It has scientific roots that can be referenced to the books of the righteous forefathers. It follows the approach of the Ahlu as-Sunnah wal Jamaah. Some of the later scholars have also partially articulated the concepts and ideas we will present in this book, but we have put it together more comprehensively. We are committed to the approach of the Sunnis using the Quran and the authentic works of Hadith and Seerah to substantiate our ideas.

II

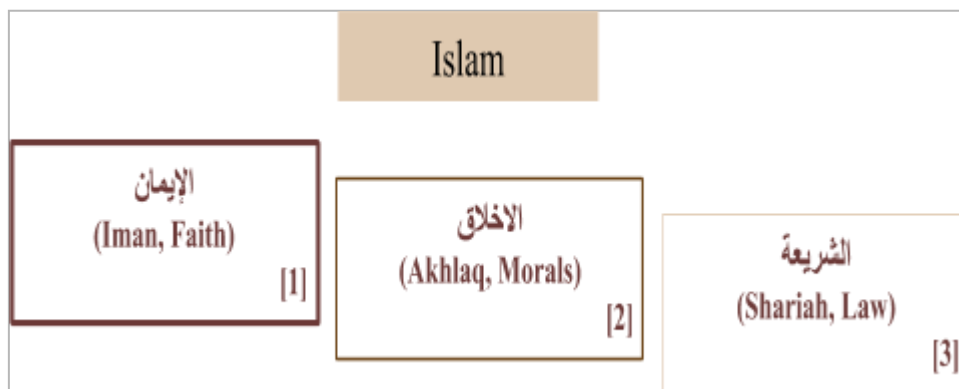
Goals of Shariah

What is Islam? What are the goals of Islam? Does Islam equate with Islamic law, Shariah? Are the goals of Islam similar to the goals of Sharaeeh? Of course not. This and the following chapters will focus on deliberating upon the above questions.

What is Islam? The question I ask here is a question I usually ask scholars as well as students of Islamic disciplines. What are the Goals of Islam? Most of them opine that the goals of Islam are the goals of Shariah. They then quote the arguments from the trendy topic of Maqasid Ash-Shariah (the goals or objectives of Shariah). Unfortunately, this answer is incorrect. The goals of Islam are not the goals of Islamic law. Shariah (Islamic law) is part of Islam and even if we achieve all the goals of Shariah, we will achieve only part of the goals of Islam. We will not achieve the whole of Islam since all of Shariah is only part of Islam.

Three Main Components of Islam

To begin with, we must understand that Islam has three main components. Islam consists of, in order of importance,



1. Iman (Faith, Belief)
2. Akhlaq (Morals, Manners)
3. Shariah (Islamic law, Fiqh, Jurisprudence)

If we understand these three components and understand the separate goals of these components, we can define the goals of Islam. This is the different approach I am taking. Usually, when we explain Islam, we explain it in reverse. We explain it from bottom to top. So we start by the laws of what is permissible (Halal) and what is forbidden (Haram). We are more concerned about the details of what is allowed or not allowed, what constitutes good manners or ill-manners. But we miss the whole picture of what these details lead us to. The rituals, righteous deeds, good behavior, compliance with the law, and strong faith must lead to some goals. There must be a why or purpose behind it. What I will do is to begin from the middle, not from the bottom. I will start from the middle and construct a whole framework or picture of the goals of Islam. I will then give some detailed examples to clarify these goals. I will then conclude with the principal goal of each component separately; the principal goals of Iman, Akhlaq, and Shariah. I will then summarize the major end goal of Islam.

Let us start from the middle. Islam consists of three main components; Iman, Akhlaq, and Shariah. The order of importance is specific, as shown in the visual above.

Shariah in Brief

Let us begin with the Shariah because when I ask scholars and students of Islam alike about the goals of Islam, they mostly respond with the goals of Shariah. Let me clarify this confusion first.

The Shariah is generally referred to the system of legislation in Islam. It refers to the commands given by Allah (SWT) to His servants, which have been brought by His prophets culminating with the Seal of the Prophets and Messengers, Prophet Muhammad (SAW). From the details of these commands as contained in the Quran, the sayings and examples of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), the practice of the early generation of Muslims, particularly the period of the rightly guided Caliphs, our scholars have summarized the fundamental principles and objectives of the Shariah.

From the Shariah we can determine the Hukm (plural Ahkam) or ruling value or regulation of a particular act. In general, there are five kinds of Hukm in the Shariah, and they are: Wajib or obligatory, Mandub or recommended, Haram or forbidden, Makruh or hateful (disapproved) and Mubah or permissible. Unfortunately, the details of these Hukm often obscure the basic wisdom or objectives of the Shariah.

Obligatory actions must be performed and are rewarded when done with good intentions. The opposite applies for forbidden actions. Recommended actions are those which should be performed and the disliked actions should be abstained from. Again there is a reward when the action is motivated by good intentions. Permitted actions are neither encouraged nor discouraged.

The ultimate worth of actions is based on intention and sincerity, as mentioned by the Prophet who said,

عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَبِي حَفْصٍ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ

رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: "إِنَّمَا الْأَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا نَوَى، فَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَمَنْ كَانَتْ هِجْرَتُهُ لِدُنْيَا يُصِيبُهَا أَوْ امْرَأَةٍ يَنْكِحُهَا فَهِجْرَتُهُ إِلَى مَا هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِ"

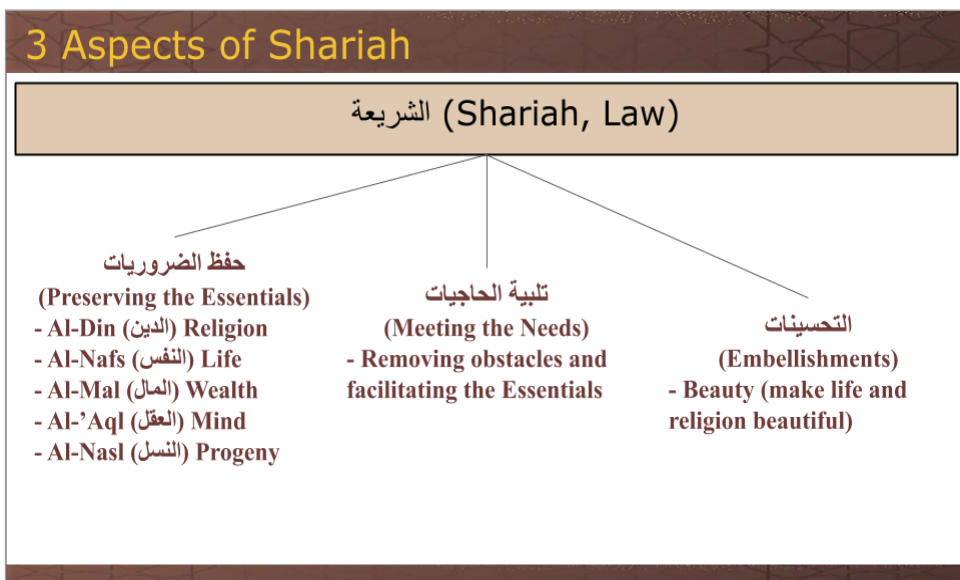
It is narrated on the authority of Amirul Mu'minin, Abu Hafs 'Umar bin al-Khattab (ra) who said:

I heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) say: "Actions are (judged) by motives (niyyah), so each man will have what he intended. Thus, he whose migration (hijrah) was to Allah and His Messenger, his migration is to Allah and His Messenger; but he whose migration was for some worldly thing he might gain, or for a wife he might marry, his migration is to that for which he migrated." [Bukhari & Muslim]

Three Aspects of Shariah

But, what are its goals? Of course, when we understand the goals of Shariah, we will understand and appreciate its details.

The legal philosophers of Islam, such as Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, Imam Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi, and Imam Shah WaliUllah explain that the goal of Shariah is to promote human welfare. The welfare of humans is based on the fulfillment of three aspects in order of priority; Daruriyyat (Essentials, Necessities), Hajiyyat (Complementaries, Needs), and Tahsiniyyat (Embellishments, Beautifications).



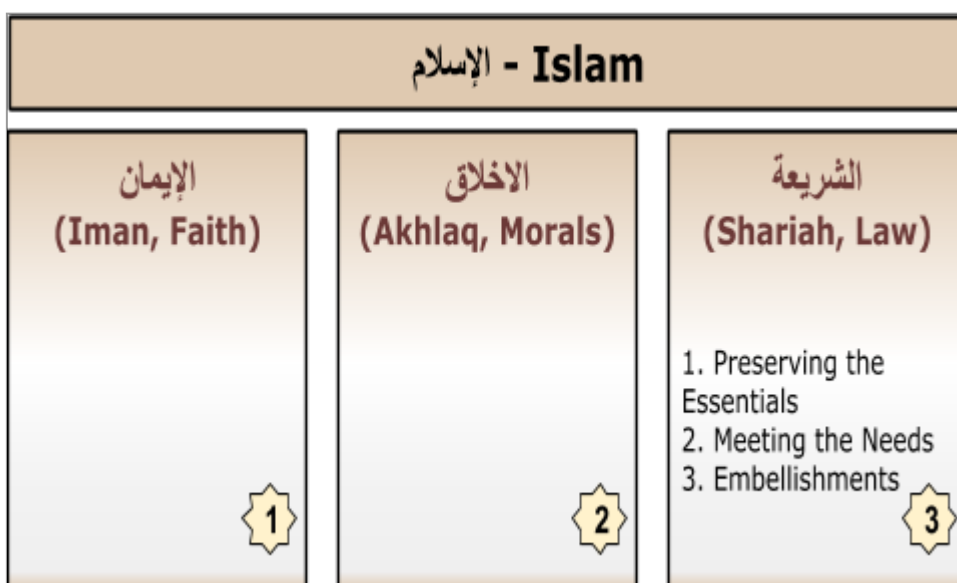
The Shariah has three aspects and each of these aspects has its goals. To understand the goals of Shariah, we must understand its aspects.

Let us build a visual framework showing what we have discussed so far. Islam has three elements;

1. Iman (Faith),
2. Akhlaq (Morals) and
3. Shariah (Islamic law).

Shariah has three aspects:

1. Preservation of the Essentials
2. Fulfilling the Needs
3. Fulfilling the Embellishments



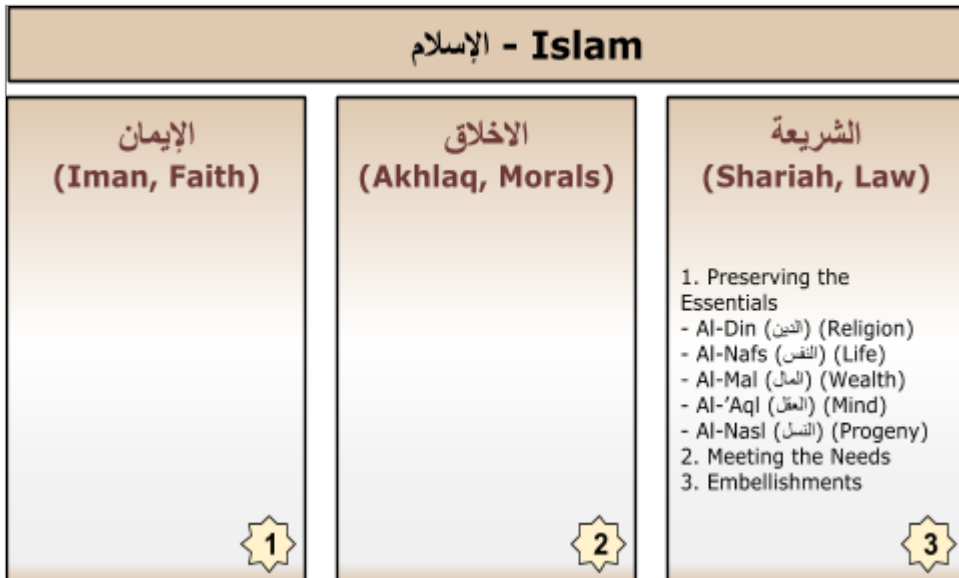
So, we have the Essentials, the Needs, and the Embellishments. We will determine the goals behind each one of them.

Daruriyyat, the Essentials or Necessities are defined as Maslahah (interests) of life which people essentially depend upon. Essentials are the interests without which human life will suffer; people may perish or suffer misery without it. The human community itself gets disturbed and life becomes difficult. The Essentials are seen as absolute requirements to the survival and spiritual well-being of individuals, to the extent that their destruction or collapse would cause chaos and the demise of the normal order in society. Essentials are matters that worldly and religious life depend upon. Their omission leads to unbearable hardship in this life, or punishment in the next.

The Shariah, on the whole, primarily seeks to protect and promote these essential values and validates all measures necessary for their preservation and advancement. The goals of the Essentials are to maintain the individual and the society and keep this balance between the individual and society. The human balance will go wrong without it. The life of the individual and the society gets disturbed.

Five Essentials

The Essentials consist of five priorities, some scholars say there are six. We can combine the fifth and sixth priorities together.



The first one is Preservation of Religion (Hifz al-Din). Without religion, human life is devoid of any spiritual fulfillment. This applies to all human beings. Our Creator (SWT) has purposely filled this essential need of the human being by appointing His Messengers to convey, teach, and exemplify the correct religion since the time of Prophet Adam (AS). The final Messenger was Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the final complete religion is Islam. Without the correct relationship with Allah (SWT), human life goes wrong.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam, [3:19]

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا

This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion; [5:3]

The Shariah preserves these essentials in two ways: firstly by ensuring their establishment and then by developing them. To ensure the establishment of religion, Allah (SWT) has made belief and worship obligatory. To ensure its development, the rulings relating to the obligation of learning and conveying the religion were legislated.

The second priority is Preservation of Mind (Hifz al-Aql). Allah (SWT) has distinguished the human over other creatures through the capability of his mind or intellect. Because of this mind, humans are held accountable on the Day of Judgement, to be rewarded or punished. The mind is so vital to the extent that if it goes, the human will not be held accountable. This is a major principle in Islam. If a human loses his mind, he or she is not to be held accountable, unless this happens on purpose. Three types of people are pardoned. Firstly, the one who is asleep since he has no control over his mind. Second is the young child until he or she matures and the mind has developed. And finally the insane until he becomes sober and regains his mind. For those who lose their mind for psychological or other reasons, they are pardoned until they regain their mental capability. Of course, this issue has further details. Do psychological illnesses apply or not? This is something we may refer to when we arrive at this issue. But, if someone loses his mind willingly through alcohol or drugs, he will be held accountable.

The ability to choose is fundamental in Islam. Remember this rule: if someone loses the ability to choose, he or she is not to be held accountable. If someone loses the ability to choose, he is being forced or loses his will, he is not to be held accountable. This is unfair to the person whereas Allah (SWT) is just. Thus a sound intellect is the basis of the responsibilities that humans will be accountable for.

Preservation of Wealth relates to both the wealth of the individual and society. This is essential as we can see the effects of poverty on

livelihood. The Shariah has made it obligatory to support oneself and that one is responsible for. It has laws to regulate the commerce and transactions between people, in order to ensure fair dealing, economic justice, and to prevent oppression and dispute.

Then there is Preservation of Self or Life. This relates to the physical well being and health of again both the individual and society. To ensure the preservation of human life, the Shariah legislated for marriage, healthy eating and living, and forbade the taking of life and laid down punishments for doing so.

Preservation of Progeny or Offspring is the final essential. Some scholars add another essential called Preservation of Family. The offspring belong to a family because the family is the main ingredient of society. Without a traceable family system where we can identify who is the father or mother or child or husband and how people are related by blood, the whole human community becomes corrupt. Thus preserving the family is essential.

Marriage is legislated for the preservation of lineage, and sex outside marriage is forbidden. Punitive laws were put in place in order to ensure the preservation of lineage and the proper continuation of human life.

Preservation of the Offspring can be discussed alone or incorporated together with the family. The slight differences are superficial indeed. In Shariah, the family is the nucleus ingredient of society, not the individual, although individual rights are also preserved. Thus the Shariah balances between the family and individual rights but gives the required weightage to the family institution.

This is the general philosophy of The Essentials. Now, each of these Essentials has its details, laws, and goals. Through this, we understand the goals of the Shariah.



III

Preservation of Religion (Ad-Din)

In the context of this Essential of Shariah, Din or Religion, according to the Muslim scholars, does not refer to the comprehensive religion, but the ritual aspects. The word Religion is one of the very important terms in the Holy Quran. When Allah (SWT) said in the Holy Quran, "Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam" [3:19], religion here means a way of life.

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ

Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam, [3:19]

But, when we read in Surah Al-Fatiha "Master of (Yawmid-Din)", does (Yawmid-Deen) here also mean a way of life?

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Master of the Day of Judgment. [1:4]

No. Din here means the Day of Judgment. In Arabic, "Mudan" means held accountable for (something). Thus Din here means judgment. As Arabs say: Judge not, that you may not be judged, meaning don't judge people as they may judge you in return.

The word Din has multiple meanings. Preservation of Religion might mean religion with all its aspects and can also mean the rituals of religion, like praying, fasting, and supplicating. It can also mean being accountable for something. So, Preservation of Religion here means preserving the articles of Faith, the rituals, and other spiritual deeds that relate the servant with Allah (SWT).

One of the great Goals of Shariah is Preservation of Religion. Some scholars even believe it is more important than Preservation of Life. Because if Preservation of Life is more important, why do we have Jihad to preserve Religion? Jihad to fight for the sake of Islam often leads to martyrdom, a dream of many Muslims. Jihad involves sacrificing our life for Islam. So when someone loses his life to protect his religion and is greatly rewarded for it in the Hereafter, this indicates that Preservation of Religion is more important than Preservation of Life.

Yet, there are certain cases where Allah (SWT) said,

مَنْ كَفَرَ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِيمَانِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ أُكْرِهَ وَقَلْبُهُ مُطْمَئِنٌّ بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَكِنْ مَنْ شَرَحَ
بِالْكُفْرِ صَدْرًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ غَضَبٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ

Any one who, after accepting faith in Allah, utters Unbelief,- except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in Faith - but such as open their breast to Unbelief, on them is Wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a dreadful Penalty. [16:10]

which allows the Muslim to preserve his life (self) even if he has to utter words of Unbelief. How do we reconcile with the earlier view that Preservation of Religion is more important than Preservation of Life?

Differentiating Between Individual and Ummah

The answer has to do with differentiating between the individual's Religion versus the Religion of the Nation (Ummah). When the Religion of the Ummah, the society, or the country is under threat, Preservation of Religion takes precedence over Preservation of Life. One should be prepared to sacrifice his own life for the religion of his or her own people, country, and Ummah. This is fundamental in Islam.

But if it has to do with an individual, Preservation of Life is prioritized. Let us revisit the verse we have just mentioned. It is related to a well-known incident in the Prophetic Seerah during the early period of Islam in Mekkah. It involves the family of Yaser, his wife, and his son, Ammar. They were among the first vulnerable companions of the Messenger (SAW) They were tortured. Yaser's wife, Sumayyah, may Allah be pleased with her, became the first martyr in Islam when she succumbed to the tortures. She was followed by her husband who became the second martyr. Without any doubt, they both sacrificed their lives with honor. The young Ammar personally witnessed his mother and father being tortured and killed before him. They were killed before his eyes. Then the infidels started threatening him; they kept torturing him until he was forced to say that Allah (SWT) is not his God. They pressed him so hard to the point that he had to say the beetle walking on the ground is his God. Yet, they did not let him go until he was forced to curse the Messenger (SAW). Only then, was he released.

His life was being threatened. Should he prioritize his Religion or his Life? Ammar put his life forward. Yaser and Sumyyah prioritized religion and gave up their life for that. When Ammar did this, Ammar remained a true believer in his heart. Few are as faithful as him but because of the words he uttered, he felt so painful. He went to the Messenger (SAW) to explain what happened to him, swearing to the

Messenger (SAW) that they would not let him go until he said so and so. He was crying. The Messenger (SAW) ordered him to do the same if they did it again. Ammar was a true believer. He (SAW) said,

"No (he is not a disbeliever), indeed Ammar is full of faith from head to toe."
Ibn Majah

But the matter here has to do with a vulnerable individual. So the Prophet (SAW) not only allowed but commanded Ammar to protect his life under torture.

But when the matter has to do with the Ummah, one should adopt Jihad and be willing to sacrifice life. Now the question is: What to prioritize? The general rule is that preserving the Ummah and its religion is fundamental.

For example, if a ruler wanted to twist the people's religion, scholars should stand before him and confront him. The issue here has to do with the community and the Ummah's religion. The silence of Islamic scholars, in this case, is unacceptable. Let me repeat; there is a rule for this matter whether to prioritize Religion or Life. The general rule is that preserving the Ummah and its religion is fundamental and of the highest priority. Some people might say that they saw some scholars on TV who started to apple-polish the rulers and renounce the current Islamic Awakening. Is this a correct action? Some people might say these scholars are forced to do so. This is unacceptable. There is a rule for this matter, as we have mentioned. The scholars must prioritize the Ummah's religion above every other related Essential including their own Life. It is different for the public, the common ordinary people. The general rule for them is that they are permitted, under torture and duress, to renounce the religion while their hearts remain steadfast in the faith. It is allowed for the public (common people), for the weak and vulnerable, to protect their Life even at the temporary expense of their Religion. I must stress that it is allowed, not necessarily, it is better or preferred, for them to take

that stand. But it is not allowed for those who guide other people, nor for scholars. Leaders and scholars are not pardoned to resort to such permission. Because when they present such arguments, people might misunderstand. They influence people, so people will deviate from the true religion. Religion itself becomes twisted. At the end of this chapter, I have appended a story on how the great scholar Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal stood firm as a leader when the Religion faced a major threat. It will clearly illustrate what we have concluded here.

