

Studies on the Fundamentals of Religion

Written by:

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May Allah forgive him, his parents, and all Muslims

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

Introduction

All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help and forgiveness, and repent to Him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our selves and from our bad deeds. Whoever Allah guides, none can lead astray, and whoever He leads astray, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah alone, Who has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger and slave of Allah; may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, his family and Companions, and those who follow them properly until the Day of Judgment.

To proceed, This treatise includes "Studies on the Fundamentals of Religion", according to the new curriculum approved for the second year at the academic institutes, Dār Al-Tawhīd, the Islamic University, and other institutions.

I implore Allah Almighty to render this work useful and sincerely done for His sake.

Curriculum:

The new curriculum contains the following topics:

- A. Islam is a social necessity for the refinement of human life.
- B. The failure of other religions and doctrines in reforming people and achieving their happiness.
- C. The Perfection of Islam and the unity of its principles in reforming all aspects of human life:
 1. Creed. 2. Worship.
 3. Economy. 4. Social affairs.
 5. State politics. 6. Muslims' pride in their religion.

Muhammad ibn Sālih al-'Uthaymīn

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A. Islam is a social necessity for the refinement of human life.

Human society is diverse in its ideas, objectives, environments, and activities. So, it necessarily needs a guide to direct it, a system to unite it, and a ruler to protect it. The noble messengers (peace be upon them) used to undertake this task with revelation from Allah Almighty. They would guide people to the path of goodness and guidance, unite them upon the divine Shariah, and judge between them with justice. Hence, people's affairs were set aright as much as they responded positively to those messengers and according to how much their era was close to the prophetic missions. Prophetic missions before the era of Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) had a particular nature that suited the community to which the messenger was sent. Every prophet was sent to his community in particular. Allah Almighty says: {Indeed, We sent Noah to his people} [Nūh: 1] {And to 'Ād [We sent] their brother Hūd} [Hūd: 50] As such, the verses go on to relate the stories of the prophets up to the last prophet before Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him): {And [remember] when Jesus, son of Mary, said: "O children of Israel, indeed I am the messenger of Allah to you confirming what came before me of the Torah and bringing good tidings of a messenger to come after me, whose name is Ahmad."} [Al-Saff: 6] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Every prophet was sent only to his people, while I have been sent to all people." After the message of Jesus (peace be upon him), people belonged to either of two groups:

the totally ignorant who were indulging in their ignorance or the people of a scripture who transgressed against their scripture with distortions and violations. People had no religion to unite them nor a system for their rulers to follow; they had corrupt beliefs, confused ideas, deviant desires, evil deeds, and unjust judgments. If a noble person amongst them committed theft, they would let him go; but if a weak person did, they would punish him. They were, hence, in dire need for a religion to elevate them to the level of perfection in their beliefs, ideas, desires, deeds, and judgments. They – particularly the people of the Scripture, whose prophets gave them tidings of the coming of Muhammad – were waiting for this religion that would illuminate the path for them and show them the truth in the clearest way. It was Muhammad's message that carried this awaited religion, Islam, which Allah approved as a religion for all mankind, thereby completing His favor upon them, and opened for them the door of knowledge, goodness, and reform. That is why Islam is a social necessity for the refinement of human life, as proved by the following: a. Allah Almighty says: {Certainly did Allah confer [great] favor upon the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from themselves, reciting to them His verses, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, although they were before in a manifest error.} [Āl-'Imrān: 164] Purification, knowledge, and wisdom are a foundation for the refinement and civilization of nations. There could be no civilization without knowledge, no morals without purification, and no system without wisdom.

b. The reality and system of Islam which aim at preserving people's religion, mind, life, property, and honor and then reforming and refining those matters in a way that ensures happiness in the worldly life and in the Hereafter.

c. The great impacts of this religion, the like of which has never been seen in history; whereas before Islam, humanity was the farthest possible from advancement and sublimity in terms of religion, morals, manners, governance, and politics. Yet when people adhered to Islam, this backwardness turned into advancement, and this decadence into sublimity as witnessed in the early history of Islam.

