

Chapter 15: The Universal Mission of the Prophet of Islam, A Faith for both East and West

Islam emerged like a limpid fountain and increased in depth and expanse as time went by. It finally became a great river passing through various human societies, irrigating fields in which seeds of humanity were to be planted, satisfying the thirst of human beings for salvation and justice. It is going on and will surely continue to do so as long as there are human beings on earth because human nature is thirsty for this heavenly faith and would perish if it were denied it.

Islam is truly the only power that is able to wipe out all wrong manners, all corruption, and all corrosive attitudes in all places and at all times and to lead human beings onto the path God has determined for them.

Obviously, Islam does not please those who oppress the colonialists, the arrogant, and their like. So they have always tried hard to hinder it, but in spite of so many wicked policies and plots of the world-exploiters and despite the serious attempts of the enemies of Islam to misrepresent this holy faith, Islam has prevailed.

Islam contains the secret of victory as well as of prosperity. The fact that Islam is a divine faith, not a man-made one, is testimony to the rightful claim that all the laws, rules, instructions, and precepts necessary for human happiness and salvation are to be sought in it.

Is it not the case that God has created human beings as well as all other beings? Is it not the case that the Creator knows all about His creatures? Is it not true that the same gracious God who has created so many wonderful natural resources to meet human material needs has also endowed human beings with divine resources to satisfy their spiritual wants?

Thus being presented by God, it is totally compatible with human nature and consistent with all human wants and needs: material, spiritual, and emotional. Most important of all, it provides all the necessary means for human evolution towards salvation so that when man leaves this world for the eternal one, he

will be deserving of Paradise there and not hell, just as God wants man to be.

It goes without saying that all laws and precepts in the holy faith of Islam have been made on the basis of human nature, which is the same in all human societies and at all times. So those who say, 'East is east and west is west' and 'An eastern Prophet cannot be a good leader for western people', are absolutely wrong. For human beings, whether of the east or the west, have their nature, their natural characteristics, and their wants in common.

There is no difference between people in this respect, no matter how different their race, colour, traditions, geographical conditions, and the like may be. And just as eastern people need an innate faith – a faith compatible with their nature and capable of satisfying their various human needs – western people are in need of such a divine faith, exactly to the same extent. A simple comparison can serve to clarify the matter. Human beings all over the world and at all times need food, water, and oxygen to survive, and there is no human being found without a need of them for his survival. Just so, all of them need spiritual nourishment for their souls, their emotional health, their spiritual survival, and, most significant of all, their finding salvation.

There are, of course, many proofs to this righteous claim that Islam ensures human happiness and salvation in all parts of the world, and at all times. Those who oppose this divine faith and try to misrepresent it are in fact the greatest enemies of human beings.

Makkah: The Starting Place For The Prophet's Propagation Of Islam

It is crystal clear that when the Holy Prophet of Islam illuminated the dark atmosphere of Makkah with the call of monotheism, he did not mean to lead just the people of the Hijaz or the Arabs, but his divine mission was to communicate God's message to the whole world and to start this momentous task from Arabia.

One proof of this true belief is that at the beginning of his mission, he said to his Qwn relatives, 'Truly, I am God's Messenger to you, in particular, and to all people, in general...'¹

There are also some verses in the Qur'an that confirm this claim. Consider the following three verses:

'Say, O people, "Surely I am God's Messenger to you all"' (7:158).

'And We have not sent you but as a mercy to the worlds' (21:107).

'And this Qur'an has been revealed to me that with it I may warn you and whomsoever it reaches' (6:19).

Such verses reveal the fact that the divine mission of the Prophet was not revised to become universal

after his migration to Medina and the prevalence of Islam. From the very beginning, his holy mission was meant for all people, for all parts of the world, and for all times.

In answer to the question asked of Imam Sadiq, 'Why is the Qur'an always new and fascinating no matter how many times it is read or taught?', he said, 'God has not sent the Qur'an for a special time or for a particular group. The Qur'an is for all and forever, so till doomsday it will be new and enchanting at all times and to all groups of people.' 2

Another Testimony To Islam's Universality

In 6 A.H., the Holy Prophet of Islam dispatched several representatives to rulers and kings of different parts of the world, each with a letter in which he invited them to become Muslims and submit to God's faith. All these letters had the same purport, that is, the invitation to monotheism and Islamic fraternity.