So, in general, Preservation of Religion is prioritized over Preservation of Life. The exception is given to the ordinary Muslim but then again he or she will be greatly honored when they chose Religion above everything else. Sumayyah and Yasir, the first two martyrs in Islam, exemplified that honor.

Highest Priority

The Shariah positions Preservation of Religion as the highest priority. Clearly, without Iman, Akhlaq, and the rituals, there is no Religion and no Islam. Without Preservation of Religion, there will be no laws or provisions that will ensure the Preservation of Wealth, Mind, or Family. Society will become chaotic because every Essential is now in jeopardy. Thus, we must sacrifice ourselves, our families, and our wealth, everything, to preserve the Ummah's Religion, the religion of the community, the religion of the country. If anyone, including the rulers, tries to twist this matter, we must confront him. Exceptions may be permitted to the vulnerable and the public, but not accepted by leaders or scholars. The story of the people of the Pit in Surah Al-Buruj, Surah 85 in the Quran, clearly shows that Allah (SWT) greatly honors those who sacrifice the Life for the sake of the Religion.

There are many laws in Shariah related to the Preservation of Religion. All Acts of Worship like praying, fasting, performing the Hajj, performing the Umrah, reading the Quran, supplicating, and praising Allah strengthen the relationship between the servant and his Creator (SWT). Even though Zakah, Hajj, and fasting have many aspects related to people, the main intent is the spiritual bonding of obedience and closeness to Allah (SWT).

We agree that every good and permissible deed that is done with the deliberate intention to seek the pleasure of Allah (SWT) is an act of worship. But this particular Essential, Preservation of Religion, mainly concerns the rituals. (The others are covered under the other Essentials). Preserving these rituals is one of the Goals of Shariah. These rituals are very necessary for humans. A human who does not have a relationship with Allah (SWT) lives in misery. The great scholar Imam Ibn Al-Qayyim (May Allah rest his soul) said: There is a feeling

of emptiness in the heart that can solely be filled with intimacy with Allah (SWT).

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْ ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَى

And whoever turns away from My reminder, his shall be a straitened life, and We will raise him on the day of resurrection, blind. [20:124]

Mankind lives in misery without having a relationship with Allah (SWT). That is why there are many laws in Shariah to preserve Religion. Religion has the highest priority under the Essentials.

Reading Quote [2]

The embers of dispute between the Mu'tazilah and others besides them were kindled in the time of Harun Ar-Rashid. Then the idea that the Quran was created took root – meaning the understanding that it was not the Divine Speech – and the flames of tribulation were fanned by this in the days of the khalifah Al-Ma'mun and Al-Mu'tasim after him.

This innovation regarding the Quran was taken on by the government for a time and great differences occurred between those calling to it – like Bishr Al-Marisi and Ahmad ibn Abi Du'ad, the Qadi of Baghdad – and those in opposition to it – such as Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Muhammad ibn Nuh.

Al-Ma'mun supported the innovators in carrying out the enforcement of this twisted concept and he offered wealth to those who would assist this thinking from the scholars like Ahmad ibn Hanbal, who had leadership among the people.

The sincere scholars rejected the innovation. Al-Ma'mun lost hope that Imam Ahmad and those with him would join this new thinking. Al-Ma'mun then sentenced a group among them to death while jailing others, among them Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

He languished in prison for 18 months from the last of the rule of Al-Ma'mun all the way to the beginning of the reign of Al-Mu'tasim. In prison, Imam Ahmad faced many harsh trials, such as beatings and torture.

The Imam endured these hardships and persevered. He became more certain that he was right and that Islam was being challenged. His patience and unbending confidence only increased the confusion in the minds of the persecutors.

The Imam was taken from prison in chains and in a state of lowliness to the gatherings of debate and he would face off against Ahmad ibn Abi Du'ad, Ahmad ibn Ribah, Abu Shu'aib Al-Hujjam and others from the inner circle of the khalifahs. He would establish against them the proof, lead them into humiliation and due to this they chained him harder and he was taken back to jail without sandals.

They would whip in public whenever he refused to agree that the Quran was created. Sometimes they would cut from him access to food for one day or more. He remained steadfast.

One day, the khalifah Al-Mu'tasim ordered that he be brought from prison and have him presented in front of him. He then addressed the Imam, "You have near relation to me from the Messenger of Allah (SAW), and I will surely have you beaten with the whip until you say just as I do about the Quran being created."

The khalifah then turned to his whip carrier and said to him, "Take him for penalty." So he took him by the side and gripped him and then began the whipping. The first time he struck Imam Ahmad, he said, "In the Name of Allah." The second time he was struck, the Imam said, "There is no might or power except in Allah." Upon the third stroke, the Imam said, "The Quran is

the Speech of Allah, Uncreated.” At the time of the fourth stroke, he said, “Nothing comes to us except what Allah has written for us.”

The whip carrier continued on until he reached some 29 strokes with the whip. At that point, the sirwal of Imam Ahmad loosened some and while casting his glance towards the sky he was moving his lips. The sirwal stayed firm and did not come down to expose his nakedness.

Ibn Al-Asbagh said this, “I came into Ahmad’s cell after seven days and I said to him, ‘Abu `Abdillah, I saw you on the day that they struck and whipped you and the waistband of your sirwal loosened. You then took a glance towards the sky and your lips were moving. What did you say at that point?’

He answered me, ‘I said: Allah! Indeed I am upon the truth so do not let my clothing over that area be taken from me.’ ” The evil increased after this and they sent Imam Al-Marwazi, a good friend of Imam Ahmad and one of his students. He came to him in prison one day and addressed the Imam, “My teacher, Allah said the following:

...And do not kill yourselves...[Surat An-Nisa’ (4), verse 29]

Is this not the case?” Al-Marwazi meant that he should agree with the statement of the khalifah – outwardly – to save himself from destruction. Imam Ahmad replied to this, “Marwazi, leave so that you might see what thing I see.”

So Al-Marwazi went into the meeting area of the khalifah and found a large gathering of people, the number of which he could not count. In their hands they had pens and inkwells. Al-Marwazi asked them, “What exactly are you doing?”

They remarked, “We are waiting for what Imam Ahmad will say so that we can write it.” Al-Marwazi then came into the presence of Imam Ahmad and informed him of what he had witnessed. The Imam responded, “Marwazi, Shall I lead all of these astray? I should kill myself and not lead them astray and this is more correct.”



IV

Preservation of Self/Life (An-Nafs)

Preservation of Self/Life is premised upon a major philosophy in Islam. From the Islamic perspective, our physical self does not belong to us. We and everything else in the universe belong to the Creator (SWT). This is evidenced by so many verses in the Quran.

وَلِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ

And Allah's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between them; He creates what He pleases; [5:17]

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا فِيهِنَّ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

To Allah does belong the dominion of the heavens and the earth, and all that is therein, and it is He Who has power over all things. [5:120]

أَمْ لَهُمْ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا

Or is it that theirs is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and what is between them? [38:10]

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ

To Him belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth: and all affairs are referred back to Allah. [57:5]

We must establish this premise firmly. It is the foundation to understand Preservation of the Self and Preservation of Wealth.

Many questions and issues can be simply answered and resolved once we understand this fundamental principle.

Human Body and Soul Belongs to Allah (SWT)

Based on the fact that Allah (SWT) owns this universe and everything and everyone within it, our physical self and all its parts, do not belong to us. It belongs to Allah (SWT) and He (SWT) has merely entrusted it to us. As such we cannot simply do as we please with our physical self; we are only entrusted with it. The main Law to understand concerning Preservation of Self/Life is that the human does not own his or her self or life; Allah (SWT) is the true owner.

The human body belongs to Allah (SWT).

We also do not own our wealth.

... وَأَتَوْهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ ...

... And give them of the wealth of Allah which He has given you... [24:10]

Allah (SWT) gave us this body and this wealth and we are supposed to prosper it and use it for our benefit. We cannot purposely dent it, change it or destroy it without a valid reason. Doing so means to abuse the trust that Allah (SWT) has given us over something that belongs to Him (SWT). That is why the Shariah has many Laws and guidelines related to the human body and life.

We must understand these Laws in relation to its Goals. The Laws themselves are not the Goals. It is not simply about something being permissible (Halal) or forbidden (Haram) without a justification. The Shariah does not work arbitrarily. Our religion is a rational one. There isn't a single ruling, even a tiny one, without a purpose. Our religion is not arbitrary. There is a purpose for everything. I shall come back to this matter in more detail

Three Different Cases

Based on this premise, let us discuss three different rulings in Shariah related to the self. We will discuss a minor issue, a slightly more serious issue and a major one.

Let us look at the example of permanent tattoos on the body. Permanent tattoos are forbidden (Haram) in Islam. Temporary tattoos like drawings with washable dyes or stickers that can be removed are permissible (Halal, Mubah), provided that it doesn't show nudity or other inappropriate figures or words. According to the Shariah, permanent tattoos are forbidden (Haram). When scholars taught us that permanent tattoos are forbidden (Haram), they did not tell us why. The reason they are Haram is because we have permanently changed this body, without the permission of its owner. We do not own this body, so we can not simply change it the way we like. Allah (SWT) created the human in the best form.

We cannot simply do something permanently to the body that we do not own. If someone cuts his own hand saying that he is free to cut his hand any way he likes, he is sinful. This is not only harmful but also a sin because he has destroyed what he does not own.

This is one of the small issues. Let us move on to a slightly more serious issue.

وَلَا ضَلَّاهُمْ وَلَا مَنَّبَهُمْ وَلَا مَرَّاهُمْ فَلْيَبْتَكَنْ آذَانَ الْأَنْعَامِ وَلَا مَرَّاهُمْ فَلْيَغَيِّرَنَّ خَلْقَ اللَّهِ
وَمَنْ يَتَّخِذِ الشَّيْطَانَ وَلِيًّا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ خُسْرَانًا مُبِينًا

And most certainly I will lead them astray and excite in them vain desires, and bid them so that they shall slit the ears of the cattle, and most certainly I will bid them so that they shall alter Allah's creation; and whoever takes the Shaitan for a guardian rather than Allah he indeed shall suffer a manifest loss.
[4:119]

Why is it forbidden to alter the creation of Allah? Because, once again, all creatures belong to Allah (SWT), not us. This body isn't ours. Without getting into the details of jurisprudence (Fiqh), we are forbidden to physically change our bodies without a need. The need can either be medical or psychological, but it must be recommended by the related subject matter expert, not simply our own choice. For example, changing for fun or just for the looks, is not allowed. With the advances in the field of plastic surgery, it seems people including Muslims have a tendency to physically change parts of their body just to look better.

Manipulating God's creation is not allowed except in case of a necessity (Dharurah) which has its rules. The general rule is that it is forbidden and considered sinful, as we are changing something we do not really own.

Finally, let us discuss a major issue which is committing suicide. With the premise given earlier and the two preceeding examples, it becomes very apparent now why committing suicide is considered a major sin in Shariah. Suicide is prohibited in Islamic law according to evidence from the Quran, Sunnah, and the consensus of Muslim scholars.

قُلْ تَعَالَوْا أَتْلُ مَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّي عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ أَلَّا تَشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ ۚ نَحْنُ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ ۚ وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ ۚ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا النَّفْسَ الَّتِي حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ وَصَّاكُم بِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ

Say: Come I will recite what your Lord has forbidden to you-- (remember) that you do not associate anything with Him and show kindness to your parents, and do not slay your children for (fear of) poverty-- We provide for you and for them-- and do not draw nigh to indecencies, those of them which are apparent and those which are concealed, **and do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden except for the requirements of justice**; this He has enjoined you with that you may understand. [6:151]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَ تِجَارَةً عَنْ تَرَاضٍ مِنْكُمْ وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِكُمْ رَحِيمًا

O you who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities:
But let there be amongst you Traffic and trade by mutual good-will: Nor kill
(or destroy) yourselves: for verily Allah hath been to you Most Merciful!
[4:29]

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ " مَنْ
تَرَدَّى مِنْ جَبَلٍ فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ، فَهُوَ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ، يَتَرَدَّى فِيهِ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا
أَبَدًا، وَمَنْ تَحَسَّى سَمًا فَقَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ، فَسَمُهُ فِي يَدِهِ، يَتَحَسَّاهُ فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا
مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا، وَمَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِحَدِيدَةٍ، فَحَدِيدَتُهُ فِي يَدِهِ، يَجَأُ بِهَا فِي بَطْنِهِ فِي
نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدًا مُخَلَّدًا فِيهَا أَبَدًا "

Narrated Abu Huraira:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Whoever purposely throws himself from a mountain and kills himself, will be in the (Hell) Fire falling down into it and abiding therein perpetually forever; and whoever drinks poison and kills himself with it, he will be carrying his poison in his hand and drinking it in the (Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternally forever; and whoever kills himself with an iron weapon, will be carrying that weapon in his hand and stabbing his 'Abdomen with it in the (Hell) Fire wherein he will abide eternally forever."

[Bukhari]

The person who commits suicide commits a major sin and goes to Hellfire. Even the treatment of the dead body is subject to strict laws. It is so serious that some scholars argued whether to perform the funeral prayer or not. Of course, we perform the funeral prayer for suicide. Putting aside the detailed legal discussions on the matter, the point we want to highlight is that our scholars even argue whether to perform the funeral prayer on the deceased or whether to bury the corpse with the Muslims. They went that far. The final verdict among most scholars is that It is considered a Fard Kifaya [communal duty] upon Muslims to wash and shroud a person who commits suicide as well as to bury him in a Muslim cemetery. This is

because he is a Muslim and is subject to the general rulings that apply to deceased Muslims. Suicide is a major sin but does not take him or her out of Islam.

The main reason why the laws related to suicide are so strict is that the sinner has destroyed the gift of life that Allah (SWT) has entrusted to him. The self is one very, very important gift Allah (SWT) grants humans to protect and preserve. Then some reckless and desperate people destroyed this gift, which does not belong to them, by committing suicide. Such people deserve the ultimate punishment because they have destroyed the soul and body that they were entrusted with (Amanah). Those who do tattoo deserve punishment, those who alter the creation of Allah (SWT) deserve a greater punishment. And those who destroy the whole gift deserve even more severe punishment.

The issue of abortion can also be addressed in the context of Preservation of Self/Life. Abortion is forbidden (Haram) when the baby is 120 days old or more as he has a soul then. There is a controversy in the ruling among scholars as to when the baby is younger. Most of them are of the view that it is not allowed as long as there is life in that fetus. Some scholars say 40 days. It is a medical issue to decide if it has a soul. However, if the unborn fetus threatens the life of the mother, it can, of course, be sacrificed to preserve the life of the mother.

I hope from the examples discussed we can see how these laws are not arbitrary. They have a purpose, they are based on a sound premise. Preservation of Self or Life is one of the major goals of the Shariah.

In the previous chapter, I mentioned the example of Jihad which appears contrary to Preservation of Self. There are laws in the Shariah that encourage Muslims to sacrifice themselves for Islam.

When it comes to Preservation of Religion of the Ummah, especially when it is under threat, Jihad is encouraged. Jihad does not necessarily mean the use of weapons against the enemies. Jihad might entail uttering words that can lead to death.

عَنْ طَارِقِ بْنِ شِهَابٍ أَنَّ رَجُلًا سَأَلَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَيُّ الْجِهَادِ أَفْضَلُ قَالَ كَلِمَةٌ حَقٌّ عِنْدَ سُلْطَانٍ جَائِرٍ

Tariq ibn Shihab reported: A man asked the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, "What is the best jihad?" The Prophet said, "A word of truth in front of a tyrannical ruler." [Musnad Ahmad]

The Messenger Of Allah (PBUH) also said: "The master of martyrs Is Hamza Ibn Abdul Mutalib and a man who stands up to a tyrant ruler and orders and forbids him (accounts him) and is killed." [Al-Hakim]. I am aware of the argument concerning the authenticity of this Hadith. It is more likely a fine (Hasan) or authentic (Sahih) Hadith. Again, in this case, someone sacrificed his life to say the right word. Even if we are not too certain of the authenticity of this Hadith, we can cite the story of the boy who sacrificed himself to guide his people. The famous story is related to Surah al-Buruj (Surah 85 in the Quran). It is well-documented that the believers then sacrificed themselves. The People of the Ditch gave their lives for the sake of their religion and Allah (SWT) praised their action. We are indeed forbidden to kill ourselves. But, in certain cases, Allah (SWT) ordered us to prioritize religion, to put religion forward. I have explained that in the previous chapter and want to stress it again here.

To conclude, Preservation of Self/Life is premised on the fundamental principle that life belongs to the Creator (SWT). We are only entrusted with our lives. Thus we must preserve life to the best of our ability. The detailed laws of Shariah prevent any unwarranted action to change, hurt, maim, or destroy life. Preservation of Self/Life is an Essential without which human life is being threatened.



V

Preservation of Wealth (Al-Mal)

Let us get directly into the third Essential, Preservation of Wealth. This is a fundamental goal of Islamic Law, to preserve and prosper the wealth of the individual and the community. The fundamental premise that we need to understand parallels the premise underlying the Preservation of Self; we do not own our self/life, it belongs to Allah (SWT). In this case, we do not own this wealth as well. This is the wealth of Allah (SWT). It is a gift entrusted to us.

... وَأَتَوْهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ ...

... And give them of the wealth of Allah which He has given you... [24:10]

These are not our possessions. There are many other verses related to this theme.

Allah (SWT) Entrusted Us With His Wealth

Allah (SWT) is the Eternal Owner of Sovereignty. He owns us and owns our wealth. He (SWT) entrusted us with this wealth and gave us orders to use it for certain purposes and not others. Once we understand this fundamental premise we can appreciate many laws aimed at the Preservation of Wealth.

Wealth does not just mean money. Wealth is anything valuable.

Wealth does not just mean money. Wealth is anything valuable. Houses, cars, public and private possessions are all different forms of wealth. Keep this in mind when we mention the word wealth. The

fundamental premise of wealth is that it belongs to Allah (SWT). That is why nobody is allowed to misuse it. This is the fundamental principle: It is not ours so we cannot misuse it.

If someone, for example, rolled a 10 dollar note and smoked it like a cigarette, then this is misusing wealth. It is not allowed. I can accept that one can spend some money on fun activities and entertainment, but simply burning it like this is being irresponsible. He is abusing what he does not really own. The Quran mentions

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَامًا وَارْزُقُوهُمْ فِيهَا وَاكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا

Give not unto the foolish (what is in) your (keeping of their) wealth, which Allah has given you to maintain; but feed and clothe them from it, and speak kindly unto them. [4:5]

A sound and responsible mind is required to manage wealth. We are not allowed to simply do what we want with the wealth that we are entrusted over.

As part of the Preservation of Wealth, the Shariah encourages all legal means to acquire and grow wealth for both the person and society. At the same time, it forbids all means to acquire wealth wrongfully especially at the expense of others like cheating, stealing, robbery, bribery, and usury. The Shariah has many laws related to it and some like stealing and robbery have capital punishments associated with it.

Based on the premise that wealth belongs to Allah (SWT), part of it must be shared with society. So the Shariah has made the Zakah obligatory with the specific groups of needy people that can receive the Zakah contributions.

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمَوْلَقَةِ قُلُوبِهِمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

Alms are for the poor and the needy, and those employed to administer the (funds); for those whose hearts have been (recently) reconciled (to Truth); for those in bondage and in debt; in the cause of Allah; and for the wayfarer: (thus is it) ordained by Allah, and Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom. [9:60]

Apart from the obligatory Zakah, the Shariah allows the state (government) to collect another obligatory Land tax (Kharaj), and there are detailed rules for that. Clearly, the Shariah is very serious to ensure that wealth is justly distributed among the society so that it does not concentrate in the hands of just the rich.

... كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ ...

... In order that it may not (merely) make a circuit between the wealthy among you... [59:7]

This balance to ensure the just distribution of the wealth that belongs to Allah (SWT) is another important premise in the Preservation of Wealth.

Apart from what is obligatory, the Shariah strongly encourages all forms of donations and aid for other needs of society. This general Sadaqah can be used for any form of aid or benefit to individuals or society. Since wealth is a gift entrusted upon us, why should we keep it only for ourselves? Sharing the wealth of Allah (SWT) through voluntary deeds like donations, charity, and helping the poor is greatly rewarded by Allah (SWT). Ponder upon this verse in the context that Allah (SWT) multiplies the reward for those who voluntarily contribute from the wealth that Allah (SWT) Himself has given.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ
سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةُ حَبَّةٍ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

The parable of those who spend their property in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears (with) a hundred grains in every ear;

and Allah multiplies for whom He pleases; and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing [2:261]

The premise of wealth sharing is a fundamental aspect of the Preservation of Wealth.

I intend to explain the goals of Shariah in these few chapters and thus will not discuss all the laws related to the Preservation of Wealth. There are numerous laws related to buying and selling, permissible (Halal) and forbidden (Haram) forms of exchange of goods, and loans. All the rules that are related to theft and usury are to eliminate injustice in obtaining wealth. All the rules related to inheritance and the intricate details on how it is to be divided are to ensure which family members deserve the inheritance and in what portions. We must appreciate that most of these laws were prescribed since the early days of Islam and that even today the Shariah still stands out as a legal system that is very detailed in areas like the distribution of inheritance. All these laws are to ensure that the wealth entrusted by Allah (SWT) grows in a just and balanced way while benefiting all in society.