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B. The failure of other religions and doctrines in reforming people and achieving their happiness.

The heavenly religions that were destined to survive until the present time are three: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Judaism and Christianity each fall short in reforming people and fulfilling their happiness for the following reasons:

a. Both religions were limited to the people of Moses and Jesus. Prophet Muhammad (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Every prophet was sent only to his people, while I have been sent to all mankind." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim] b. They are marked by restrictions and strictness. The wisdom of Allah dictates that the Shariah prescribed for a certain community is suitable for them and not for others. Allah Almighty placed shackles and burdens on the Children of Israel, which suited their nature and situation. He says in the Qur'an: {Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered prophet, whom they find written in what they have of the Torah and the Gospel, who enjoins upon them what is right and forbids for them what is wrong and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the evil, and relieves them of their burden and the shackles which were upon them} [Al-A'rāf: 157]

Examples in this regard:

1. Their prayer can only be offered in specific places, such as monasteries and churches.
2. If water is unavailable, one cannot purify himself with dust (dry ablution); rather, prayer remains due on him until he finds water and makes up for it.

3. The spoils of war gained by fighters are not lawful for them.

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "I have been given five things which were not given to anyone before me: I have been supported with fear (cast into the hearts of my enemies) for a distance of one month's travel; the earth has been made for me a place for praying and a means for purification, so when the time of prayer comes for anyone of my followers, he can pray (wherever he may be); war booty has been made lawful for me, and it was not lawful for anyone before me..." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]5. Some good things were made unlawful for the Jews due to their wrongdoing and transgression. Allah Almighty says: {For the wrongdoing of the Jews, We made unlawful for them [certain] good things which had been lawful for them} [Al-Nisā': 160]

c. These two Shariahs – Judaism and Christianity – were subjected to distortions and alterations that render them unfit for reforming people, were they to continue as religions; whereas they both being abrogated by the Islamic Shariah makes them more unfit.

If it is not possible to bring about happiness for mankind through Judaism and Christianity, though both are heavenly religions, it is even more so in the case of man-made religions.

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C. The Perfection of Islam and the unity of its principles in reforming all aspects of human life

Islam is a complete and comprehensive religion, which can reform all aspects of human life:

a. Allah Almighty says: {This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.} [Al-Mā'idah: 3]

b. It is the religion of Allah Who is All-Knowing of what reforms His creation and All-Wise in what He has legislated for them.

c. Its teachings attest to this. The Qur'an, which is the constitution of Islam, does not disregard anything that may benefit people, even the etiquette governing sitting together, entering houses, and so on. {O you who believe, when you are told to make room in the assemblies, then make room. Allah will give you ample room (from His mercy). And when you are told to arise then arise...} [Al-Mujādilah: 11] {O you who believe, do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked permission} [Al-Nūr: 27] The Prophetic Sunnah – the second source of Islamic legislation – does not disregard such delicate matters. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) taught his Ummah how to eat, drink, sleep, and answer the call of nature, though these are simple matters compared to prayer, fasting, Zakah, Hajj, etc.

Islam is complete in terms of creed, worship, economic and social affairs, state politics, and the pride that a Muslim takes in his religion.

It is complete in terms of creed because it is a firmly-established creed based upon the requirements of untainted human nature and sound reasoning.

It is belief in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and destiny, the pleasant and unpleasant aspects thereof.

Allah Almighty says: {The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], "We make no distinction between any of His messengers." And they say: "We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination."} [Sūrat Al-Baqarah: 285]

Belief in Allah as a glorious Lord and true God, with no partner in this, nor in His Names and Attributes.

Belief in Allah as Sovereign and Lawgiver. No rabbi, monk, prince, or king can change any of the rulings of Allah Almighty. The lawful is what Allah made lawful, and the unlawful is what Allah made unlawful and obligations are what Allah made obligatory. No one can reverse His rulings or change His judgments.