Since the Holy Prophet's mission was divine, in obedience to God's command, consistent with human nature, and meant to lead people to God's path, it highly impressed such just, truthseeking people as Najashi, Muquqs, and others, so they submitted to Islam. 3

Research made on the collection of the Prophet's letters indicates that he sent 62 letters to kings, chiefs of tribes and clans, and heads of convents. The texts of 29 of these letters are available. 4

Now we will take a glance at parts of the letters of the Holy Prophet of Islam.

A Letter To Khusrow, The King Of Iran

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate

From Muhammad, God's Messenger, to Khusrow, the King of Persia. Greetings to the followers of the right path, to those obedient to God and His Prophet, to those who bear witness to God's Oneness, who worship the One God, and who bear witness to the prophecy of God's servant, Muhammad.

Truly I call upon you to obey God's command and convert to Islam. I am God's Messenger to all the people so that living hearts will be awakened and illuminated and so that infidels will have no excuses. Submit to Islam so you will be safe and immune, and if you disobey me and turn down my invitation, you will be blamed for the sins of the magi. 5

A Letter To Harqal, The King Of Rome

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate .

..I call upon you to submit to Islam. If you become a Muslim, you will share the Muslims' gains and their losses, and if you do not want to become a Muslim yourself, then let your people freely convert to Islam

or pay the poll tax, paid in lieu of conversion to Islam, and do not restrict them in choosing their faith." 6

The letters of the Holy Prophet of Islam were not exclusively written to kings. Rather, he sent letters to various nations and to the followers of other faiths so all would be informed of the rising of the sun of Islam.

A Letter To The Ruler Of Yamamah

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate

This is a letter from God's Messenger, Muhammad to Hawzah. Greetings to the one who follows the path of salvation and the instructions of the divine. guides.

You, the ruler of Yamamah, note that my faith will advance to the farthest place where man can go, so submit to Islam to be immune." 7

A Letter To The Jews

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate This is a letter from Muhammad, God's Messenger, Musa ibn `Imran's brother and co-missionary. God has assigned to Muhammad the same mission He had assigned to Moses. I swear to you by God and by the sacred commands descended upon Moses on Mount Sinai that: Have you found in your Holy Book predictions of my prophetic mission to the Jewish community as well as to all other peoples? If you have found this, then fear God and convert to Islam, and if you have not found such a divine prediction, then you will be excused." 8

A Letter To Bishop Najran

In the Name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate This is a letter from God's prophet Muhammad to Bishop Najran: Truly I call on you to worship the real adored God instead of worshipping God's creatures. 9

Our Duty Is To Convey The Message Of Islam

The speedy advance and promulgation of Islam were due to the sincere, indefatigable endeavours of our Holy Prophet more than anything else.

In the propagation of Islam, the Holy Prophet utilized two powerful, effective forces: one, proficient speakers who had realized the truth and righteousness of Islam and who deeply loved and admired the Holy Prophet of Islam, and, two, the amazingly impressive letters, which revealed the vivifying precepts of Islam and which, in reality, were crystal clear reflections of Islam. He sent his messengers to different parts of the world although there were many hardships in their way and the needed means and facilities

were scarce or unavailable.

Now the holy soul of our Prophet is worried about Muslim societies, and no doubt he watches them to see how they attempt to promote Islam, to communicate the precepts of Islam to people all over the world, and also to see if they make use of modern technologies and media to propagate the holy teachings of Islam.

So it is incumbent upon us to mobilize all our forces and powers to promote the cause of Islam and to spare no effort or self-sacrifice in the propagation of this holy faith, so our eastern and western brothers and sisters in Islam may be led to this vivifying fountain of truth. It will be a great achievement for us to have the honour of such an invaluable service to Islam and to humanity in general.

Just as our Holy Prophet said to 'Ali, 'I swear by God that if God leads a person towards salvation through you, it will be more valuable and beneficial to you than the value of all the beings in the whole world upon which the sun casts its rays.'"¹⁰

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1. Kamil, Vol. 2, p.61.
 2. Safinat ul-Bihar, Vol. 2, p.413.
 3. Kamil, Vol. 2, p.210; Makatib ul-Rasul, Vol. 1, pp.30-31.
 4. Makatib ul-Rasul, Vol. 1, pp.35-41, 60-182.
 5. Ibid., p.90; Sirihi Halabiyih, Vol. 3, p.277.
 6. Muhammad wa zamamdarani, p.162.
 7. Sirihi Halabiyih, Vol. 3, p.285.
 8. Makatib ul-Rasul, Vol. 1, p.172.
 9. Al-bidayah wal Nahayah, Vol. 5, p.53.
 10. Bihar ul-Anwar, Vol. 21, p.361.

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