Public Wealth

Wealth, of course, can be individual or public property and can be public money. Let us focus a little bit on public property. Public property is part of the wealth entrusted by Allah (SWT) to the state and its management is entrusted upon the ruler. Thus a clear basic principle applies. The ruler is entrusted with public property. By no definition does he own it. Thus he is not allowed to spend any part of it for himself except through existing governance procedures.

Let us review what happened during the early days of the Caliphate under Abu Bakr as-Siddiq (May Allah be pleased with him). He was the first Caliph after the death of the Messenger (SAW). The Messenger (SAW) was a prophet, a judge, a governor, and a military commander. We will discuss his (SAW) different roles in another book, Insha Allah. It is clear that the new Caliph cannot assume all these roles. Thus a new system of governance is needed.

Abu Bakr was the first Khalifah. He and the other Companions now have to establish a new system of governance after the Messenger (SAW). Many principles and rules will remain but will be expressed in different forms. How will the new Caliph govern and will the Companions and also other Muslims deal with him? Specifically, how will they govern matters related to wealth?

After being appointed as the Caliph of the Muslim Ummah, on the very next day itself, Abu Bakr took some goods and went to the market. Umar ibn Al-Khattab and Abdulrahman ibn A'uf (May Allah be pleased with them) saw him. They stopped him and asked: Where are you going? Abu Bakr said: I'm going to trade at the market. How can I earn money to spend on my family? Note that he was the Caliph and in charge of the public wealth. Yet, it is clear to him that the wealth of the state does not belong to him. How can he feed his family? They argued that he should get busy over the Nation

(Ummah) matters. He wondered how is he to earn a living? They told him that he will be paid a salary. The Caliph does not decide the amount of his salary. It's the nation or the parliament, or the cabinet who decides the amount of his salary. After discussions, the Companions agreed that they would give him a sheep daily and cash of around 100 Dirhams a day or so, something simple.

The following day, he was seen going to the market again. They, again, stopped him and asked: Where are you going? Abu Bakr said the salary is not enough, it is not enough for my basic needs, not the luxuries. I have wives and children. It isn't enough, so let me go to trade in the market. After discussions, the Companions said they would raise the salary to two sheep a day. Two sheep and 200 Dirhams. That is all that the Caliph will earn. The Caliph is not allowed to use the people's money the way he likes. This is public money. The governor isn't allowed to do so, nor does anyone else.

We are not allowed to abuse public property. Claiming that this is not our own property, we cannot for example break a bench in a public park. It is sinful. Preservation of Public Property is obligatory upon us.

Preservation of Wealth is a major Essential. The Holy Quran dwells deeply on this matter. Let us discuss this verse from one of the short Suras.

وَلَا يَحْضُ عَلَى طَعَامِ الْمِسْكِينِ

And does not urge (others) to food of the poor [107:3]

Allah (SWT) said the food (طعام - Ta'am) of the poor. Whereas there's the word feeding (اطعام - It'am) in the Holy Quran. Feeding or to feed is also mentioned in the Holy Quran. But the context in this verse isn't about feeding, the context is about food. What is the point in this? If food becomes expensive, the poor cannot afford to buy it. They will

suffer misery and starvation. In this case, it becomes the nation's duty to provide food at low prices, at least for the poor. There must be a system to support these people. Some countries have a food coupon system and some have a food bank.

When there is a famine and food is in short supply, Umar ibn Al-Khattab even suspended the application of the penal code for theft. We provide a summary of this incident at the end of this chapter.

Thus the Shariah is very sensitive to this matter of providing food. We can sense that it relates to two Essentials, Preservation of Life and Preservation of Wealth. Making food available and affordable for people especially the poor is part of the provisions under Preservation of Wealth. Wealth must be distributed justly to cover the basic needs of life. This is how the Preservation of Wealth supports the Preservation of Life. So we again see that the laws and guidelines in Shariah have related goals and reinforce these goals.

Preservation of Individual and Public Wealth is an Essential for the good life of the individual, society, and Ummah. It is a major goal among the Goals of Shariah.

Reading Quote [3]

During 640 AD, Arabia suffered from serious drought. There were no rains, and as such there was no cultivation. There was also nothing for the animals to graze upon. That led to a serious famine and people were in great distress. Black dust storms blew over the countryside and that added to the distress of the people. The people from the interior flocked to the cities. There was practically no grain in the market. Ghee, butter and meat disappeared from the markets. It became a serious problem to feed the people.

Umar worked to solve the problem. He wrote to the provincial governors asking them to send food grains to Arabia. Camel loads of food grains and other necessities of life came from Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. Foodgrains were received from Egypt through the sea as well. Umar distributed food grains and other necessities among the people family wise. Meals were cooked at the State level and all persons from the interior of the desert who took refuge in Madinah were fed daily at the expenses of the state. According to one account as many as 40,000 persons were fed every day.

At night he would move about from street to street to see for himself that all had been fed. Whenever any case of hardship came to his notice he would rush relief immediately. He would in most cases carry the relief goods on his own back. After taking his rounds, Umar would pray to God till late hours of the night. He would then wake up in the early hours of the morning, and again pray before going to the mosque to lead the morning prayer.

Addressing the congregation Umar would say: "I cannot say whether this calamity is because of the lapses of the Caliph or the sins of the people. Whosoever is to be blamed let us repent, and pray to God for relieving us of this misery."

Umar fixed a day for the offering of Istisqa prayers. The faithful were required to offer the special prayers on the specified day throughout the Muslim dominions. On the fixed day all the Muslims in Madinah assembled in a plain outside Madinah and offered the Istisqa prayers. It is related that within a week of the special prayer clouds appeared on the sky and there were heavy rains. Umar then led a thanksgiving prayer. After the rains things changed for the better and the famine was over.

Umar solved the crisis of the famine with full intensity because the famine threatened the Daruriyyat of life. He organized the distribution of food in a just way such that the dominions of the state not affected by the famine would assist the famine stricken dominions.



VI

Preservation of Mind (Al-Aql)

Preservation of Mind is a very significant goal of Shariah (Islamic law). Like all the Essentials when we say Preservation it has a baseline meaning of protecting and an upper meaning of developing or promoting. Preservation of Mind involves both protecting the Mind from being impaired or destroyed and developing it. There is a group of general laws related to the mind.

Islam is a Rational Religion

We will begin discussing the general laws before, gradually, moving to the more detailed ones. One of the important general laws is that Islam respects the mind. Pay attention to this important premise; there is no contradiction between Religion and the Mind. This is impossible because Islam is a rational religion except that many Muslims, including scholars, do not put enough effort to explain Islam properly.

Let me explain this principle that seems to be simple. Let us tackle a seemingly major conflict that has confused many people; the relationship between science and religion. Some have even deserted Islam because of it. It is important to clarify this conflict to understand and appreciate the value of the mind or intellect in Islam. The general law on the relationship between science (Ilm) and religion (Deen) in Islam can be easily summarized after we deliberate on two related factors; authenticity and certainty.

We must explain the authenticity or reliability of the texts or evidence (نص - Nas) from the Islamic point of view first. There are

some texts (Nusus - نصوص) in religion that are considered authentic (Sahih). Others are classified differently. What are the authentic texts? All the verses in the Holy Quran are authentic texts. Next, in order of priority, are all the Recurrent (Mutawatir - متواتر) Sahih Hadith of the Prophet (SAW). These are all authentic. After that, all the singular (Ahad - احد) Sahih Hadith are considered authentic texts.

(Just to explain briefly, Hadith are the sayings or actions or permissions of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The Recurrent Sahih Hadith are those with multiple chains of narrations. Hadith that are Sahih but have only one chain of narration are called Hadith Sahih Ahad).

Next, we will explain the Degree of Certainty (Thubut - ثبوت) of the texts. There are texts which are authentic and their meanings are absolutely certain. These are the certain texts (Qat'iy - قطعي). There are also the uncertain (Zanni - ظني) texts for which the meanings may not be so obvious or it may have multiple interpretations. The Holy Quran mentions the two categories of certainty as Muhkamat (مُحْكَمَات - decisive) and Mutashabihat (مُتَشَابِهَات - allegorical).

هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْهُ آيَاتٌ مُحْكَمَاتٌ هُنَّ أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ وَأُخَرُ مُتَشَابِهَاتٌ

He it is Who has revealed the Book to you; some of its verses are decisive, they are the basis of the Book, and others are allegorical; [3:7]

The Mutashabihat are verses that can have different meanings according to the rules of the Arabic language. Assigning meanings to these verses requires thorough thinking so that only acceptable meanings are given to them. Examples include:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِثْلِ شَجَرَةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۚ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي رُجَاةٍ ۚ الرُّجَاةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ۚ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ ۚ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth; a likeness of His light is as a niche in which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, (and) the glass is as it were a brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof almost gives light though fire touch it not-- light upon light-- Allah guides to His light whom He pleases, and Allah sets forth parables for men, and Allah is Cognizant of all things. [24:35]

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ

Surely those who swear allegiance to you do but swear allegiance to Allah; the hand of Allah is above their hands ... [48:10]

The Muhkamat verses have only one meaning according to the rules of the Arabic language or else the meaning of the verse is clearly known. Examples include:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

Say: He, Allah, is One. [112:1]

... وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ الْبَيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا ...

... and Allah has allowed trading and forbidden usury ... [2:275]

All the verses in the Quran are authentic. Verse [3:7] states that most of the verses in the Quran have a decisive and clear-cut (Qat'iyy) meaning. These verses form the basis of the Quran. They are unquestionable. Some verses are Mutashabihat; so they can have many meanings according to the rules of the Arabic language. Meanings assigned to them must be done in a manner that complies with the language and the Religion and does not contradict the verses that are Muhkamat. Surely the verses of the Quran do not contradict one another. When verse [3:7] says that the Muhkamat verses are the foundation of the Book it means that if we do not understand or suspect our understanding or disagree about its

meaning, we must refer to these Muhkamat verses. They are the foundation of the Book and as such we must refer back to the foundation.

Likewise, the Hadith (sayings of the Prophet (SAW)) do not contradict one another, and they do not contradict the verses of the Quran.

Let us summarize our discussion so far on authenticity and certainty. All verses of the Holy Quran are authentic. All Recurrent (Mutawatir) Hadith are authentic. All Sahih Hadith with a singular chain of narration is also considered authentic but its strength as a piece of textual evidence is less than the Mutawatir Sahih Hadith. Most of the authentic texts from the Quran and Hadith are Qat'iy texts. Some of these authentic texts are Zanni in terms of their meanings. Any interpretation of its meaning(s) cannot contradict the Qat'iy authentic texts. So the texts of Shariah that are of concern in the discussion of science and religion can be classified broadly as authentic and certain, and authentic but not so certain.

Let us move now to Science. Science uses other terms to classify scientific texts or evidence. Science does not use terms like certain and uncertain or authentic and inauthentic. Science uses different terminologies. When we study Astronomy, Geology, Biology, and Physics we come across things called Facts (Haqaiq) and things called Theories (Nazariyat). We can briefly summarize the difference as follows.

- A scientific Fact is something that has been observed repeatedly like; this charged thing always attracts or repels this other charged thing with this force when they're this distance apart.
- A Theory (or Hypothesis) is an attempt to explain the facts as observed like why do objects always fall when released from a height. We think this might be how and why something is observed to behave like. Sometimes scientists develop a law

that states the consistent relationship between what is being observed like the law of momentum or Newton's law of gravitation. Some of these laws group together facts that have a consistent mathematical relationship like $F = k \cdot q_1 q_2 / r^2$ for point charges, for instance. A theory is a group of laws working together, combined with attempted explanations as to why they work, to explain a group of related phenomena -- electromagnetic theory, for instance. It represents the current knowledge that science has based on repeated observations.

Islam and Science

Let us now discuss the relationship between religion, intellect, and science. From the Islamic point of view, religion, as ascertained by the authentic texts is the absolute truth. For example, on the issue of creation, the texts are authentic and certain.

... قُلِ اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

Say: Allah is the Creator of all things, and He is the One, the Supreme.
[13:16]

اللَّهُ خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَكِيلٌ

Allah is the Creator of everything and He has charge over everything. [39:62]

Allah (SWT) is the One, the Creator of all things. This is an absolute matter with no doubt. The Quran has numerous verses about Allah (SWT) as the Creator. In science, some scientists are skeptical about this matter. Scientists themselves are in disagreement on the issue of creation. Some are Monotheists and some are atheists. Some belief in creation but doubt who is the creator. How should we as Muslims deal with this issue? The fundamental premise is that it is mandatory for Muslims to believe and accept all the texts that are authentic and certain. Verses of the Holy Quran absolutely and certainly state that Allah (SWT) is the Creator of all things. Science is uncertain about this issue. So the Islamic position holds without any doubt.

What if science is absolute and certain about some issues, while the Islamic texts might have different meanings? Let us take this clear example. The earth is round. Nobody argues this because there is recurrent visual and scientific evidence that the earth is round. There are pictures taken from space that show the earth is round. The earth is absolutely round. In science, there is no question about that.

But we find verses of the Quran that may be interpreted that the earth is spread out like a carpet.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي مَدَّ الْأَرْضَ وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْهَارًا

And He it is Who spread out the earth and placed therein firm hills and flowing streams, [13:3]

وَالْأَرْضَ مَدَدْنَاهَا وَأَلْقَيْنَا فِيهَا رَوَاسِيَ وَأَنْبَتْنَا فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مَوْزُونٍ

And the earth We have spread out; set thereon mountains firm and immovable; and produced therein all kinds of things in due balance. [15:19]

This can be interpreted as the earth is flat, or can be interpreted as an egg and such things. But how to interpret these verses. These verses must be interpreted so as not to contradict the facts established by the scientific method.

What if the religious text isn't certain when it comes to its interpretation? An example is this verse about the movement of the mountains.

وَتَرَى الْجِبَالَ تَحْسَبُهَا جَامِدَةً وَهِيَ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ ۚ صُنْعَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَتَقَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ إِنَّهُ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَفْعَلُونَ

And you see the mountains, you think them to be solid, and they shall pass away as the passing away of the cloud-- the handiwork of Allah Who has made everything thoroughly; surely He is Aware of what you do. [27:88]

Some scholars say that the verse refers to a phenomenon on the Day of Resurrection. Other scholars say it refers to this world but we are not able to explain it yet. We do not know for certain. If it is a worldly phenomenon and current knowledge of science cannot explain in certainty, then our position is to wait for better clarity.

There are verses in the Quran that were confirmed by science much later and some only recently. Examples include the various phases in the development of the fetus in the mother's womb. It was unknown

when it was first revealed 15 centuries ago and only later on confirmed by science.

وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ
ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ
ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا
الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۚ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ

Verily We created man from a product of wet earth;
Then placed him as a drop (of seed) in a safe lodging;
Then fashioned We the drop a clot, then fashioned We the clot a little lump,
then fashioned We the little lump bones, then clothed the bones with flesh,
and then produced it as another creation. So blessed be Allah, the Best of
creators! [23:12-14]

So when the Islamic texts are authentic but the explanation is not so certain while science is also uncertain, we wait for better clarity.

It is important to stress that when science is not yet certain about some phenomena and have, at best, a theory or hypothesis, we cannot use the theory as the overriding method to interpret and evaluate the Islamic texts. Let us take Darwin's Theory as an example. Darwin's Theory is a theory, not a fact. There are uncertainties and loopholes in the theory. Some Muslims try to interpret the verses of the Holy Quran accordingly. It is not allowed to interpret the verses of the Quran according to uncertain theories because uncertain things might change. I am not discussing now Darwin's Theory or evaluating it. I am highlighting the principle. It is still only a theory up to this day. Some parts of it are supported by data and observation and some parts are not. We are not allowed to interpret the verses of the Quran according to mere theories. Since it is still uncertain, we should wait.

When science is certain and religion is also certain, we are in harmony. There is no contradiction whatsoever.

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى

رَجُلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَىٰ أَرْبَعٍ ۚ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And Allah has created from water every living creature: so of them is that which walks upon its belly, and of them is that which walks upon two feet, and of them is that which walks upon four; Allah creates what He pleases; surely Allah has power over all things. [24:45]

وَهُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ مِنَ الْمَاءِ بَشَرًا فَجَعَلَهُ نَسَبًا وَصِهْرًا ۗ وَكَانَ رَبُّكَ قَدِيرًا

And He it is Who has created man from the water, then He has made for him blood relationship and marriage relationship, and your Lord is powerful. [25:54]

The Quran states that every living creature and man is created from water. Science has verified that water is a vital component of the human body and that of living creatures. It is impossible for absolute science and absolute religion to contradict because both of them come from Allah (SWT).

The general law on the relationship between science ('Ilm) and religion (Deen) in Islam can be easily summarized through the following matrix.

Islam	Science	Comments
Authentic and Certain	Certain	Full harmony. No contradiction.
Authentic and Certain	Uncertain	Take the Islamic texts.
Authentic but multiple interpretations	Certain	Take the interpretation that does not contradict science.
Authentic but multiple interpretations	Uncertain	Wait for further knowledge.

No other religion can claim such a simple way to integrate and harmonize with science. This is the respect that the shariah has given to science and the Mind. The Shariah respects science and the scientific method. We must respect both science and the collective human intellect. We should respect logic, proof, and evidence. We should respect the scientific method of observation with data, proving hypotheses, developing and testing theories, etc. In fact, establishing the authenticity of Hadith, the second most important source of Islamic knowledge, follows a strict scientific methodology.

The great Imam, Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali when he talked about the Goals of Islam which we are discussing in this book, he began with stressing the importance of Proof (Burhan) based on Logic (Mantiq). It is impossible to understand the Goals of Islamic Law unless we understand Logic. Yes, logic, the science that some Muslim scholars attack. We are not against Logic and Philosophy, we are against the unwarranted approach to interpreting the Holy Quran according to uncertain theories or opinions, or based on individual views without referring to or sometimes even rejecting other authentic Islamic texts. This is what we are against.

Allah (SWT) Entrusted Us With This Beautiful Mind

Now that we understand the important Essential of the Preservation of Mind, it is easy to appreciate why the Shariah forbids alcoholic drinks. It is confirmed by science and society that alcoholic drinks affect the mind and can make people drunk. Even in societies that allow the consumption of liquor, everyone is aware of its danger to the mind.

The same applies to drugs. Some Muslims claim that nothing about drugs is mentioned in the Islamic texts. Please don't play this game. Drugs are absolutely forbidden (Haram) because they affect the mind. No person is allowed to mess up with his mind. Because, again, no person owns his mind. The mind is a great gift entrusted by Allah (SWT). We can not mess up with it. We must preserve and develop it.

As a related detail to show the seriousness of the Shariah on drinking, some scholars even discussed what is called the divorce of the drunk. If someone divorced his wife while being drunk, while he is not sober, is the divorce valid or not? How is the divorce valid while he is not sober? Some scholars say it is not valid because his mind is unstable. But in some opinions, it is valid as a punishment for him.

The sound mind is a fundamental premise of all obligations and commandments of the Shariah. Thus the Preservation of Mind is a major goal of Preservation of Essentials.

VII

Preservation of Family

Now we arrive at the fifth Essential, the fifth Goal of the Shariah, which is Preservation of the Family. Some scholars call it Preservation of Offspring or Progeny (al-Nasl). They effectively mean the same but let us use the simpler term, Preservation of the Family

The Family has a very significant philosophy in Islam, a philosophy that is totally different from that of the West, in fact, a radical difference. Modern Western thought is centered on the individual. It may follow a Capitalist, social democrat, or socialist economy philosophy, but the social philosophy is Individualism. Keep this in mind because we won't be able to understand the West without being aware of two main principles; Individualism and Materialism. I'm simplifying these complex intellectual matters because I'm not addressing the thought scholars in this book but the general public.

For the West, money and wealth, coupled with individual rights, make up the so-called American Dream. The American culture strongly values ideals of entrepreneurship, independence and self-reliance [1], all centered upon the individual. The individual is free to do whatever he likes. The family is a matter of form. I purposely mention this first as an example so that we can better appreciate the Islamic perspective of the family since Preservation of Family is one of the main Goals of the Shariah.

Unique Understanding of Family in Islam

Islam does not ignore the individual nor diminishes his or her role and rights. Islam certainly acknowledges that the individual has specific needs, objectives, and desires. But Islam also recognizes that society also has its specific needs and objectives, and Islam considers the family as the foundation of society. Islam acknowledges all these factors and balances between the rights and duties of the individual, family, and society. Islam isn't necessarily biased to the family. Islam sets a balance between the individual and the family.

In the West, this balance is missing in favor of the individual. Islamic Philosophy is based on the balance between Individualism and the family

Islam recognizes the individual as a human. He has his own possessions, own decisions, own rights, own roles, and own responsibilities. Most importantly, the individual will be judged alone on the Day of Resurrection. Allah (SWT) does not judge a whole family, or a whole party, or a whole group of people together; the individual person will be held accountable for his or her own deeds.