Belief in the beginning of the creation and the Day of Judgment. Creation is from Allah and shall return to Him. Mankind's existence and fate shall not come to nothing, without a purpose behind it. Rather, they shall return to their Lord, and they should work and prepare for that return;{And they say: "We hear and we obey. We seek Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the final destination."}[Al-Baqarah: 285]{So whoever does an atom's weight of good shall see it. And whoever does an atom's weight of evil shall see it.}[Al-Zalzalah: 7-8]

Such a creed that accompanies man in all his states must necessarily give him sound guidance in all affairs of his life, thus keeping him steadfast in his abidance by the commands of Allah Almighty.

Islam is complete in terms of worship, as it has legislated for Muslims what makes them reach complete humility and servitude to their Lord; laws and teachings that are varied in their manners and times, so that the purpose for which they were created can be achieved;{I have not created jinn and men except to worship Me}[Al-Dhāriyāt: 56]Prayer is a purely physical act of worship, to be offered either at appointed times, such as the five obligatory prayers and Witr prayer, or at unspecified times,such as the general supererogatory prayers. Through prayer, one connects with his Lord in the most proper manner; purified, decently dressed, and facing the Qiblah (direction of prayer towards Makkah) in humility to Allah Almighty. He seeks closeness to Him by standing in prayer, bowing, prostrating, sitting, and reciting Qur'an, Dhikr, and supplications in those movements and postures. He then exits the prayer with a heart filled with light and faith.

Zakah is a financial act of worship in which a Muslim pays a portion of his wealth in order to draw close to his Lord, purify himself from sins and miserliness, cleanse his wealth, and render benefit to Islam and Muslims.

Fasting is a physical act of worship, but of a different type. It involves abstention from the lusts of eating, drinking, and copulation in order to draw near to Allah by giving up what one desires, and it is a reminder of the favor of Allah Almighty as He enables him to afford the breakfast. It is also a reminder of the conditions of the poor and destitute.

Hajj (pilgrimage) is both physical and financial act of worship in which a Muslim leaves his homeland and family and heads for the House of Allah, seeking closeness to his Lord, extolling His sanctities, and gathering with fellow Muslims from all over the world;{That they may witness benefits for themselves and mention the name of Allah on known days over what He has provided for them of sacrificial animals}[Al-Hajj: 28]

Jihad is also a physical and financial act of worship in which a Muslim offers his life and wealth to draw close to Allah, defend His religion, make His word uppermost, and as mercy towards people perchance they would embrace the religion of Allah or pay the tribute to enjoy the protection of Islam.

These various acts of worship combine for worshipers the loftiest forms of servitude to their Lord, as they boost their faith, deepen their creed, refine their souls, reform their societies, and elevate their ranks in the worldly life and in the Hereafter.

Islam is complete with regard to economy, as it offers the best system for earning, preserving, and spending money. It allows earning money through contracts and labor.

Examples of earning money through contracts include the following:

1. Sale: Islam permitted sale transactions in a way that involves no injustice or usury. Allah Almighty says:{And Allah has permitted trade and forbidden usury}[Al-Baqarah: 275]Indeed, people need to trade money amongst themselves.
2. Partnership: Islam permitted partnership as long as it is based on justice and equality among partners in gains and losses, for partnerships involve cooperation and

mutual help. In a Hadīth, the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said that Allah Almighty said: "I am the third of two partners as long as neither of them cheats the other." [Abu Dāwūd]3. Donations: Islam permitted donations because they bring about affection and benefit the recipient. Allah Almighty says: {But if they give up willingly to you anything of it, then take it in satisfaction and ease}[Al-Nisā': 4]

Examples of earning money through labor include the following:

1. Cultivation: Islam permitted it as it develops the land, grows food, and benefits those who work in it. Allah Almighty says: {It is He who made the earth subservient for you - so walk among its slopes and eat of His provision - and to Him is the resurrection.}[Al-Mulk: 15]The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "No one has ever eaten food better than what his own hands have earned. Indeed, the Prophet of Allah, Dāwūd (David), used to eat from the earnings of his own hands." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "No Muslim plants a plant or sows a crop; so a person, a bird, or an animal eats from it except that he will have the reward of charity for it." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]2. Hunting, collecting grass, and extracting pearls and the like from the sea. Allah Almighty says: {Lawful to you is game from the sea and its food as provision for you and the travelers, but forbidden to you is game from the land so long as you are on pilgrimage}[Al-Mā'idah: 96]He also says: {And it is He who subjected for you the sea to eat from it tender meat and extract from it ornaments which you wear}[Al-Nahl: 14]

Islam regulated the preservation of wealth by a variety of means, for money is a means of sustenance for people and it serves both their worldly and religious interests.

Examples of this include the following:

1. Islam prevents people from giving money to the feeble-minded who do not spend it properly. Allah Almighty says: {And do not give the weak-minded your property, which Allah has made a means of sustenance for you}[Al-Nisā': 5]If it is given to them, it will be tampered with and lost.2. People are commanded to bring witnesses to their sale transactions. Allah Almighty says: {And take witnesses when you conclude a contract}[Al-Baqarah: 282]Failure to bring witnesses causes the loss of money of either partner in case of the other partner's denial. Islam regulated the spending of money and gave great care to it, prohibiting people from wastefulness. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Allah dislikes three things for you: idle talk, wasting money, and persistent questioning." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]Islam also prohibited both extravagance and stinginess. Allah Almighty says: {And do not make your hand chained to your neck nor extend it completely and thereby become blamed and insolvent}[Al-Isrā': 29]

Islam laid down two types of spending: obligatory and recommended.

Examples of obligatory spending include the following:

1. Zakah (alms): It is a fixed share in assets on which Zakah is payable, to be given to those who are entitled to receive Zakah. Allah Almighty says: {And establish prayer and give Zakah}[Al-Baqarah: 43]The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Islam was built on five pillars: testifying that there is no deity worthy of worship but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing prayer, giving Zakah, performing Hajj, and fasting (the month of) Ramadan." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]We have previously pointed out the wisdom behind Zakah.2. Spending on oneself, one's wife, and one's kin. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Your self has a right upon you..." About spending on one's wife, Allah Almighty says: {and the father of the child shall bear the cost of the mother's food and clothing on a reasonable basis}[Al-Baqarah: 233]Regarding spending on one's kin, He says: {And give the relative his right, and the poor and the traveler, and do not spend wastefully. Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and Satan has ever been ungrateful to his Lord}[Al-Isrā': 26-27]

The wisdom behind making spending obligatory is to preserve lives and console those who are needy.

3. Obligatory spending due to an emergency to address a necessity, such as feeding a hungry person and clothing a person who has no clothes. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Feed the hungry, visit the sick, and release of captives." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]

The wisdom behind the obligation of spending here is to save the inviolable person, address a necessity, and to have a sense of responsibility towards helpless fellow Muslims.

Examples of recommended spending include the following:

1. Charity to the poor other than Zakah. Allah Almighty says: {Indeed, the men who give in charity and the women who give in charity and have loaned Allah a goodly loan - it will be multiplied for them, and they will have a noble reward} [Al-Hadīd: 18] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "He who gives in charity the value of a date which was lawfully earned – and Allah only accepts what is lawfully earned – Allah will accept it with His right hand and will nurture it for him, just as one of you nurtures his foal, until it becomes like a mountain." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim] 2. Spending on public interests, like building mosques, schools, and maintaining roads. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqās (may Allah be pleased with him): "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." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

The wisdom behind such recommended spending is that a Muslim draws close to Allah, purifies himself and his wealth, and fulfills the needs of Muslims.

Islam is complete in terms of social affairs, as it regulates society in a manner that guarantees the wellbeing of the nation. It regulates both family and public relations.