وَكُلُّهُمْ آتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فَرْدًا

And every one of them will come to Him on the day of resurrection alone.
[19:95]

وَلَا تَزِرُ وَازِرَةٌ وِزْرَ أُخْرَىٰ

And a burdened soul cannot bear the burden of another... [35:18]

These two and other verses of the Quran clearly indicate that, eventually, it is the individual that will be judged. The individual is accountable and will be judged as an individual.

But, as we mentioned earlier, the family is the building block of society in Islam. The individual is a key component of the family.

Islam ensures that every individual can be related to a family. The family does not only mean the spouse and children. One can be unmarried and have no children and yet, have a family. In Islam, every person has some form of blood relation to a family.

I want to explain a term in Arabic called Al-Aqilah (العاقلة), roughly translated as rational. Those who study the Penal Provisions in Shariah will come across this term. To understand what Al-Aqilah means we look at the root of the word in Arabic AQL (ع ق ل) which means to tie. AQL here has nothing to do with the mental powers. AQL here means to tie (ربط - Rabt). The following Hadith illustrates this.

عن أنس بن مالك قال رَجُلٌ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَعْقِلُهَا وَآتَوَكَّلُ أَوْ أُطْلِقُهَا وَآتَوَكَّلُ قَالَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اعْقِلْهَا وَتَوَكَّلْ

Anas ibn Malik reported: A man said, "O Messenger of Allah, should I tie my camel and trust in Allah, or should I leave her untied and trust in Allah?" The Prophet (SAW) said, "Tie her and trust in Allah." [Sunan al-Tirmidhi]

AQL has to do with tying. That is why when we say that someone is AQL (عاقِل), sane, reasonable, rational, it means he has control of his actions and "ties them". He ties and controls his actions. His actions are not unleashed. He doesn't do whatever he likes and controls himself because he has a reason.

In light of this, what does Al-Aqilah mean? The term has nothing to do with reason. It has to do with tying. Al-Aqilah in each family means that every member of a family belongs to a group. They are responsible for controlling or tying him. Even if this individual committed a crime, some scholars said his family is responsible for him and they should pay the blood money or related compensation. If he can't pay the family members will have to pay it. The Shariah has details on who should cover for him; perhaps the brothers, the father, and sometimes the uncles. But the role of the family is clear in "tying" the behavior of its members.

So, who controls the actions of the individual in Islam? The individual himself is firstly responsible to control his actions through God-consciousness. After that, he is controlled by the family tie (Al-Aqilah). Only then comes the Law and the State.

In the West, such a system does not exist and they never thought of it. God-consciousness is non-existent there although there is some element of individual values. What really controls the behavior is the law, the respect that people have to law and order. The family has no formal cultural or religious responsibility to cover for his faults. That's why when there was once an electricity supply cut in New York, for one only one night and only in New York, the losses estimated by theft were about 2 billion dollars. The system collapsed. The authorities couldn't control the people. People were unleashed and greed overcame their fear of the law.

Importance of Family System

The family system is fundamental in Islam. Thus the Shariah aims to preserve the Family and encourages the family system to prosper. Legal marriage is obligatory in Islam so that the correct blood and family ties can be determined and established. The children born out of that marriage and even that are brought into the family by that marriage (in the case of marriage between spouses with existing children) can really know who their parents, grandparents, aunts or step aunts, uncles or step uncles, and so on. Many religious rulings like inheritance, the permissibility of marriage, and even permissibility to expose parts of the body are intricately defined based on the details of the family relationships.

The Shariah has strict laws concerning filial devotion, to keep good relations with kith and kin. Disobedience to parents is condemned as a major sin. Some forms of disobedience to parents entail a legal punishment in this world. For instance, when a child from a wealthy family starts to waste and misuse his money, his family can open a case asking to precautionarily seize his money. He is to be banned from using his money without the permission of his family or a custodian. What's the reason for all that? Because the family is the brick to build a society. Since the family is the brick to build a society, we must preserve it. It isn't only a social structure, it's both a social and legal structure upon which judicial penalties and criminal laws are based on.

Now we can better appreciate why the Shariah has many laws that not only encourage the family but also preserve it. For example, adultery and all acts leading to it are forbidden because it adulterates kinship and progeny. Adoption (Tabanni) is also forbidden because it causes the mix up of kinship. It is allowed for a family to adopt a child, take care, and support her. But it is forbidden for the child to hold the name of the family while not being a

descendant of them. The adopted child does not have blood ties to the family. He and the family that adopted him will be cursed. Again, this is because it mixes up the kinship and progeny, and creates chaos in the distribution of inheritance, the permissibility of marriage, and even boundaries in daily physical interactions.

Family-related laws constitute a huge part of the Shariah. There are laws related to the privacy of siblings. One of the major categories is called Al-Munakahat (المنكحات), Laws of marriage, engagement, and desertion (separation, divorce). It covers details of when it's allowed to get married to someone but not the other. There are Nursing laws that detail the relations of the nursing lady and the child being nursed. The category of Family-related laws in the Shariah is so big because its goal is very important; to preserve and strengthen the family system which is the building block of society.

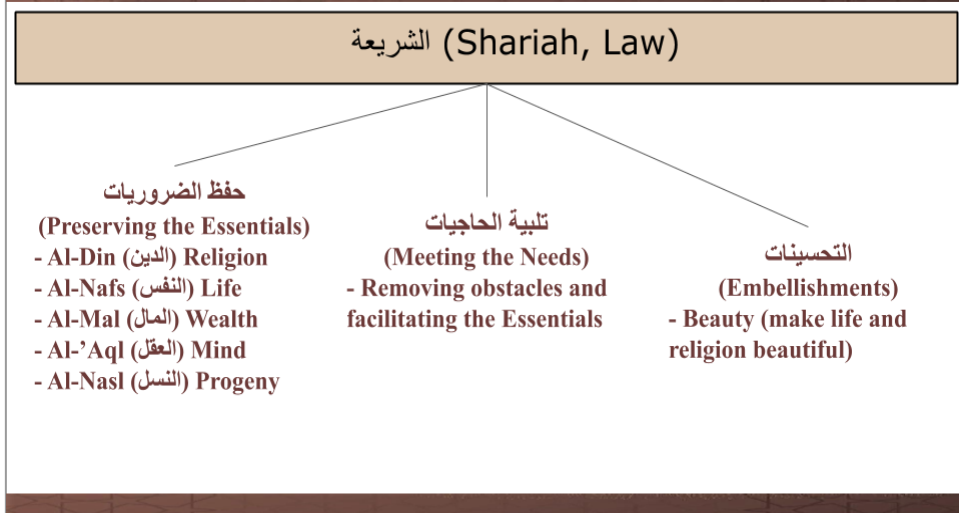
In Shariah, the Family does not negate the individual and the individual does not ignore the family. Both have certain rights and duties to create a balanced and strong building block for the bigger society. The individual isn't to override the family, and neither is the family to undermine the individual. It is such a wonderful balance. Islam has a beautifully unique system. Such a system is nonexistent in any other religion or state. No other balanced system exists. It is nonexistent particularly in the West where individualism rules.

That's why I said in the very beginning that it is neither right nor allowed to compare Islam to any other religion. It is incorrect to compare Islam with Christianity. Christianity today is mainly rituals and relationships with the God they believe in. Whereas Islam is a comprehensive system, a complete way of life.

We are trying to understand Islam through its goals. We have discussed all the components related to Preservation of the Essentials as summarized in the diagram below. Preservation of

Religion, Life, Mind, Wealth and Family are all part of the Shariah, not all of it. Preservation of the Essentials is part of Shariah. Shariah (Islamic law) is part of Islam. Now the Islam Simplified picture appears more complete.

3 Aspects of Shariah



VIII

Needs (Hajiyyat) and Embellishments (Tahsiniyyat)

So far, we have already discussed the Essentials. The Essentials alone do not represent the whole of Shariah, they form an important part of Shariah (Islamic law). Besides the Essentials, another important part of Shariah is Fulfilling the Needs (Hajiyyat).

What do the Needs mean? Essentials are things that people cannot live without. The definition of Needs are things that people can actually live without, but life becomes difficult. Life becomes difficult without Needs. Thus a more practical definition of Fulfilling the Needs is actually Removing Difficulties. The Shariah also seeks to remove the difficulties in life. It does not want people to experience not only misery, which is covered by the Essentials, but also difficulties.

Let us take a simple example. Before people used money, they used the exchange or barter system for trade. They exchanged a sheep for 20 hens, for example. Sometimes they exchanged sheep for non-food items like carpets. It is giving and taking based on mutual consent. Just imagine if we today still trade the same way. Would life be possible? Of course, we can still live, but with so much difficulty.

That is why the system of money was invented. It is much easier and more flexible than barter trade. The money system did not start with Islam. The Shariah approves its use like it approves the barter system. The Shariah, over time, also detailed out the use of coins to

augment the money system so that it conforms to the other laws of trade and commerce.

Because a reliable money system or currency will help facilitate trade and commerce which in turn contributes to the Preservation of Wealth, the Shariah organized the minute details of currency. It stated that the reference of money is gold and silver. The Dinar or gold coin was defined precisely during the time of Caliph Umar. The Dirham or silver coin was also defined precisely. With that, the exchange rate between the Dinar and the Dirham could be determined precisely. Because gold and silver represent the reference of money, the Shariah disallowed both these metals to be traded as goods except in the form of jewelry and other ornaments. All these details on currency were developed to remove difficulties in trade and commerce, to facilitate in the Preservation of Wealth.

Removing Difficulties

So removing a difficulty to facilitate one or a combination of the Essentials, is one of the Goals of Islamic Law. That is why so many Islamic Laws serve the purpose of removing difficulties and Fulfilling Needs. Allah (SWT) stressed that in the Holy Quran.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ

Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, [2:185]

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يُخَفِّفَ عَنْكُمْ وَخُلِقَ الْإِنْسَانُ ضَعِيفًا

Allah desires that He should make light your burdens, and man is created weak. [4:28]

مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

... Allah does not desire to put on you any difficulty ... [5:6]

وَجَاهِدُوا فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ هُوَ اجْتَبَاكُمْ وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

And strive hard in (the way of) Allah, (such) a striving a is due to Him; He has chosen you and has not laid upon you an hardship in religion; [22:78]

Unfortunately, some scholars, nowadays, are masters of difficulty. They have made an art on making religion difficult to the point of taking pains to debate a minor ruling in Shariah that nobody ever discussed, and judge that it is forbidden (Haram). "Allah desires ease for you" is one of the Goals of Shariah. This Quranic text is further strengthened by the Hadith,

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا - أَنَّهَا قَالَتْ مَا خَيْرَ رَسُولٍ اللَّهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بَيْنَ أَمْرَيْنِ إِلَّا أَخَذَ أَيْسَرَهُمَا، مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ إِنْشَاءً، فَإِنْ كَانَ إِنْشَاءً كَانَ أَبْعَدَ النَّاسِ مِنْهُ، وَمَا أَنْتَقَمَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ لِنَفْسِهِ، إِلَّا أَنْ تَنْتَهَكَ

حُرْمَةُ اللَّهِ فَيَنْتَقِمَ اللَّهُ بِهَا.

Narrated 'Aisha:

Whenever Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was given the choice of one of two matters, he would choose the easier of the two, as long as it was not sinful to do so, but if it was sinful to do so, he would not approach it. Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) never took revenge (over anybody) for his own sake but (he did) only when Allah's Legal Bindings were outraged in which case he would take revenge for Allah's Sake. [Bukhari]

Shortening of prayer, for example, was legalized because of traveling back then was so difficult. Today, traveling isn't so difficult. I can travel here from Kuwait to any country within four to five hours. There seems no difficulty with that. Can I shorten the prayer? Of course, I can shorten the prayer. It isn't a matter of disagreement. How is it so even though there is no difficulty? Originally, the reason was to remove the difficulty. Based on that comes a legal maxim in Islamic law on removing the difficulty and accepting the permission (رخصة - Rukhsah) from Allah (SWT). Some of the companions asked the Messenger (SAW) about some laws which were legitimized due to certain circumstances, like war. They became legitimate for this reason. The companions inquired that since there is no more war, do the laws still apply? The Messenger (SAW) said: Yes. They asked The Messenger (SAW): Why? The Messenger (SAW) said: take the permission of Allah (SWT).

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ
فَمَن شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۖ وَمَن كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِّنْ أَيَّامٍ
أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ
مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

The month of Ramadan is that in which the Quran was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days;

Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks. [2:185]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ
وَامْسَحُوا بِرُءُوسِكُمْ وَأَرْجُلَكُمْ إِلَى الْكَعْبَيْنِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ جُنُبًا فَاطَّهَّرُوا وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ
مَرْضَىٰ أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ أَوْ جَاءَ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ مِنَ الْغَائِطِ أَوْ لَامَسْتُمُ النِّسَاءَ فَلَمْ تَجِدُوا
مَاءً فَتَيَمَّمُوا صَعِيدًا طَيِّبًا فَامْسَحُوا بِوُجُوهِكُمْ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ مِنْهُ مَا يَرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ
عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

O you who believe! when you rise up to prayer, wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows, and wipe your heads and your feet to the ankles; and if you are under an obligation to perform a total ablution, then wash (yourselves) and if you are sick or on a journey, or one of you come from the privy, or you have touched the women, and you cannot find water, betake yourselves to pure earth and wipe your faces and your hands therewith, Allah does not desire to put on you any difficulty, but He wishes to purify you and that He may complete His favor on you, so that you may be grateful. [5:6]

We referred to these two verses earlier. We now quote the full verses above. Verse [2:185] relates to the permission (Rukhsah) of not fasting during Ramadan when sick or upon a journey. Verse [5:6] also relates to the permission of how to purify oneself when water is not available. Removing difficulties is one of the fundamental principles and Goals of Shariah.

Prophet Muhammad exemplified this easiness in practicing Islam even when there was no apparent difficult circumstance. Consider this authentic Hadith mentioned in Sahih Muslim. Ibn 'Abbas reported that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) combined the noon prayer with the afternoon prayer and the sunset prayer with the 'Isha' prayer in Medina without being in a state of danger or rainfall. And in the Hadith transmitted by Waki' (the words are): "I said to Ibn 'Abbas: What prompted him to do that? He said: So that his (Prophet's) Ummah should not be put to (unnecessary) hardship."

And in the Hadith transmitted by Mu'awiya (the words are): "It was said to Ibn 'Abbas: What did he intend thereby? He said he wanted that his Ummah should not be put to unnecessary hardship."

Nowadays, in some countries, especially in the big cities, it takes 3 hours to move from a place to another because of traffic. People who experience this can combine prayers. The Messenger (SAW) did so with the intention that his Ummah should not be put to unnecessary hardship. So we can combine, not shorten, our prayers when faced with difficult circumstances, but never to fool around it. One of the conditions is not to do it on a daily basis. Combining prayers isn't to take place every day, only sometimes. We are obligated to pray five times daily, it cannot be transformed to three times instead of five per day. Combining prayers shouldn't become a habit. An additional condition is to combine prayers the properly prescribed way; the noon (Zuhr) prayer is to be combined with the afternoon (Asr) prayer and the sunset (Maghrib) prayer is to be combined with the evening (Isha') prayer. It isn't allowed to combine the afternoon with the sunset prayers. If you are going out and expect a long way, combine the prayers ahead. Combine the noon and the afternoon prayers in time of the former or you can stop and combine those two prayers in the time of the latter. But it isn't allowed to delay the noon and the afternoon prayers and combine them with the sunset prayer. This is a fooling or messing up with the concept of removing difficulties.

Allah (SWT) wants to remove difficulty (رفع المشقة - Ra'ul Mashaqqah) over us. This is one of the big Goals of Shariah. Removing difficulties and fulfilling Needs.

From the Shariah point of view, another distinction between Essentials and Needs is that Essentials legalize the prohibition whether it affects individuals or groups. However, Needs do not legalize the prohibition unless it is concerned with the group, as the

individual's Needs are subject to change and variety and it is impossible to vary rules according to the private Needs of individuals, whereas Essentials are limited and restricted.

Beauty

The last part of Shariah (Islamic law) is Providing Embellishments or Enhancements. Tanmiyat Al Tahsiniyyat. Tahsin (تحسين) comes from the root word Hasana (ح س ن) which means good or beautiful. Tahsin is to make something good or better, to improve, or make something more beautiful.

وعن عبد الله بن مسعود رضي الله عنه عن النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قال: "لا يدخل الجنة من كان في قلبه مثقال ذرة من كبر" فقال رجل "إن الرجل يحب أن يكون ثوبه حسناً ونعله حسناً؟ قال: "إن الله جميل يحب الجمال الكبر بطر الحق وغمط الناس"

'Abdullah bin Mas'ud (RA) reported:

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "He who has, in his heart, an ant's weight of arrogance will not enter Jannah." Someone said: "A man likes to wear beautiful clothes and shoes?" Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, "**Allah is Beautiful, He loves beauty.** Arrogance means ridiculing and rejecting the Truth and despising people." [Muslim]

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said:

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ لَا يَقْبَلُ إِلَّا طَيِّبًا

O people, Allah is good and he accepts only what is good. [Muslim]

One of the Goals of Islamic Law is Beauty. It is a goal abandoned by many Muslims today even among those who claim to be committed to Islam. Beauty is expressed in the beauty of both the individual and society. The beauty of the individual is firstly expressed by maintaining cleanliness rules.

عَنْ أَبِي مَالِكٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأُ الْمِيزَانَ . وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَمْلَأَنِ - أَوْ تَمْلَأُ - مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالصَّلَاةُ نُورٌ وَالصَّدَقَةُ بُرْهَانٌ وَالصَّبْرُ ضِيَاءٌ وَالْقُرْآنُ حُجَّةٌ لَكَ أَوْ عَلَيْكَ كُلُّ النَّاسِ يَغْدُو فَبَايَعُ نَفْسَهُ فَمُعْتِقُهَا أَوْ مُوْبِقُهَا"

Abu Malik at-Ash'ari reported:

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: Cleanliness is half of faith and al-Hamdu Lillah (all praise and gratitude is for Allah alone) fills the scale, and Subhan Allah (Glory be to Allah) and al-Hamdu Lillah fill up what is between the heavens and the earth, and prayer is a light, and charity is proof (of one's faith) and endurance is a brightness and the Holy Qur'an is a proof on your behalf or against you. All men go out early in the morning and sell themselves, thereby setting themselves free or destroying themselves. [Muslim]

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "خَمْسٌ مِنَ الْفِطْرَةِ
الِاسْتِحْدَادُ وَالْخِتَانُ وَقَصُّ الشَّارِبِ وَنَتْفُ الْإِبْطِ وَتَقْلِيمُ الْأَظْفَارِ"

Narrated Abu Hurairah:

that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Five are from the Fitrah: Cutting the pubic hair, circumcision, paring the mustache, plucking the under arm hair and trimming the fingernails." [Tirmidhi]

These are practices that the Messenger (SAW) loved to follow. These are all part of the beauty of the individual. They all reflect beauty as one of the Goals of Islamic Law.

There is also a public aspect of beauty. Public Beauty (Jamal Jama'i) means showing the Muslims as a strong nation not a weak one, a nation that has many good and fine examples for other communities to follow. Public beauty for the Muslim ummah should be seen physically and also morally, as a society without slander, corruption, and vulgarity.

Consider Surah An-Nur, Surah 24. In it Allah (SWT) says,

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِثْلِ نُورِهَا ۖ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۚ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي رُجَاةٍ ۚ الرُّجَاةُ كَأَنَّهُا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ۚ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ ۚ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth; a likeness of His light is as a niche in which is a lamp, the lamp is in a glass, (and) the glass is as it were a

brightly shining star, lit from a blessed olive-tree, neither eastern nor western, the oil whereof almost gives light though fire touch it not-- light upon light-- Allah guides to His light whom He pleases, and Allah sets forth parables for men, and Allah is Cognizant of all things. [24:35]

What is the goal of this Surah? It aims at spreading light. The individual's light is in the purity of the heart and the manners. The public light is through the laws of entering the homes and guarding privacy. The early part of Surah an-Nur covers the laws of slander, laws to protect honorable, innocent, and believing women. The whole Surah aims at promoting light, Spiritual, Social Light and Public Light. Although this Surah was revealed in Medina and covers many laws, its goal is to preserve and promote beauty within the Muslim society. This is one of the beautiful things in the Holy Quran.

Beauty is very prominent in the Holy Quran, the main reference for the Shariah and Islam. It can be seen in the use of the language, the literary style, the parables, and the stories, among others. It is a huge topic by itself to discuss the beauty of the Quran. The following Hadith conveys the exhortation on treating the beautiful Holy Quran with beauty.

عَنِ الْبَرَاءِ، قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "زَيِّنُوا الْقُرْآنَ بِأَصْوَاتِكُمْ"

It was narrated that Abu Bara' said:

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: 'Make your voices beautiful when you recite Quran.' [Nasaai]

In general, the Embellishments are related to deeds that fall under the ruling of Mandub or recommended. The Essentials are mainly related to the Mandatory (Wajib) or Forbidden (Haram). The Necessities span a broader spectrum from the Mandatory to Recommended. There are abundant examples of deeds under each of the three categories of Shariah. They can be found in the many books available on the topic of Maqasid Al-Shariah. I only intend to highlight the goals of the Shariah and the three categories in this

book. I hope the examples I discussed are related, relevant and practical.

To conclude, Needs and Embellishments are things people seek in order to ensure a good life, and avoid hardship, even though they are not Essential. The spirit of the Shariah with regards to Needs and Embellishments is summed up in the Quran,

... مَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيَجْعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَرَجٍ وَلَكِنْ يُرِيدُ لِيُطَهِّرَكُمْ وَلِيُتِمَّ نِعْمَتَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

... Allah would not place a burden on you, but He would purify you and would perfect His grace upon you, that you may give thanks. [5:6]

The following diagram summarizes the Goals of Shariah that we have deliberated upon.

3 Aspects of Shariah

الشريعة (Shariah, Law)

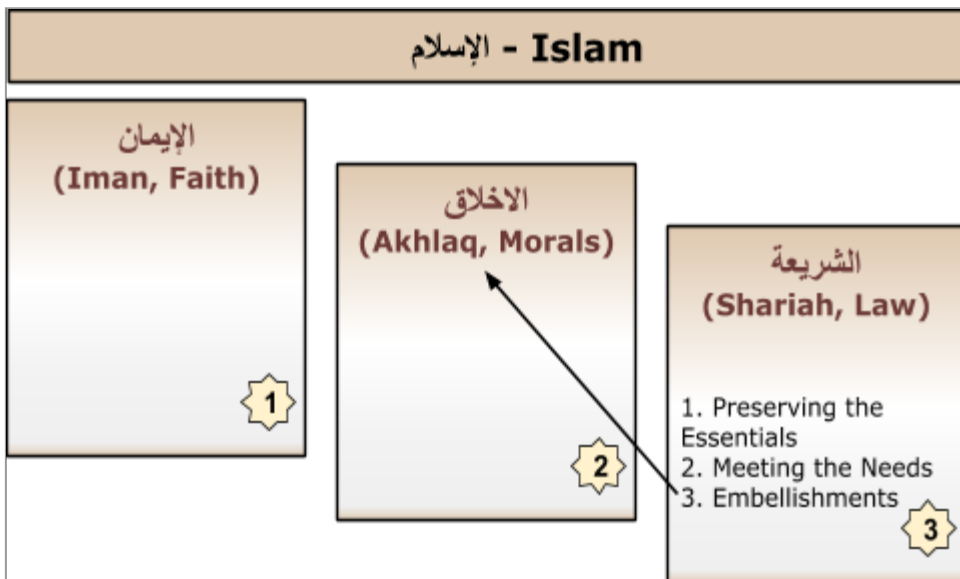
Principal Goal of Shariah is (الحكم لله), Rule is for Allah

1. Preserving the Essentials (حفظ الضروريات)
 - Al-Din (الدين) Religion
 - Al-Nafs (النفس) Life
 - Al-Mal (المال) Wealth
 - Al-'Aql (العقل) Mind
 - Al-Nasl (النسل) Progeny
2. Meeting the Needs (تلبية الحاجيات)
 - Removing obstacles and facilitating the Essentials
3. Embellishments (التحسينات)
 - Beauty (make life and religion beautiful)

IX

Morals (Akhlaq)

In the previous chapter, I discussed the Enhancements or Embellishments and related it to beauty. It stresses the importance for Muslims to show the beauty in appearance, behavior, and manners. One of the goals of the Shariah is to show Islam and Muslims in a good way with a beautiful look. The outer beauty should naturally be a manifestation of inner beauty and calmness. This inner beauty of individuals and society leads us to the topics of Faith (Iman) and Morals (Akhlaq). It moves us to the second main topic of Islam; Akhlaq or Morals.



It should be very, very clear. Although it is true that Islam consists of Iman, Akhlaq, and Shariah (Islamic law), they have different levels of importance. They aren't to be drawn side by side. They are to be

drawn one above another. Iman takes the highest priority, followed by Akhlaq and then Shariah (Islamic law). This hierarchy is very important because it helps us prioritize in the event of a conflict or uncertainty. When any misconception, uncertainty or conflict arises, Iman takes the highest precedence followed by Akhlaq and then only Shariah.

Insha Allah Example

Let us analyze a simple daily issue of saying Insha Allah (إن شاء الله) in relation to doing something in the future. From the Shariah point of view, saying Insha Allah is Mandub or Mustahab. It is not Wajib. We mentioned earlier that, in general, there are five kinds of Hukm (ruling) in the Shariah; Wajib or obligatory, Mandub or recommended, Haram or forbidden, Makruh or hateful (disapproved), and Mubah or permissible. Unfortunately, the details of these rulings often obscure the basic wisdom or goals of Islam, as we will explain through this example.

Issue/Perspective	Shariah	Akhlaq	Iman
Saying Insha Allah	✓	✓ ✓	

The Shariah says that saying Insha Allah is Mandub. But the following four verses from the Quran show the loftiness of the Akhlaq of Prophets Musa, Shu'ayb, and Isma'il in relation to things they will do in the future [4]. They qualified in a humble way that they will be patient or righteous or steadfast in belief only if Allah pleases (wills). It shows a very fine, sublime but high level of humbleness, humility, and awe toward Allah (SWT). These are certainly great examples of beautiful Akhlaq.

قَدْ افْتَرَيْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا إِنْ عُدْنَا فِي مِلَّتِكُمْ بَعْدَ إِدْنَاكَ اللَّهُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَكُونُ لَنَا أَنْ نَعُودَ فِيهَا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ رَبُّنَا وَسِعَ رَبُّنَا كُلَّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكَّلْنَا رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ

Indeed we shall have forged a lie against Allah If we go back to your religion after Allah has delivered us from It, and it befits us not that we should go back to it, **except if Allah our Lord please**: Our Lord comprehends all things :n His knowledge; in Allah do we trust: Our Lord! decide between us and our people with truth; and Thou art the best of deciders. [7:89]

قَالَ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ صَابِرًا وَلَا أَعْصِي لَكَ أَمْرًا

He said: If Allah pleases, you will find me patient and I shall not disobey you in any matter. [18:69]

قَالَ إِنِّي أُرِيدُ أَنْ أُنِكَحَكَ إِحْدَى ابْنَتَيَّ هَاتَيْنِ عَلَى أَنْ تَأْجُرَنِي ثَمَانِي حَجَجٍ فَإِنْ
أَتَمَمْتَ عَشْرًا فَمِنْ عِنْدِكَ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ أَشُقَّ عَلَيْكَ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ
الصَّالِحِينَ

He said: I desire to marry one of these two daughters of mine to you on condition that you should serve me for eight years; but if you complete ten, it will be of your own free will, and I do not wish to be hard to you; if Allah please, you will find me one of the good. [28:27]

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَى فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَى ۚ
قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ افْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِي إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الصَّابِرِينَ

And when he attained to working with him, he said: O my son! Surely I have seen in a dream that I should sacrifice you; consider then what you see. He said: O my father! do what you are commanded; if Allah please, you will find me of the patient ones. [37:102]

Thus saying Insha Allah is very important from an Akhlaq perspective. There are many Hadith that indicate the prominence of Akhlaq in Islam [3]. (Draz [5] wrote an excellent thesis on Akhlaq in the Quran.)

"The best of people are those with the most excellent character." [Tabarani, Sahih]

"The best of you in Islam are those who are most excellent in character as long as you deeply understand the religion." [Ahmad, Sahih]

"The best thing mankind has been given is excellent character." [Hakim, Sahih]

"The best of the Believers is the most excellent of them in character." [Ibn Maajah, Sahih]

Next we consider the following incident about Prophet Sulaiman (AS) as mentioned in the following Hadith.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ "قَالَ سُلَيْمَانُ بْنُ دَاوُدَ لَأَطُوفَنَّ اللَّيْلَةَ عَلَى سَبْعِينَ امْرَأَةً تَحْمِلُ كُلُّ امْرَأَةٍ فَارِسًا يُجَاهِدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، فَقَالَ لَهُ صَاحِبُهُ إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ. فَلَمْ يَقُلْ، وَلَمْ تَحْمِلْ شَيْئًا إِلَّا وَاحِدًا سَاقِطًا إِحْدَى شَقِيهِ". فَقَالَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ "لَوْ قَالَهَا لَجَاهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ". قَالَ شُعَيْبٌ وَابْنُ أَبِي الزِّنَادِ "تَسْعِينَ". وَهُوَ أَصَحُّ.

Abu Huraira narrated that the Prophet (SAW) said, "Sulaiman (the son of Dawud) said, 'Tonight I will sleep with seventy ladies (from his wives) each of whom will conceive a child who will be a knight fighting for Allah's cause.' His companion said, 'If Allah will.' But he (Sulaiman) did not say so; therefore none of those women got pregnant except one who gave birth to a half child (without limbs)." The Prophet (SAW) further said, "If he (Prophet Sulaiman) had said it (i.e. 'If Allah will') he would have begotten children who would have fought in Allah's cause." [Bukhari]

The above Hadith explains the following verse.

وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا سُلَيْمَانَ عَلَى كُرْسِيِّهِ جَسَدًا ثُمَّ أَنَابَ

And certainly We tried Sulaiman, and We put on his throne a (mere) body, so he turned (to Allah). [38:34]

Here we observe another perspective of the issue of saying Insha Allah. It is more important than the Akhlaq perspective and certainly much more important than the Shariah perspective. It is the perspective of Iman (Faith, Belief, Creed). Decisions related to birth, life (and death) undoubtedly belong only to Allah (SWT). Humans can attempt to procreate, save lives, and even cause deaths, but the final decision and full power lie only with Allah (SWT). No human, even a Prophet, and Messenger who ruled over the most powerful kingdom can be so certain to have a son, even though he had 70 wives, except only with the will of Allah (SWT).

لِلَّهِ مُلْكُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۚ يَهَبُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ إِنَاثًا وَيَهَبُ لِمَنْ

يَشَاءُ الذُّكُورَ
أَوْ يُزَوِّجُهُمْ ذُكْرَانًا وَإِنَاثًا وَيَجْعَلُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ عَقِيمًا إِنَّهُ عَلِيمٌ قَدِيرٌ

Allah's is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; He creates what He pleases; He grants to whom He pleases daughters and grants to whom He pleases sons.

Or He makes them of both sorts, male and female; and He makes whom He pleases barren; surely He is the Knowing, the Powerful. [42:49-50]

Thus saying Insha Allah is even more important from the perspective of Iman.

Issue/Perspective	Shariah	Akhlaq	Iman
Saying Insha Allah	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓

We will end this example of Insha Allah with another incident involving our beloved Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The disbelievers of Makkah sent some men to Jewish rabbis in Yathrib (now Medina) to ask them (the rabbis) about Muhammad (SAW), and describe him to them, and tell them what he is saying. So they went to Yathrib and asked the Jewish rabbis about the Messenger of Allah (SAW). The rabbis said: 'Ask him about three things which we will tell you to ask, if he answers them then he is a Prophet who has been sent (by Allah); if he does not, then he is saying things that are not true, in which case how you will deal with him will be up to you. Ask him about some young men in ancient times, what was their story? For there is a strange and wondrous tale. Ask him about a man who traveled a great deal and reached the east and the west of the earth. What was his story? And ask him about the Ruh (soul or spirit) what is it? If he tells you about these things, then he is a Prophet, so follow him, but if he does not tell you, then he is a man who is making things up, so deal with him as you see fit.'

So, the Quraish delegation returned to Makkah and related to the people of Makkah what the Jewish Rabbis had told them. Then they came to the Messenger of Allah (SAW) and asked him about the things the Rabbis mentioned. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said that he would tell them tomorrow about what they have asked but he (SAW) did not say, 'If Allah Wills.'

Allah's Messenger (SAW) never answered such questions unknown to him except with revelation. So, he waited for the revelation from Allah. Fifteen days passed by without any revelation concerning those matters which the disbelievers asked, neither did the angel Jibreel (AS) come to him. The people of Makkah started to doubt him and the criticisms toward him grew. The Messenger of Allah (SAW) felt sad because of the delay in revelation and was grieved by what the people of Makkah were saying about him.

Then Jibreel (AS) came with the revelation of Surah al-Kahf, which contained answers to some of the questions and also the following verse explaining the correct etiquette when determining to do something in the future.

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لشيءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَلِكْ غَدًا إِلَّا أَنْ يَشَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَادْكُرْ رَبَّكَ إِذَا نَسِيتَ
وَقُلْ عَسَى أَنْ يَهْدِيَنِي رَبِّي لِأَقْرَبَ مِنْ هَذَا رَشَدًا

And do not say of anything: Surely I will do it tomorrow,
Unless Allah pleases; and remember your Lord when you forget and say:
Maybe my Lord will guide me to a nearer course to the right than this.
[18:23-24]

Determining to do something in the future should always be attributed to the Will of Allah, Who is the Knower of the Unseen, and Who Alone Knows what was and what is yet to happen and what is not to be. It is an important etiquette (Akhlaq) that reflects a true understanding and belief (Iman) in the attributes of Allah (SWT).

Akhlaq is More Important Than Shariah

Let us take another example to appreciate the difference in these priorities. For a certain period in recent times, marriage of convenience (Zawaj al-Misyar) was trending in the Arabian Gulf area. Fortunately, Alhamdulillah, the trend has decreased. What some people do is the following: Someone travels abroad or even, sometimes, he doesn't travel but within his own city, he has another wife, in secret. Of course, it's permissible on the surface since the marriage normally fulfills the legal requirements determined by Shariah; Ijab and Qabul (formal offer of marriage and formal acceptance of the marriage proposal), valid and sufficient witnesses, the guardian, and the dowry. All the necessary marriage terms are fulfilled and valid, but he keeps the marriage secret. His first wife, even his family, and children do not know that he has a second wife. Then he passes by this secret wife, occasionally, at his convenience. In short, it is legally taking another wife but keeping it a secret.

How do we judge this matter? From the Shariah (Islamic law) or Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) perspective, I can't say it is forbidden (Haram). All the necessary marriage conditions are fulfilled; there is a proposal and acceptance, a dowry, proper permission from the woman's guardian, and witnesses. Even on the convenience arrangements, he would say that he and the new wife had an agreement that she accepted. So, from the Shariah perspective, it is legitimate.

But there is a difference between being jurisprudentially permissible (Halal) and morally permissible (Halal). The first thing is there is no equality between the secret wife and the first wife in terms of rights like time spent with the wives. He doesn't recognize that but he may argue that the second wife accepted.

Putting aside the aspect of Iman and God-consciousness (Taqwa), let's take the moral aspect. What if this man dies? Of course, the secret second wife is legally married to him. And his first wife will, suddenly, discover that she has a sister-wife, another wife who will share part of the inheritance. And so do the children from the secret second wife. She and her children and parents will start to wonder where the second family came from. Imagine the enmities and confusion that will ensue, potential lawsuits, other claims, and counter-claims. We are potentially ruining society for the sake of an individual desire.

What do you think of this kind of marriage? My opinion will be that it met the terms of marriage from the Shariah perspective. That means it is permissible (Halal) because I can't consider as forbidden (Haram) what meets all the marriage conditions. But from the Akhlaq perspective, because it leads to injustice, leads to falsity, and leads to destroying relationships, it is morally forbidden (Haram). Akhlaq is more important than Shariah. That makes it forbidden (Haram), in my opinion.

The implication behind an action that originally might have been permissible (Halal) or Makruh could change if there were Akhlaq implications. This is implied in the principle of "Ma'alat al-'Af'al" (مآلات الأفعال) as mentioned in the discussion of Maqasid Shariah by Imam Ash-Shatibi.

Thus, although taking another wife without informing the present wife may be permissible from the Shariah perspective, it has serious negative implications from the Akhlaq perspective. As we will see in the following paragraph, it also has negative implications from the Iman perspective.

Issue/Perspective	Shariah	Akhlaq	Iman
Remarrying Without Informing the Present Wife	✓	× ×	× × ×

Allah (SWT) has made polygamy permissible in Islam with its related conditions. Thus there is nothing wrong or shameful in polygamy. Attempting to conceal it from anybody for that matter is like believing that one has the power to conceal things and prevent others from knowing. The Only One Who has full power on concealing and revealing news is Allah (SWT). The beginning of Surah Tahreem (Surah 66) narrates an incident involving the Prophet (SAW) and some of his wives. Some of them secretly plotted something out of jealousy to one of his (SAW) other wives. Allah (SWT) chose to reveal it to the Prophet (SAW) and the following verse teaches us some important lessons about the attributes of Allah (SWT).

وَإِذْ أَسَرَّ النَّبِيُّ إِلَىٰ بَعْضِ أَزْوَاجِهِ حَدِيثًا فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَتْ بِهِ وَأَظْهَرَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ عَرَفَ
بَعْضُهُ وَأَعْرَضَ عَنْ بَعْضٍ فَلَمَّا نَبَّأَهَا بِهِ قَالَتْ مَنْ أَنْبَأَكَ هَذَا قَالَ نَبَّأَنِيَ الْعَلِيمُ
الْخَبِيرُ

And when the prophet secretly communicated a piece of information to one of his wives-- but when she informed (others) of it, and Allah made him to know it, he made known part of it and avoided part; so when he informed her of it, she said: Who informed you of this? He said: The Knowing, the one Aware, informed me. [66:3]

This is how we understand Islam. I should not understand religion just in terms of things and actions being allowed or otherwise only from one perspective. Religion has goals. We must understand the comprehensive framework of Islam that involves Iman, Akhlaq, Shariah, and the related goals.



X

Perfecting Good Morals (Akhlaq)

Let us go back to the issue of Morals. Islam did not introduce a completely new code of ethics or morals. Look at the various versions of this famous Hadith.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ صَالِحَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

Abu Hurayra reported that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "I was sent to perfect good Akhlaq." [Ahmad]

عَنْ مَالِكٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ حُسْنَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "I have been sent to perfect good Akhlaq." [al-Muwatta']

The wording used is to "perfect" good Akhlaq or morals. There are known morals and values that transcend religions, cultures, geographies, and time. We call them Universal values. These universal values were known a long time ago. About the oldest piece of writing on universal values that we still have in our hands today was written by Aristotle, in the BC era. Of course, universal values date back much earlier, but this is the oldest written reference available [5]. These values existed even before the Christ era. Aristotle specified a group of values, which are still acknowledged today. These "Universal Values" include a set of moral values that are absolutely good and another set which are absolutely bad. For example, truthfulness, honesty, modesty, equality, and mercy are agreed upon good values. While another set of agreed-upon bad

values include: vanity, lying, cheating, theft, and injustice are all, obviously, rejected.

Islam Perfects Universal Values

When Islam came, it approved all this. By the way, Islam didn't bring about anything that is absolutely a hundred percent new. This is confirmed by our Messenger (SAW).

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ "إِنَّ مَثَلِي وَمَثَلَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ مِنْ قَبْلِي كَمَثَلِ رَجُلٍ بَنَى بَيْتًا فَأَحْسَنَهُ وَأَجْمَلَهُ، إِلَّا مَوْضِعَ لَبْنَةٍ مِنْ زَاوِيَةٍ، فَجَعَلَ النَّاسُ يَطُوفُونَ بِهِ وَيَعْجَبُونَ لَهُ، وَيَقُولُونَ هَلَّا وُضِعَتْ هَذِهِ اللَّبْنَةُ قَالَ فَأَنَا اللَّبْنَةُ، وَأَنَا خَاتِمُ النَّبِيِّينَ".

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "My similitude in comparison with the other prophets before me, is that of a man who has built a house nicely and beautifully, except for a place of one brick in a corner. The people go about it and wonder at its beauty, but say: 'Would that this brick be put in its place!' So I am that brick, and I am the last of the Prophets." [Bukhari]

So, the Messenger (SAW) said that he was the last brick that completed the building. Therefore, we, the Muslims, didn't make this building by ourselves alone. It was built by the whole of humanity beginning with the first Prophet and Messenger Adam (AS) and then continued by the previous prophets. We follow their path. The most part of this construction isn't laws or rulings, but morals and faith. Compared to other prevailing religions today, Islam has the most complete and detailed laws. Islam also has a complete moral code with details but are built to complement the morals that humans have agreed upon.

The Hadith we mentioned earlier, "I have been sent to perfect good Akhlaq", clearly indicates that Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was sent to uphold and complement ethical values and good morals, These good morals are agreed upon by all humans. Islam came and approved them. It didn't bring about something new. Even the society in Mecca at that time, honored people who were truthful, trustworthy, noble, courageous. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) exemplified these values

even before being appointed a Prophet and Messenger and was much respected in Mecca because of it. So, the Messenger (SAW) was sent to uphold and complement ethical values, to complete and perfect it.

So, Islam acknowledges all the good morals that humans agreed upon. For example, no individual or society approves lying. Even thieves don't approve of lying. Thieves use "word of honor" when dealing. For them, these are agreed upon morals.

But Islam approved morals and went even further. The Messenger (SAW) said,

... فَإِنَّ الْحَلَالَ بَيِّنٌ وَالْحَرَامَ بَيِّنٌ وَبَيْنَ ذَلِكَ أُمُورٌ مُشْتَبِهَةٌ فَدَعْ مَا يَرِيكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يَرِيكَ

... For that which is lawful is clear and that which is unlawful is clear, and between them are matters which are not as clear. Leave that which makes you doubt for that which does not make you doubt. [Nasaai]

Abdullah bin Mas'ud (RA), who narrated this version of the Hadith, described how to tackle this narrow area in the middle, the doubtful matters. He said that if you are a scholar, you shall know these doubtful matters, but if you aren't a scholar, it's better to avoid them. Stay on the safe side, the side with no doubts. This is the general understanding.

Islam came to complement good manners from the past that humans agreed upon. Islam approved truthfulness, honesty, modesty, and other manners. There are, also, bad manners that humans agreed upon its evil like lying, deception, cheat, theft, and injustice. Islam also came to approve that they are evil. So, what does it mean to say that Islam came to complement ethical values? What is meant is the area in between which isn't clear; the doubtful matters. So Islam came and issued laws about it, made rules to preserve it,

and how to deal with it. Islam also deliberates upon its minute details.

Take for example the issue of Dutifulness to Parents. Dutifulness to Parents is a matter that Islam greatly admires and at the same time considers disobedience to parents as one of the major sins. The gravity of the sin is to the point that when disobedience to parents is mentioned in the Quran, it is often mentioned alongside Shirk (Polytheism, taking partners) with Allah (SWT). Allah (SWT) considers this matter so great.

وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِابْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ
وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَى وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنْ
اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ
وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي
الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا ۖ وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ۖ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ

And when Luqman said to his son while he admonished him: O my son! do not associate aught with Allah; most surely polytheism is a grievous iniquity--

And We have enjoined man in respect of his parents-- his mother bears him with faintings upon faintings and his weaning takes two years-- saying: Be grateful to Me and to both your parents; to Me is the eventual coming.

And if they contend with you that you should associate with Me what you have no knowledge of, do not obey them, and keep company with them in this world kindly, and follow the way of him who turns to Me, then to Me is your return, then will I inform you of what you did. [31:13-15]

So, Dutifulness to Parents is given extra importance in Islam.

But Dutifulness to Parents is also encouraged as a good moral deed in other religions and cultures. However, it isn't given the same degree of importance. So, one aspect of "I have been sent to perfect good Akhlaq" is about the emphasis on this moral.

Another aspect relates to the details about Dutifulness to Parents. Earlier we mentioned Jihad as a major deed related to an Essential of Shariah, Preservation of Din. When Jihad is declared, shall it be prioritized over Dutifulness to Parents? Scholars say it depends on your circumstances. If you have other brothers or your parents are young and can take care of themselves, then you should join Jihad. On the other hand, if your parents are old or so sick and have nobody to take care of them except you, then the details of the moral guidelines in Islam is to give priority to your parents.

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو قَالَ جَاءَ رَجُلٌ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَسْتَأْذِنُهُ فِي الْجِهَادِ فَقَالَ أَحْيَى وَالِدَاكَ قَالَ نَعَمْ قَالَ فَفِيهِمَا فَجَاهِدْ

وفي رواية أخرى قال فارجعْ إِلَى وَالِدَيْكَ فَأَحْسِنْ صُحْبَتَهُمَا

Abdullah ibn Amr reported: A man came to the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, asking permission to wage jihad. The Prophet said, “Are your parents alive?” The man said yes. The Prophet said, “Then strive in their service.”

In another narration, the Prophet said, “Then return to your parents and treat them with good company.”

[Bukhari, Muslim]

But this judgment doesn't apply to all people, just in this case. So, in matters of morals, Islam provides answers to detailed cases as part of “perfecting morals”. We can see in this case how the Messenger (SAW) guides in prioritizing between Preservation of Din, Preservation of Family, and the highly important moral deed of Dutifulness to Parents. Indeed, “I have been sent to perfect good Akhlaq”.

Major Difference in the Goals of Morals

We have given an example of how universal morals are being perfected in Islam by setting degrees of importance and providing the details of the moral. But the major differences are between morals and their goals in Islam compared to that of other religions and societies.

The essence of morals in other societies revolves around being either humane or merciful. Being considerate, helpful, and merciful to other people, animals, and even the environment are practices observed in many societies. Islam does not view people of other cultures as a population of animals. Most people are humane and merciful. Some societies may have tyrannical rulers but rarely do we find a society where most people are corrupt, harsh, and oppressive (the people of Sodom during the time of Prophet Lut (AS) was an example). Not all people today have abandoned their humanity. On the contrary, most of them are humane and merciful.

By the way, there is a Hadith that praises the Romans on some good qualities.

قَالَ الْمُسْتَوْرِدُ الْقُرَشِيُّ عِنْدَ عَمْرِو بْنِ الْعَاصِ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ وَالرُّومُ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ فَقَالَ لَهُ عَمْرُو أَبْصِرْ مَا تَقُولُ قَالَ أَقُولُ مَا سَمِعْتُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ لَنْ قُلْتَ ذَلِكَ إِنْ فِيهِمْ لَخَصَالًا أَرْبَعًا إِنَّهُمْ لِأَحْلَمُ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ فِتْنَةٍ وَأَسْرَعُهُمْ إِفَاقَةً بَعْدَ مُصِيبَةٍ وَأَوْشَكُهُمْ كَرَّةً بَعْدَ فَرَّةٍ وَخَيْرُهُمْ لِمَسْكِينٍ وَيَتِيمٍ وَضَعِيفٍ وَخَامِسَةً حَسَنَةً جَمِيلَةً وَأَمْنَعُهُمْ مِنْ ظُلْمِ الْمُلُوكِ

Al-Mustawrid reported: He said in front of Amr ibn al-‘As that he heard the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, say, “The Hour will be established while the Romans are the majority of people.” Amr said, “Be careful what you say.” He said, “I have said what I heard from the Messenger of Allah.” Amr said, “If the Prophet said that, indeed, there are four good qualities in them: they are the most forbearing of people in tribulation, they are the quickest to recover after a calamity, they are the most eager to return

after a retreat, and they are good to the poor, the orphan, and the vulnerable. Their fifth quality is good and beautiful: they are the best at stopping the oppression of their kings.” [Muslim]

Basis of Akhlaq

Prophet Muhammad (SAW) summed up his mission on morals:

" I was sent to uphold and complement ethical values."

(Narrated by Ahmad)

Yes, Islam acknowledges the universal values and perfects them. Despite this, the source and goals of morals in Islam are radically different from those of other religions and societies. Let us discuss the goals. What is the goal of Akhlaq or morals in Islam? The first main goal is to seek the pleasure of Allah (SWT). We Muslims are humane, merciful, and helpful to others out of obedience to Allah (SWT) and following the example of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

Some people even in the west are merciful in terms of donations to the poor, and supporting humanitarian causes but their motivation may be social responsibility, fame, or even genuine concern for human suffering, but the divine connection to the Creator is missing. This is something significantly different between our community and theirs. In Islam, charitable contributions in the form of wealth or services must be with the intention to seek the pleasure of Allah (SWT). Then only the blessings and rewards will ensue.

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ
سَنَبْلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ
الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى ۖ لَهُمْ
أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ
قَوْلٌ مَعْرُوفٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَذًى ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ
يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَبْطُلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ
النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۖ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ ثَرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ
وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهٗ صَلْدًا ۚ لَّا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الْكَافِرِينَ

The parable of those who spend their property in the way of Allah is as the parable of a grain growing seven ears (with) a hundred grains in every ear; and Allah multiplies for whom He pleases; and Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing

(As for) those who spend their property in the way of Allah, then do not follow up what they have spent with reproach or injury, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and they shall have no fear nor shall they grieve. Kind speech and forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury; and Allah is Self-sufficient, Forbearing.

O you who believe! do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury, like him who spends his property to be seen of men and does not believe in Allah and the last day; so his parable is as the parable of a smooth rock with earth upon it, then a heavy rain falls upon it, so it leaves it bare; they shall not be able to gain anything of what they have earned; and Allah does not guide the unbelieving people. [2:261-264]

That is why among the first people to be dragged to the Hellfire on the Resurrection Day is a wealthy man who donates to people but his intention is that people would say he is generous and kind.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ أَوَّلَ النَّاسِ يُقْضَى
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ اسْتَشْهَدَ فَأَتَى بِهِ فَعَرَفَهُ نِعَمَهُ فَعَرَفَهَا قَالَ فَمَا عَمِلْتَ فِيهَا
قَالَ قَاتَلْتُ فِيكَ حَتَّى اسْتَشْهَدْتُ قَالَ كَذَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّكَ قَاتَلْتَ لِأَنْ يُقَالَ جَرِيءٌ فَقَدْ قِيلَ
ثُمَّ أُمِرَ بِهِ فَسُحِبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ حَتَّى أُلْقِيَ فِي النَّارِ وَرَجُلٌ تَعَلَّمَ الْعِلْمَ وَعَلَّمَهُ وَقَرَأَ
الْقُرْآنَ فَأَتَى بِهِ فَعَرَفَهُ نِعَمَهُ فَعَرَفَهَا قَالَ فَمَا عَمِلْتَ فِيهَا قَالَ تَعَلَّمْتُ الْعِلْمَ وَعَلَّمْتُهُ
وَقَرَأْتُ فِيكَ الْقُرْآنَ قَالَ كَذَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّكَ تَعَلَّمْتَ الْعِلْمَ لِيُقَالَ عَالِمٌ وَقَرَأْتَ الْقُرْآنَ لِيُقَالَ

هُوَ قَارِئٌ فَقَدْ قِيلَ ثُمَّ أُمِرَ بِهِ فَسُحِبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ حَتَّى أُلْقِيَ فِي النَّارِ وَرَجُلٌ وَسَّعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَأَعْطَاهُ مِنْ أَصْنَافِ الْمَالِ كُلِّهِ فَأَتَى بِهِ فَعَرَفَهُ نَعْمَهُ فَعَرَفَهَا قَالَ فَمَا عَمِلْتَ فِيهَا قَالَ مَا تَرَكْتُ مِنْ سَبِيلٍ تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُنْفَقَ فِيهَا إِلَّا أَنْفَقْتُ فِيهَا لَكَ قَالَ كَذَبْتَ وَلَكِنَّكَ فَعَلْتَ لِيُقَالَ هُوَ جَوَادٌّ فَقَدْ قِيلَ ثُمَّ أُمِرَ بِهِ فَسُحِبَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ ثُمَّ أُلْقِيَ فِي النَّارِ

Abu Huraira reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said,

“Verily, the first people to be judged on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who was martyred. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them. Allah will say: What did you do about them? The man will say: I fought in your cause until I was martyred. Allah will say: You have lied, for you fought only that it would be said you were brave, and thus it was said. Then, Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.

Another man studied religious knowledge, taught others, and recited the Quran. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them. Allah will say: What did you do about them? The man will say: I learned religious knowledge, taught others, and I recited the Quran for your sake. Allah will say: You have lied, for you studied only that it would be said you are a scholar and you recited the Quran only that it would be said you are a reciter, and thus it was said. Then, Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.

Another man was given an abundance of blessings from Allah and every kind of wealth. He will be brought, the blessings of Allah will be made known and he will acknowledge them. Allah will say: What did you do about them? The man will say: I did not leave any good cause beloved to you but that I spent on it for your sake. Allah will say: You have lied, for you spent only that it would be said you are generous, and thus it was said. Then, Allah will order him to be dragged upon his face until he is cast into Hellfire.” [Muslim]

So, the first principle in Islam is that there is an intention behind morals. The goal is to satisfy (Ridha) Allah (SWT).

Balance of Morals in Islam

Another distinguishing feature of Islamic morals is the balance it preserves between the laws (Qanun), the human, the society, and the universe (Kaun). For example, we have moral guidelines in Islam in dealing with animals. We present below selected Hadith through which Prophet Muhammad (SAW) exhorted Muslims to show mercy and forbade cruelty towards animals and birds. He showed concern for even the slightest instance of animal abuse or neglect [3].

The Messenger of Allah (SAW) once passed by a camel that was so emaciated that its back had almost reached its stomach. He said, "Fear Allah in these beasts who cannot speak." [Abu Dawud]

The Companions said, "O Allah's Messenger! Is there a reward for us in serving the animals?" He replied: "There is a reward for serving any living being." [Bukhari]

A group of Companions were once on a journey with the Prophet (SAW) and he left them for a while. During his absence, they saw a bird with its two young, and they took the young ones from the nest. The mother bird was circling above in the air, beating its wings in grief, when the Prophet came back. He said, "Who has hurt the feelings of this bird by taking its young? Return them to her." [Muslim]

The Prophet (SAW) told his companions of a woman who would be sent to Hell for having locked up a cat; not feeding it, nor even releasing it so that it could feed herself." [Bukhari, Muslim]

Such laws that relate morals to animals are original in Islam since 15 centuries ago. The seriousness of the ethical treatment of animals is to the extent that one can be punished even with Hellfire for purposely mistreating animals. Other societies are only now issuing such laws because it does not exist.

Even cleanliness has a moral dimension. In Islam, one is not allowed to relieve himself, with apologies, under a tree on the way of people because that will harm people.

So, Islam perfects human morals so as to be in harmony with everything. Take, for example, the issue of preservation of the environment in Islam. Islam does not deal with the preservation of the environment from a legal but from a moral perspective. If we truly understand Islam, preservation of the environment is one of the main goals of Islam. Why? Because we have universal laws, laws of nature, and we have mandatory laws that Allah (SWT) demanded through Islam. There's no contradiction. It is unbecoming of a Muslim to take care of religion, prayers, and worship and then neglect the universe. That's neither allowed nor accepted because Allah (SWT) taught us in the Quran to respect what He (SWT) has bestowed upon humans all that is in the universe as a favor from Him (SWT).

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً ...

Do you not see that Allah has made what is in the heavens and what is in the earth subservient to you, and made complete to you His favors outwardly and inwardly? ... [31:20]

Allah (SWT) made the universe subservient to us as His (SWT) favor. Then Allah (SWT) said,

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought, that He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may return. [30:41]

Corruption and destroying the earth, the sea, or the environment is clearly mentioned in the verse above. The threat against abusing the environment is in the Quran itself. There is no doubt about the

seriousness of taking care of the environment in Islam; it is part of our moral goals.

So we have got this moral agreement between the individual, society, and the whole universe. This universality and harmony are so beautiful. It is one of the goals of Islamic Morals.

A major underlying premise and source of morals in Islam is the Fitrah (common natures) that Allah (SWT) has bestowed upon us. Likewise, when I explained the Essentials, Allah (SWT) bestowed upon us as the gift of the human body, wealth, mind, family, and earth. We own nothing of these, They are gifts bestowed upon us and as such we must preserve and develop it. I am not allowed to mess up with my body, my family, or the earth as I wish. I don't own them. I neither own these nor own my wealth. I can't mess up with it as I don't own it. I'm only entrusted with it and thus I must take care of it.

Fitrah

The essence of Morals in Islam is taking care, developing and refining the Fitrah that Allah (SWT) has bestowed upon the human. This is the philosophy and source (Masdar) of morals in Islam? The common nature or Fitrah that Allah (SWT) created within us.

According to some western philosophical theories, the human is born with a blank slate, and then he acquires morals and values from his upbringing in the family and community. For Muslims, this is simply incorrect. The Quran is quite clear about this issue. It starts with the good human nature, Fitrah. Allah (SWT) has made it perfect.

أَنَّ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ - رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ - قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " مَا مِنْ مَوْلُودٍ إِلَّا يُولَدُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجَّسَانِهِ، كَمَا تُنْتَجِ الْبَهِيمَةُ بَهِيمَةً جَمْعَاءَ، هَلْ تُحْسِنُونَ فِيهَا مِنْ جَذَعَاءَ " ثُمَّ يَقُولُ {فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ}

Narrated Abu Huraira:

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "No child is born except on Al-Fitra (Islam) and then his parents make him Jewish, Christian or Magian, as an animal produces a perfect young animal: do you see any part of its body amputated?" Then he recited 'The religion of pure Islamic Faith (Hanifa),(i.e. to worship none but Allah), The pure Allah's Islamic nature with which He (Allah) has created mankind. Let There be no change in Allah's religion (i.e. to join none in Allah's worship). That is the straight religion; but most of men know not..." [30:30] [Bukhari]

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

And the soul and Him Who made it perfect [91:7]

This perfection has two meanings. It can mean perfected to the highest level and it can mean perfectly equal. Allah (SWT) inspired it and made it common nature to differentiate between right and wrong. Part of Fitrah or common nature is that the human understands what is good and bad for him.

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا
قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا
وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا

Then He inspired it to understand what is right and wrong for it;
He will indeed be successful who purifies it;
And he will indeed fail who corrupts it. [91:8-10]

Allah (SWT) created us with this readiness for good and evil and made it common nature (Fitrah) but we are the one to steer right or left. This is our own decision as a human being and we will be rewarded or punished based on our choice.

The last principle of morals in Islam is that we aren't only responsible for ourselves, but responsible for everyone. I have a moral and social responsibility towards the weak.

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَا تُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَالْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ وَالنِّسَاءِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ
الَّذِينَ يَقُولُونَ رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْقَرْيَةِ الظَّالِمِ أَهْلُهَا وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ وَلِيًّا
وَاجْعَلْ لَنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ نَصِيرًا

And what reason have you that you should not fight in the way of Allah and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, (of) those who say: Our Lord! cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors, and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper [4:75]

It is our moral duty as Muslims to fight to defend the weak even if they are Non-Muslims. So we are responsible for all the people in the world.

These are the basis of Islamic Akhlaq. We may share common universal values but the why of morals in Islam is radically different.

Main Objectives and Goals of Akhlaq

الاخلاق (Akhlaq, Morals)

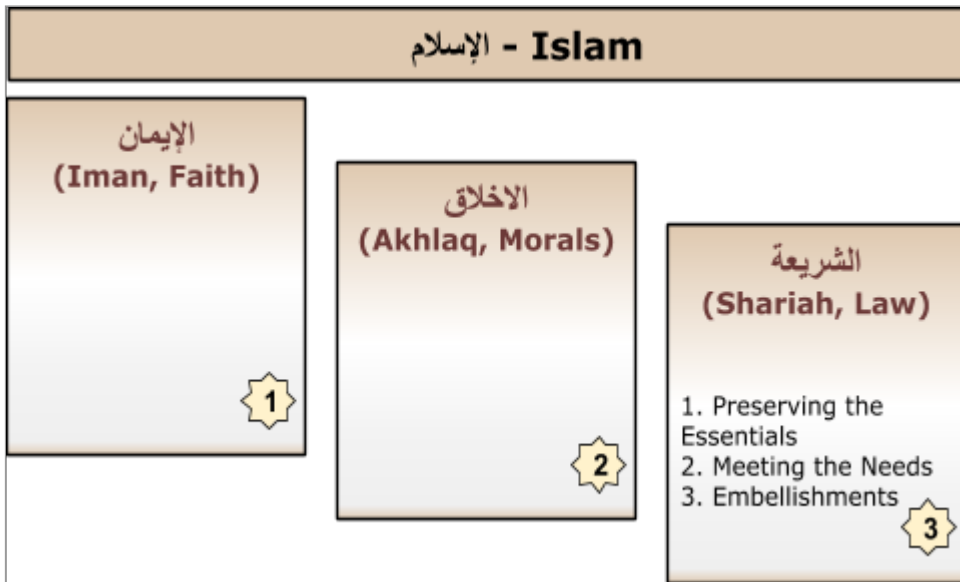
**Principal Goal of Akhlaq is the Realization of
(الرحمة) Mercy and (العدل) Justice**

1. Perfects and complements Morals based on the Fitrah
2. Motivated to seek the pleasure of Allah (مرضات الله)
3. Balance between the human, society and creation (environment)
4. Fundamental premise that Everything belongs to Allah (المملك لله)
5. Social responsibility

XI

Faith (Iman)

In this chapter, we will discuss the perspective of Iman or Faith or Belief. Akhlaq lies in the middle above Shariah but below Iman. This hierarchy is quite important so that if anything down contradicts with what lies above, the latter is to be prioritized. So the highest priority is Iman (we will use Faith interchangeably with Iman).



Our focus of discussion is not on the articles or detailed contents of Faith but on the goals of Faith. We will only use certain examples to illustrate our points. Most Muslims, including scholars, when they explain what Faith is they will quote the six pillars of Iman. Likewise, they explain Islam using the five pillars.

عَنْ عُمَرَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَيْضًا قَالَ: " بَيْنَمَا نَحْنُ جُلُوسٌ عِنْدَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ذَاتَ يَوْمٍ، إِذْ طَلَعَ عَلَيْنَا رَجُلٌ شَدِيدُ بَيَاضِ الثِّيَابِ، شَدِيدُ سَوَادِ

الشَّعْرَ، لَا يَرَى عَلَيْهِ أَثَرُ السَّفَرِ، وَلَا يَعْرِفُهُ مِمَّا أَحَدٌ. حَتَّى جَلَسَ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى
 اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. فَأَسْنَدَ رُكْبَتَيْهِ إِلَى رُكْبَتَيْهِ، وَوَضَعَ كَفَّيْهِ عَلَى فَخْذَيْهِ،
 وَقَالَ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ أَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِسْلَامِ.
 فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الْإِسْلَامُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ
 مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَتَقِيمَ الصَّلَاةَ، وَتُؤْتِيَ الزَّكَاةَ، وَتَصُومَ رَمَضَانَ، وَتَحُجَّ الْبَيْتَ
 إِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا.
 قَالَ: صَدَقْتَ. فَعَجَبْنَا لَهُ يَسْأَلُهُ وَيُصَدِّقُهُ!
 قَالَ: فَأَخْبِرْنِي عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ.
 قَالَ: أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ
 وَشَرِّهِ ...

On the authority of `Umar (ra) who said:

While we were one day sitting with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with very black hair. No traces of journeying were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet (ﷺ) rested his knees against the knees of the Prophet (ﷺ) and placed his palms over his thighs, and said: "O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam."

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) replied: "Islam is that you should testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger (ﷺ), that you should perform salah (ritual prayer), pay the zakah, fast during Ramadan, and perform Hajj (pilgrimage) to the House (the Ka'bah at Makkah), if you can find a way to it (or find the means for making the journey to it)."

He said: "You have spoken the truth."

We were astonished at his thus questioning him (ﷺ) and then telling him that he was right, but he went on to say, "Inform me about Iman (faith)."

He (the Prophet) answered, "It is that you believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers and in the Last Day, and in fate (qadar), both in its good and in its evil aspects." [Muslim]

The explanation is correct but it does not tell us what are the goals related to these pillars. For example, in Islam we have the two declarations of faith. What is the goal of this declaration? Why is it so important and it is the first pillar? These are the issues we are trying to explain..

And did Islam come to help the Muslims only? I mean, are these goals of Islam only relevant for the Muslims? No, of course not. Islam came for the sake of all humanity and not only for the Muslims.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds. [21:107]

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا

Say: O people! surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, [7:158]

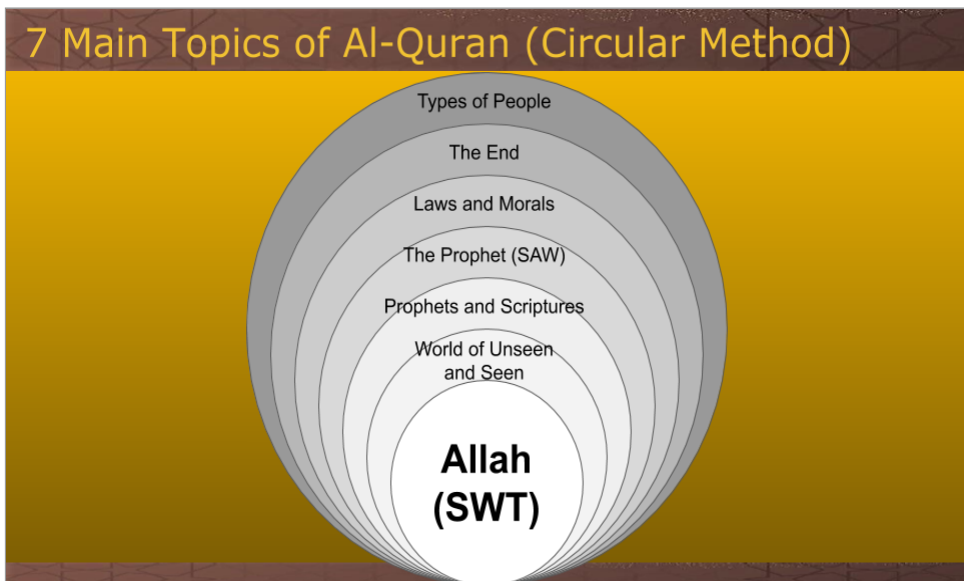
We will comprehend it when we complete explaining the whole picture we mentioned in the Preface and Chapter 1. But, let's take this main perspective of Islam which is Faith.

Believing in Allah (SWT) is the base of faith, the base of Islam, and the base of salvation on the Day of Resurrection. I will come back to the issue of salvation on the Day of Resurrection because some people have this illusion that the only people who will be saved on the Day of Resurrection are the Muslims! This firstly requires understanding of the different categories of people in this world and the Hereafter. We will discuss this in the next book, Insha Allah.

Goals of Iman

Let us now discuss Faith. The start point (Muntalaq) of Faith is believing in Allah (SWT). What about believing in the Angels, the Holy Books, the Prophets, and the Day of Resurrection? The goal of all of these is to believe in Allah (SWT) as the one and only true God. Allah (SWT) sent the Prophets to guide us to Him (SWT). He sent the Holy Books to guide us to Him (SWT). So the main start point of Faith is believing in Allah (SWT).

In Chapter 1, we showed this summary of the 7 main topics of the Quran. It all centers around Allah (SWT).



That is why we say that the other pillars of Faith all lead to Allah (SWT).

In believing in Allah (SWT), the first goal is to know Allah (SWT), to correctly introduce people to their true God. Who created them? Who is their god? Who is Allah (SWT)? Do you imagine the amount of speech about this matter in the Holy Quran, the Prophetic Hadith, and the Prophetic Seerah? Even the Shariah aims at knowing Allah

(SWT). Even Akhlaq aims at knowing Allah (SWT). Again, the first goal is that people should know their God.

That is why Allah (SWT) censures people in many verses for not knowing their God.

قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ؟

Their messengers said: Is there doubt about Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth? [14:10]

أَفَمَنْ يَخْلُقُ كَمَنْ لَا يَخْلُقُ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Is He then Who creates like him who does not create? Do you not then mind? [16:17]

So the first goal of Iman is that people should know their true God.

The second main goal of Faith is Monotheism (التوحيد - At-Tauheed). It is not enough just to know the true God. One may know his God but worships Him along with something else. This is absolutely unbecoming! If you know your true God, how do you associate a partner with Him? The infidels of Quraish knew Allah (SWT) due to the long influence of the monotheistic religion of prophets Ibrahim (AS) and Ismail (AS).

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ لَيَقُولُنَّ خَلَقَهُنَّ الْعَزِيزُ الْعَلِيمُ

And if you should ask them, Who created the heavens and the earth? they would most certainly say: The Mighty, the Knowing One, has created them; [43:9]

وَلَئِنْ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَهُمْ لَيَقُولُنَّ اللَّهُ فَآَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ

And if you should ask them who created them, they would certainly say: Allah. Whence are they then turned back? [43:87]

Many such verses show the infidels of Quraish acknowledging Allah (SWT) and some of His attributes. But they took partners claiming to bring them closer to Allah (SWT).

أَلَا لِلَّهِ الدِّينُ الْخَالِصُ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ مَا نَعْبُدُهُمْ إِلَّا لِيُقَرِّبُونَا إِلَى اللَّهِ زُلْفَىٰ

Now, surely, sincere obedience is due to Allah (alone) and (as for) those who take guardians besides Him, (saying), We do not serve them save that they may make us nearer to Allah, [39:9]

Despite all the claims and excuses, it isn't enough to know Allah (SWT). Iman or Faith seeks that knowing our God must lead us to the next goal, Monotheism.

So the first goal is that people should know their god. The second goal of Faith is that people believe in Monotheism. They must worship Allah (SWT) alone without any partners.

Main Objectives and Goals of Iman

الإيمان (Iman, Faith)

Principal Goal of Iman is (التوحيد) Tauheed or Monotheism, Oneness of Allah (SWT)

1. Knowledge of Allah (SWT) (معرفة الله)
2. Oneness of Allah (SWT) (توحيد الله)
3. Worship of Allah (SWT) (عبادة الله)

Profound Meaning of Ibadah

The third main goal of Iman after we know Allah (SWT) and believe in His (SWT) oneness, is to worship Him (SWT) alone. All Messengers came for this purpose.

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ

And verily We have raised in every nation a messenger, (proclaiming):
Worship Allah and shun false gods. [16:36]

This is the purpose of the whole matter. It isn't enough to know Allah (SWT) and fear him, this should be implemented into real actions. You must worship Allah (SWT). Worshiping Allah (SWT) through the prescribed rituals is one of the main goals of Faith.

We should understand the meaning of worship or Ibadah (عبادة). In Arabic, when we say ('abbad attarieq) (عَبَّدَ الطَّرِيقَ - he paved the way), it means he made it straight and walking through it becomes easy. So worshiping means to make the matter straight without any twist. This is what worship means. It includes submission and easiness. So the goal here is to worship Allah (SWT) and to be straight with Allah (SWT) without any twist.

That's why the meaning of worship in Islam is profound and precise. It is different compared to other religions which also have different acts of worship. Worshiping for us isn't just about the rituals; prayers, fasting, reading the Quran, remembering Allah (SWT), supplicating, Hajj, and Umrah. Of course, these are all acts of worship but Ibadah encompasses a lot more. Ibadah or worship in Islam means anything that a Muslim does with the conscious intention of satisfying Allah (SWT) and the act is permissible (Halal). There are two conditions; being correct and sincere, then it will be an act of worship. Even when sleeping, when someone sleeps intending to make sure he wakes up for the obligatory dawn prayer or to wake

up for the optional but special night prayers, it is considered an act of worship and he will be rewarded.

More than that, even the food with which a husband feeds his wife is rewarded. Because it is an act of charity, and thus considered an act of worship.

عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ أَنَّهُ أَخْبَرَهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ "إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَنْفِقَ نَفَقَةً تَبْتَغِي بِهَا وَجْهَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا أُجِرْتَ عَلَيْهَا حَتَّى مَا تَجْعَلُ فِي فَمِ امْرَأَتِكَ"

Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) said, "You will be rewarded for whatever you spend for Allah's sake even if it were a morsel which you put in your wife's mouth." [Bukhari]

Imam Nawawi commented that a man puts food into his wife's mouth for two reasons, either because she's sick or for romance (Tahabbuk), both of which Allah (SWT) likes.

Ponder upon this Hadith and notice how profound and precise is the understanding of worship in Islam.

عَنْ أَبِي، ذَرٍّ أَنَّ نَاسًا، مِنْ أَصْحَابِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالُوا لِلنَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ذَهَبَ أَهْلُ الدُّثُورِ بِالْأُجُورِ يُصَلُّونَ كَمَا نُصَلِّي وَيَصُومُونَ كَمَا نَصُومُ وَيَتَصَدَّقُونَ بِفُضُولِ أَمْوَالِهِمْ . قَالَ "أَوَلَيْسَ قَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ مَا تَصَدَّقُونَ إِنْ بِكُلِّ تَسْبِيحَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَكُلِّ تَكْبِيرَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَكُلِّ تَحْمِيدَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَكُلِّ تَهْلِيلَةٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَأَمَرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ صَدَقَةٌ وَنَهَى عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ صَدَقَةٌ وَفِي بُضْعٍ أَحَدِكُمْ صَدَقَةٌ" . قَالُوا يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ أَيَأْتِي أَحَدُنَا شَهْوَتُهُ وَيَكُونُ لَهُ فِيهَا أَجْرٌ قَالَ "أَرَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ وَضَعَهَا فِي حَرَامٍ أَكَانَ عَلَيْهِ فِيهَا وَزْرٌ فَكَذَلِكَ إِذَا وَضَعَهَا فِي الْحَلَالِ كَانَ لَهُ أَجْرٌ"

Abu Dharr reported:

Some of the people from among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said to him: Messenger of Allah, the rich have taken away (all the) reward. They observe prayer as we do; they keep the fasts as we keep, and they give Sadaqa out of their surplus riches.

Upon this he (the Holy Prophet) said: Has Allah not prescribed for you (a course) by following which you can (also) do sadaqa? In every declaration of the glorification of Allah (i. e. saying Subhan Allah) there is a Sadaqa, and

every Takbir (i. e. saying Allah-O-Akbar) is a sadaqa, and every praise of His (saying al-Hamdu Lillah) is a Sadaqa and every declaration that He is One (La ilaha ill-Allah) is a sadaqa, and enjoining of good is a sadaqa, and forbidding of that which is evil is a Sadaqa, and in man's sexual Intercourse (with his wife,) there is a Sadaqa.

They (the Companions) said: Messenger of Allah, is there reward for him who satisfies his sexual passion among us?

He said: Tell me, if he were to devote it to something forbidden, would it not be a sin on his part? Similarly, if he were to devote it to something lawful, he should have a reward. [Muslim]

Name me one religion that considers fulfilling the sexual desire in a legal manner an act of charity and deserves to be rewarded by none other than Allah (SWT)? An act of charity is an act of worship in Islam. Doing anything lawful and abstaining from the forbidden with the intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah (SWT) is an act of worship. That definition is broad, encompassing, profound, and precise. It prepares the Muslim to be in constant awareness of his or her Creator and Lord (SWT). How beautiful is this concept of Ibadah or worship in Islam? This is how we Muslims must understand Ibadah and worship Allah (SWT) accordingly. This will lead us to the next two goals of Iman or Faith.

Before that, I would like to share a personal example of how this understanding of Ibadah has helped me prioritize my obedience and worship. Sometimes I get engrossed in my writing and it brings me to around 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. While doing so, I sometimes have this monologue, "wouldn't it be better if I stop this and do the optional night prayers (Solat Tahajjud) ?" But if I pray, I will delay completing this book. What should I choose? An individual prayer or a book that will benefit people? For me, writing the book to benefit the Ummah is an act of worship. It may be a better act of worship with a bigger reward. It is so unique and beautiful that writing a book and praying the highly recommended Sunnah of the Prophet (SAW) of Tahajjud are both acts of worship.

Therefore, pay attention to this profound maxim exemplified by this saying of Umar ibn Al-Khattab (RA). One day he passed by a young man sitting in a gathering at the mosque and noticed that he wouldn't leave. So he asked: What's with him? Why wouldn't he leave the mosque? They answered: O Leader of the Faithful, he decided to stay at the mosque and dedicate himself for worship. Umar asked as to who provides for him. They said: his brother does. Umar said: His brother is better than him. The one who goes to work and earns a living shall get a bigger reward than someone who dedicates his life for mere ritual worship.

This is how we understand worship in Islam. So when we say worshiping is one of the goals of Faith, worshiping is to make our life for the sake of Allah (SWT). Even our death is for the sake of Allah (SWT).

قُلْ إِنَّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say. Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds; [6:162]

This then is the meaning of worship. It is unique, profound, and beautiful.

Getting Closer to Allah (SWT)

So, the first goal of Iman is to know Allah (SWT). The second goal is Monotheism. The third goal is to worship. The fourth goal is getting closer to Allah (SWT) and doing our best to seek His pleasure.

Main Objectives and Goals of Iman

الإيمان (Iman, Faith)

Principal Goal of Iman is (التوحيد) Tauheed or Monotheism, Oneness of Allah (SWT)

1. Knowledge of Allah (SWT) (معرفة الله)
2. Oneness of Allah (SWT) (توحيد الله)
3. Worship of Allah (SWT) (عبادة الله)
4. Closeness to Allah (SWT) (التقرب الى الله)

Once we know the greatness of Allah (SWT), His perfect attributes, and beautiful names, and we feel the superiority of Allah (SWT), we will do our best to seek His pleasure.

Some people do their best to escape religion. They do their best to find a way out. Whereas a true honest believer will do his best to come closer to and seek the pleasure of Allah (SWT). This is the honesty of Faith. If someone truly knows Allah (SWT) he will seek out for his Lord (SWT).

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَالَ: "مَنْ عَادَى لِي وَلِيًّا فَقَدْ آذَنْتُهُ بِالْحَرْبِ، وَمَا تَقَرَّبَ إِلَيَّ عَبْدِي بِشَيْءٍ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِمَّا افْتَرَضْتُهُ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يَزَالُ عَبْدِي يَتَقَرَّبُ إِلَيَّ بِالنَّوَافِلِ حَتَّى أُحِبَّهُ، فَإِذَا أَحْبَبْتُهُ كُنْتُ سَمْعَهُ الَّذِي يَسْمَعُ بِهِ، وَبَصَرَهُ الَّذِي يُبْصِرُ بِهِ، وَيَدَهُ الَّتِي يَبْطِشُ بِهَا، وَرِجْلَهُ الَّتِي يَمْشِي بِهَا، وَلَنْ سَأَلَنِي لَأُعْطِيَنَّهُ، وَلَنْ اسْتَعَاذَنِي لَأُعِذَّنَّهُ".

From Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) who said:
The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said,
“Verily Allah Ta’ala has said: ‘Whosoever shows enmity to a wali (friend) of Mine, then I have declared war against him. And My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more loved to Me than the religious duties I have obligated upon him. And My servant continues to draw near to me with nafil (supererogatory) deeds until I Love him. When I Love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, and his sight with which he sees, and his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him; and were he to seek refuge with Me, I would surely grant him refuge.’ ” [Muslim]

Calmness of the Heart

The final goal of Iman or Faith is the satisfaction and calmness of the heart.

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction. [13:28]

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ
ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكِ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

O (you) soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction!
"Come back you to your Lord,- well pleased (yourself), and well-pleasing unto Him! [89:27-28]

There is a feeling of emptiness in the heart that could solely be filled by the remembrance of and intimacy with Allah (SWT).

وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنْكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ

But whosoever turns away from My Message, verily for him is a life narrowed down, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment.[20:124]

He who shuns his Lord will live a sad life, imprisoned by the vanities of life. His end will be a painful one.

So, these are the five goals of Faith from the base to the pinnacle. The one who truly believes and nurtures his or her Iman will always have a contented and satisfied heart. His life will be in full confidence and satisfaction. It is the pinnacle of the fruit of the true knowledge of Allah (SWT), honesty in worshiping Allah (SWT) and doing the best to seek His (SWT) pleasure.

Main Objectives and Goals of Iman

الإيمان (Iman, Faith)

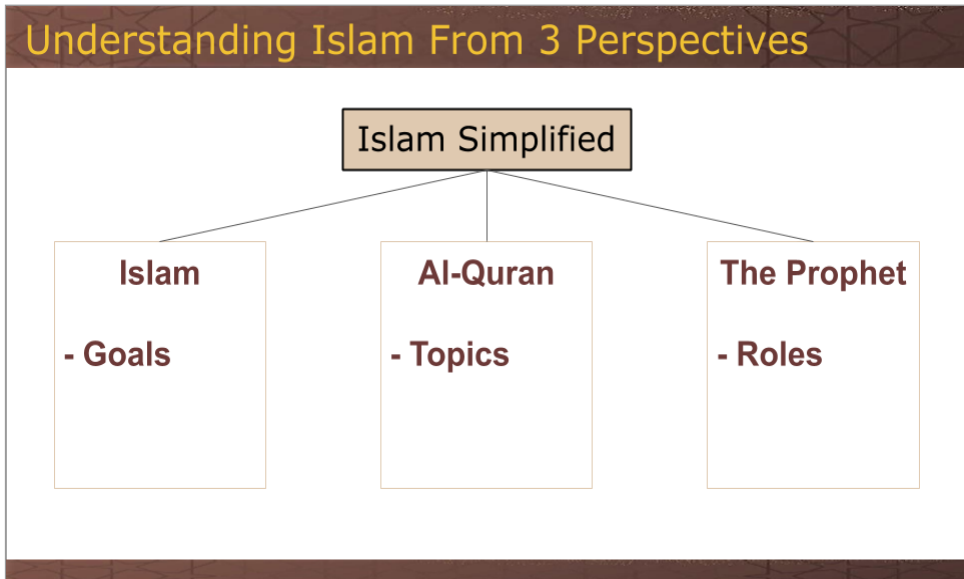
Principal Goal of Iman is (التوحيد) Tauheed or Monotheism, Oneness of Allah (SWT)

1. Knowledge of Allah (SWT) (معرفة الله)
2. Oneness of Allah (SWT) (توحيد الله)
3. Worship of Allah (SWT) (عبادة الله)
4. Closeness to Allah (SWT) (التقرب الى الله)
5. Comfort of the heart (اطمئنان القلب)

Next, in the final chapter, we will put together all that we have discussed and conclude what is the end goal of Islam.

XII

Concluding Remarks



We will conclude our discussion on understanding the goals of Islam in this chapter. It is a major perspective in helping us explain Islam in a simplified but complete manner. Simplicity does not mean superficial or incomplete. Islam Simplified means to make the understanding and explaining of Islam easy and simple, yet complete and meaningful. So, it is simple yet profound, Insha Allah.

Islam has three major components, Shariah (Islamic law), Akhlaq (Morals), and Iman (Faith). We have discussed the Goals of Shariah, the Goals of Akhlaq, and how Islamic Morals differ from other moral systems. In the previous chapter, we have just concluded the goals of Faith which include knowing Allah (SWT), Tauheed, getting closer to Him, seeking His pleasure, and the satisfaction of the heart.

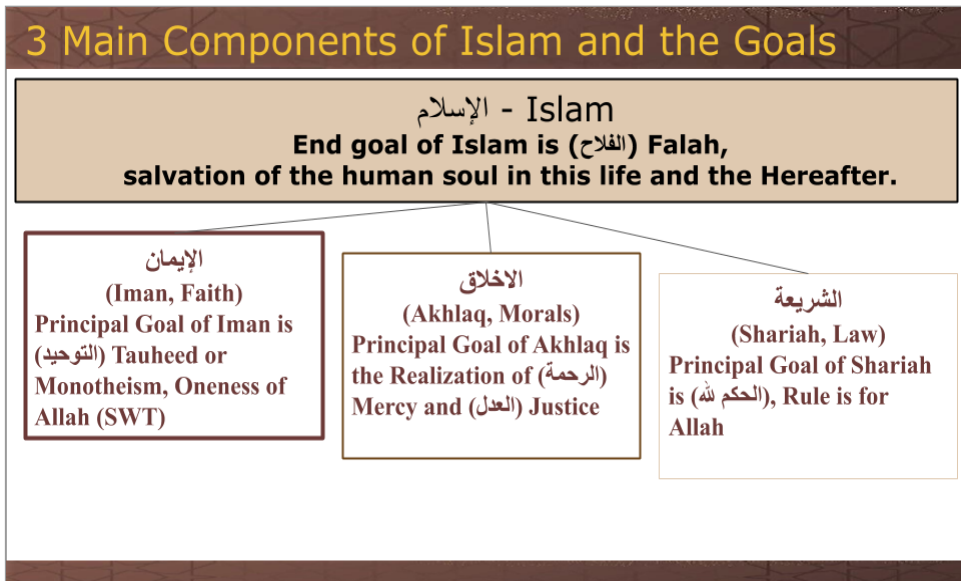
End Goal

We have discussed these goals separately. What are the objectives of all these goals? What connects all of the different goals that we have discussed? Let me start by providing a simple definition of some of the terms I have used and will be using. Other references will use these similar terms with different meanings. I don't intend to argue on which definitions are correct, only to clarify what those terms mean in this book. Let me take the simple analogy in the game of football (or soccer in the United States). The **goal** of every football game is to win the game. Within the context of a football season or tournament, the **higher goal** is to win the championship or tournament or to go as far as possible. Clearly, there is a higher goal than just winning the match. Beyond winning the championship or tournament, there is **even a higher goal**, perhaps to be recognized as the best football team ever. So goals are of different types depending on its impact and timeframe. Some references use different terms like objective, target, vision, and endgame to describe the various types of goals.

We have used the simple term goal(s) (هدف - Hadaaf) up till now. I will use the term **main goal or principal goal** to highlight the goal beyond the goals of Iman, Akhlaq, and Shariah that we have deliberated. I will tie all these principal goals with the term **end goal**. So Islam has one **end goal** with three principal goals beneath. Under the principal goals, lie the goals of the components of Islam, the goals of Shariah (Islamic law), Manners, and Faith. We have an **end goal** supported by other goals.

Falah

So what is the end goal (Alghayah alkubra) of Islam? Some people answer as Oneness of Allah (Tauheed). No, Tauheed is the principal goal of Faith. The ultimate end goal of Islam, in my opinion, is (الفلاح - Falah), salvation or prosperity of the human soul in this life and the Hereafter.



Notice I mention Falah of the human, not Falah of the Muslim. Islam did not come only for the Muslims. When Muslims truly practice Islam, even those who reject Islam will benefit. Look at the principal goals of Shariah, Akhlaq, and Iman as highlighted in the visual above. Non-Muslims may not believe in Tauheed nor agree that Rule is for Allah (SWT) only, but they will certainly benefit from the realization of Mercy and Justice in society.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds.[21:107]

Muslims don't deal with humans with hatred. We don't deal with humans the way ISIS does, may Allah (SWT) disgrace them, which is to judge against other people so that if they disbelieve, slaughter

them and send them to Hellfire. As Muslims, we are not allowed to judge people's destiny in the Hereafter. That is only for Allah (SWT) to judge based on His justice and wisdom. In this life, Islam demands that we treat others with justice and mercy. That is the principal goal of our beautiful morals.

We must care for our fellow human beings, and wish them good. If we don't like human beings, how is it the case that we are supposed to invite them to Islam? We care about them. We strive so that we all live in peace, and attain salvation on the Day of Resurrection.

The end goal is Falah of the human in this life and the Hereafter. The person who believed and achieved all the goals, he would attain Falah in life and the Hereafter. What if he did not believe it? A non-Muslim who lives under an Islamic rule, supposedly, he shall live in happiness and prosperity with a good education, prosperous economy, able to develop his family, enjoy justice and respect, and taste the sweetness of a humane society. This is how the Non-Muslims used to live in a Muslim society. (Some good examples can be found in this reference [3])

Nowadays, neither the Muslims nor the Non-Muslims live in dignity, honor, or mercy. Over the years, both bad scholars and bad rulers have destroyed our countries, our history, and our civilization. So, we want this Islamic civilization reborn. The Islamic civilization doesn't only serve Muslims but all of the people. We wish all people good in this life. And for those who believe, they shall prosper in life and the Hereafter.

(In a follow-up sequel to this book, I will come back to the subject of how different categories of people will be treated in the Hereafter, Insha Allah. It is a special and important topic but requires some prerequisites. Thus I will discuss it separately.)

I was precise when I used the word Falah of the human. I didn't say success (نجاح - Najah) or happiness (سعادة - Sa'adah), I said: "prosper". In Arabic, the call to prayer (Azan) says "Hasten to prosperity" or it can be translated as "Hasten to salvation". Happiness, of course, is a fruit of prosperity.

يَوْمَ يَأْتِ لَا تَكَلِّمُ نَفْسٌ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۖ فَمِنْهُمْ شَقِيٌّ وَسَعِيدٌ
فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ شَقُوا فَفِي النَّارِ لَهُمْ فِيهَا زَفِيرٌ وَشَهِيقٌ
خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ رَبُّكَ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ فَعَّالٌ لِّمَا
يُرِيدُ
وَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ سَعَوْا فَفِي الْجَنَّةِ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا مَا دَامَتِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ إِلَّا مَا
شَاءَ رَبُّكَ ۚ عَطَاءٌ غَيْرُ مَجْدُوذٍ

On the day when it shall come, no soul shall speak except with His permission, then (some) of them shall be unhappy and (others) **happy**. So as to those who are unhappy, they shall be in the fire; for them shall be sighing and groaning in it: Abiding therein so long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord please; surely your Lord is the mighty doer of what He intends. And as to those who are made **happy**, they shall be in the garden, abiding in it as long as the heavens and the earth endure, except as your Lord please; a gift which shall never be cut off. [11:105-108]

But Falah is the end goal, why? Memorize this well. There is a difference between the feeling (شعور - Shu'ur) and the status or condition (حال - Hal). In a very short summary, feelings are temporary, or short term. A Status can be permanent or long term. It might not be permanent but lasts long. An example of the feeling of happiness is when someone passes an exam. If someone survives a car accident, he will feel happy. Or the opposite, sadness. If someone loses a dear person, he will feel sad. But this feeling doesn't last, it's temporary.

But, for some people, this feeling turns into a condition or status. So he gets into a state of depression or a state of hatred. Anger is a temporary feeling but hatred is a lasting condition. Anger can but

does not necessarily lead to hatred. Anger is temporary, whereas hatred can last. If someone hates someone else, this is lasting. On the other hand, if you get angry with your kid, this is temporary.

Thus, Feelings are temporary but a Status is permanent. As such, we seek Falah because Falah reflects a status.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

Truly he prospers that purifies it, [91:9]

Falah means to succeed in every aspect, and it entails a continuous status. Whereas success entails that he made a success but could fail again.

As another example, consider the beautiful connotations here, when the Quran talks about the marriage relationships.

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ أَنْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا لِتَسْكُنُوا إِلَيْهَا وَجَعَلَ بَيْنَكُمْ مَوَدَّةً
وَرَحْمَةً ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

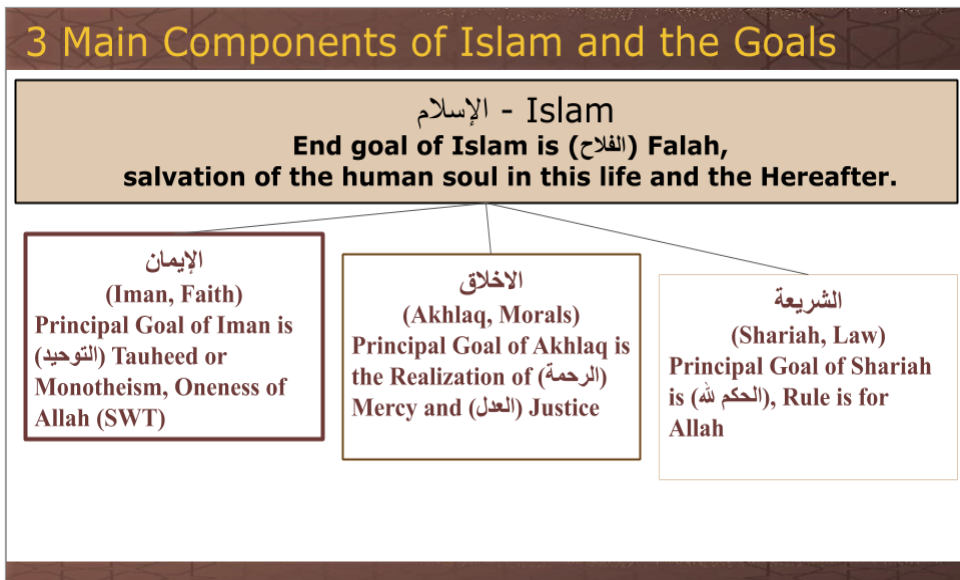
And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put harmony and mercy between your (hearts): verily in that are Signs for those who reflect. [30:21]

Allah (SWT) didn't say that he has put "love" (Hubb) and mercy between your (hearts) He said "harmony and mercy" because the feeling of love can, in a matter of seconds, flourish or dwindle. It goes up and down. But when it comes to harmony, even if I disagree with my spouse or the opposite, intimacy and care still exists. So, she might be upset with me at a moment, but then at that same moment, if she feels that I'm in danger, she will immediately forget being upset. Why? because there's harmony. Thus, keep in mind this difference between a feeling and a condition.

So, the end goal of Islam is that humans achieve Falah in this life and the Hereafter. Islam wants people to live happily and attain salvation

on the Day of Resurrection. Islam wants people to go to heaven and escape Hellfire, and get the pleasure of Allah (SWT). These are the three afterlife goals; being saved from Hellfire, gaining entry into Paradise, and attaining the pleasure of Allah (SWT). All these are the fruits of Falaḥ.

Goals of the Three Main Components of Islam



I will summarize the goals of the three main components of Islam. As we started, Islam consists of Iman, Akhlaq, and Shariah, in that order of importance. The main or principal goal of Iman is Oneness of Allah (Tauheed). That's why there is a lot of emphasis on this matter. It also represents the source and starting point of everything; rule, politics, economy, manners. This is a fundamental matter. It is the principal goal. Without Tauheed, we will certainly not attain Falah in this life or the Hereafter.

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ
اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ
لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

Say: He is Allah, the One and Only;
Allah, the Eternal, Absolute;
He begets not, nor is He begotten;
And there is none like unto Him. [112:1-4]

The above is one of the last chapters of the Quran. It unequivocally states the Oneness of Allah (SWT).

The principal goal of Akhlaq is mercy and justice. Mercy and justice are the starting points of morals in Islam. You will find out that everything related to morals in Islam revolves around mercy and justice.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds.[21:107]

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَا نُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا ۖ اعْدِلُوا هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ ۖ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ

O you who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do. [5:8]

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ يَعِظُكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice and the doing of good (to others) and the giving to the kindred, and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion; He admonishes you that you may be mindful. [16:90]

(Again, a good reference on this topic is here [3])

Concerning Shariah (Islamic law), its main source and principal goal is as mentioned in Al-Quran.

إِنِ الْحُكْمُ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ ۚ أَمَرَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

Judgment is only Allah's; He has commanded that you shall not serve aught but Him; this is the right religion but most people do not know: [12:40]

The main source of Shariah is Allah (SWT) through the final revealed book, the Holy Quran. The Quran itself prescribed clearly the other

source of divine rule. The Quran gives us a methodology on what to do if Allah's judgment is not found in the Quran. The Quran has all the major laws but some details are explained by the Messenger (SAW) through his sayings, actions, and permissions.

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَىٰ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَنْ يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَنْ يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا

It is not fitting for a Believer, man or woman, when a matter has been decided by Allah and His Messenger to have any option about their decision: if any one disobeys Allah and His Messenger, he is indeed on a clearly wrong Path. [33:36]

وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

... and whatever the Messenger gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is severe in retributing (evil): [59:7]

We have no other option since part of Iman is to accept the rule of Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (SAW). This means that if we don't judge by what Allah has revealed or the Messenger has decreed, we are not considered believers in the first place.

أَفَعَيِّرَ دِينَ اللَّهِ يَبْغُونَ وَلَهُ أَسْلَمَ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا وَإِلَيْهِ يُرْجَعُونَ

Do they seek for other than the Religion of Allah?-while all creatures in the heavens and on earth have, willing or unwilling, bowed to His Will (Accepted Islam), and to Him shall they all be brought back. [3:83]

Religion here means law, so it isn't acceptable not to abide by His (SWT) laws. The evidence from the Quran is just overwhelming on this matter. The essence of Shariah is "rule is only for Allah (SWT)".

Let us conclude the first perspective of Islam Simplified, which is Islam itself. Islam has three components; Iman or Faith, Akhlaq or Morals, and Shariah (Islamic law). Shariah has three aspects; Essentials, Needs, and Embellishments. The Five Essentials are the Preservation of Religion, Self/Life, Mind, Wealth, and Family and Offspring. Family and Offspring are together.

Islamic Morals, as we said earlier, are dramatically different from universal values and manners. Morals in Islam revolve around mercy (الرحمة) and justice (العدل). The principal goal of Morals is to achieve mercy and justice among humans and the universe. The principal goal of Shariah (Islamic law) is to practically realize the maxim "Rule is only for Allah (SWT)". The principal goal of Iman is Oneness of Allah (Tauheed); only Allah (SWT) is to be worshiped, with absolutely no partners, and to seek His (SWT) pleasure.

The end game of all of this, the ultimate goal is Al-Falah, prosperity or salvation of the human in this world and the Hereafter.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَرُزِقَ كَفَافًا وَقَنَعَهُ اللَّهُ بِمَا آتَاهُ

Abdullah ibn Amr reported: The Messenger of Allah (SAW) said: He has succeeded who embraces Islam, whose provision is sufficient, and whom Allah has made content with what he has given him. [Muslim]

I present again the visual I introduced in the beginning of this book. We have now explained it sufficiently. With this, we now understand the first major branch of our Islamic Simplified tree, the branch of Islam.

الإسلام - Islam

End goal of Islam is (الفلاح) Falah, salvation of the human soul in this life and the Hereafter.

(Iman, Faith)
Principal Goal of Iman is (التوحيد) Tauheed or Monotheism, Oneness of Allah

1. Knowledge of Allah (معرفة الله)
2. Oneness of Allah (توحيد الله)
3. Worship of Allah (عبادة الله)
4. Closeness to Allah (التقرب إلى الله)
5. Comfort of the heart (طمأنينة القلب)

1

(Akhlāq, Morals)
Principal Goal of Akhlāq is the Realization of (الرحمة) Mercy and (العدل) Justice

1. Perfects Morals based on the Fitrah
2. Motivated for the pleasure of Allah (مرضات الله)
3. Balance between human, society and creation
4. Premise that Everything belongs to Allah (الملك لله)
5. Social responsibility

2

(Shareeah, Law)
Principal Goal of Shariah is (الحكم لله), Rule is for Allah

1. Preserving the Essentials
 - Al-Din (الدين)
 - Al-Nafs (النفس)
 - Al-Mal (المال)
 - Al-'Aql (العقل)
 - Al-Nasl (النسل)
2. Meeting the Needs
 - Facilitating the Essentials
3. Embellishments
 - Make life and religion beautiful

3

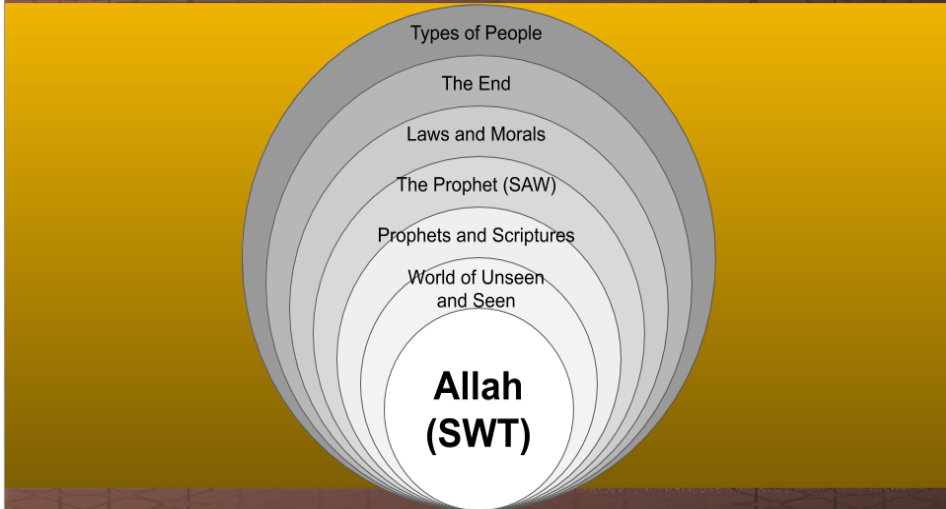
Final Words

We hope this book has achieved its purpose to explain Islam comprehensively but in a simple way. We have kept it simple by focusing on the goals of Islam and its main components rather than the details of the dos and don'ts in Islam. Today, more than ever, people are seeking to understand the purpose or the Why of the things they do. We hope this book has helped Muslims and non-Muslims alike to understand the "Whys" or goals of Islam in a simple yet profound way. Simplicity does not mean superficial. Simplicity means to make something easy and simple. So, I hope our dear readers will appreciate the simple yet profound understanding of Islam that this book presented.

The video series in Arabic available at suwaidan.tv also completely covers the Holy Quran and the Roles of the Prophet (SAW). We are preparing the English version in an e-book format similar to this. Insha Allah, we will make it freely available in due time.

We will explain the unique circular method that forms the basic structure of the Quran. We will then discuss the seven main topics in the Quran and the related sub-topics. This will give us a wholesome understanding of the Holy Quran.

7 Main Topics of Al-Quran (Circular Method)



We will also present the different unique roles of the Prophet (SAW) so that we can better understand the Sunnah. Only certain roles of the Prophet (SAW) are binding upon Muslims to follow.

Some Unique Roles of the Prophet (SAW)

نُبُوَّة (نبي - رسول)	Prophethood (Prophet, Messenger)
انسان	Human
تشريع	Legislation
فتوى	Issuing edicts
قضاء	Adjudication
إمارة	Political leadership of the state
هدي	Guidance
صلح	Conciliation
إشارة	Advice to those seeking his opinion
نصيحة	Counselling

Wallahu al-Mustaan (وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ). And Allah it is Whose help is to be sought.

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Feedback

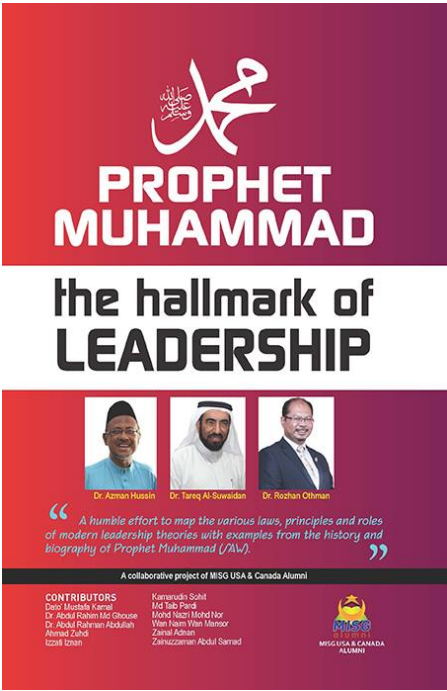
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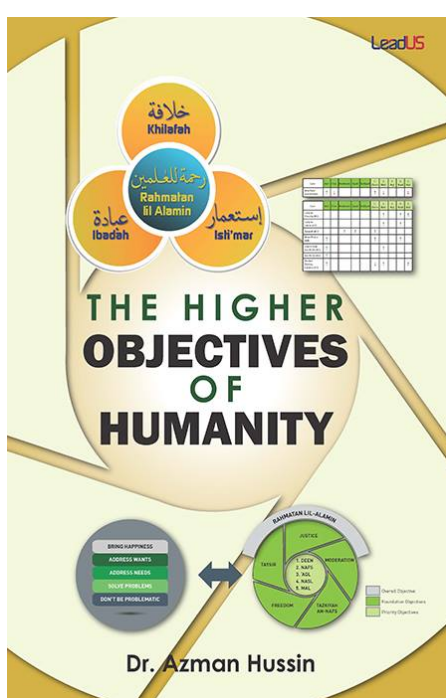
“A humble effort to map the various laws, principles and roles of modern leadership theories with examples from the history and biography of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).”

A collaborative project of MISG USA & Canada Alumni

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This book synthesizes the advanced knowledge in modern leadership science with leadership examples of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the history of the generation of the Companions. The approach taken is to start with a known modern leadership reference model that is well documented. It then collected and collated evidences from Hadith (a collection of traditions containing sayings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)) and Seerah (the life, history, behavior and habits of Prophet Muhammad (SAW)) based upon the classifications of the model. It helps to make the readers to become better leaders to help them personally and to help them provide much better leadership for the Muslim community.



This book discusses the why, what and how of Rahmatan lil-Alamin as the higher objective of humanity. It presents a practical understanding of the purpose of creation and humanity to improve the individual and collective well-being of Muslims and society. The intention is to re-introduce and re-emphasize the correct Islamic perspective of humanity.

We describe in detail how the Muslim can apply Rahmatan lil-Alamin daily in his or her life. We propose a practical model of Rahmatan lil-Alamin that we induced from the Quran.

This book seeks to establish a connection between Islam and civilization within a civilizational and ethical framework. We believe that a more proper and complete understanding of the Islamic view about humanity may present to us new perspectives of Islam and how Muslims should engage with fellow Muslims and people of other faiths. In fact, the implication of this new reinterpretation framework goes even further in that: any human civilization built on this framework is the most prosperous for the whole and also for the individuals in it.