Examples of the regulation of family relations include the following:

1. The duty of being kind to one's parents in words and deeds, and being patient with the hardship of taking care of them. Allah Almighty says: {And your Lord has decreed that you do not worship except Him, and to parents, good treatment. Whether one or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them so much as, "uff" [expression of anger or disgust] and do not repel them, but speak to them a noble word. And lower to them the wing of humility out of mercy and say: "My Lord, have mercy upon them as they brought me up when I was small."} [Al-Isrā': 23-24] In addition, Islam prohibited undutiful treatment of parents by failing to fulfill the duty of kindness to them. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Shall I inform you of the gravest of the major sins?" He repeated this three times. They said: "Yes, please do, O Messenger of Allah." He said: "Ascribing partners to Allah and unkindness to parents." He was reclining so he sat up and said: "Beware of false statements and false testimony." He kept repeating this so many times that they wished he would stop. [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim] 2. The duty of upholding kinship ties. Allah Almighty says: {And give the relative his right} [Al-Isrā': 26] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should uphold his ties of kinship." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim] In addition, Islam prohibited the severing of kinship ties. Allah Almighty says: {So would you perhaps, if you turned away, cause corruption on earth and sever your ties of kinship? Those [who do so] are the ones that Allah has cursed, so He deafened them and blinded their vision.} [Muhammad: 22-23] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever severs them - i.e. kinship ties - Allah will make Paradise forbidden for him." [Narrated by Ahmad] 3. Regulating marital relationships. Islam laid down certain regulations for marriage in terms of its contracting and dissolution and rights based on wisdom, excellence, and lack of disorder. It ordained each spouse to treat the other kindly in a way that brings about a sound and happy married life, and it clarified how problems between the two can be solved, sometimes by reconciliation, and others by sacrifice, and sometimes by arbitration.

Examples of the regulation of general relations include the following:

1. Gathering for worship on a daily, weekly, and annual basis. This affirms bonds within society and boosts friendliness, love, and cooperation. Muslims gather for the five prayers every day, Friday prayer every week, and Eid prayer every year; and Hajj is an annual gathering for all Muslims.

2. The duty of acting justly, which means that rights must be given to those to whom they are due, without prejudice or deviance. Allah Almighty says: {Be just; that is nearer to righteousness.} [Al-Mā'idah: 8] It is also part of justice that we treat others in the way we would like them to treat us. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "No one of you believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself." 3. The duty to be truthful and fulfill covenants. Allah

Almighty says:{O you who believe, fear Allah and be with those who are true.}[Al-Tawbah: 119]He also says:{And fulfill the covenant. Surely you will be questioned your covenants.}[Al-Isrā': 34]4. The duty to fulfill contracts. Allah Almighty says:{O you who believe, fulfill contracts.}[Al-Mā'idah: 1]The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:"Both parties in a business transaction have the right to annul it so long as they have not separated. If they are honest and truthful, their transaction will be blessed for them, and if they conceal something and tell lies, the blessing of their transaction will be wiped out."[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]5. Muslims are urged to do everything that brings about love and amicability amongst themselves. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:"You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I tell you of something which, if you do it, will make you love one another? Spread (the greeting of) peace amongst yourselves."[Narrated by Muslim]

In addition, Islam warned against everything that runs counter to these lofty purposes and noble manners.

It warned against injustice. Allah Almighty says:{And Allah does not like the wrongdoers.}[Āl-'Imrān: 57]In a Qudsi Hadīth, Allah Almighty said: "O My servants, I have forbidden injustice for Myself and made it forbidden amongst you; so, do not wrong one another."[Narrated by Muslim]Islam also forbade treachery. Allah Almighty says:{And do not break oaths after their confirmation while you have made Allah a witness over you.}[Al-Nahl: 91]The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "When Allah will gather on the Day of Judgment all the earlier and later generations of mankind, a flag will be raised for every betrayer, and it will be announced: This is the betrayal of so and so, son of so and so."[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]It warned against lying. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:"Beware of lying, for indeed lying leads to immorality, and immorality leads to Hellfire, and a man would continue to lie and be keen on lying until he is recorded in the sight of Allah as a liar."[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]Islam forbade everything that causes hostility and disunity. Allah Almighty says:{O you who believe, let not a people ridicule another people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule other women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call one another by offensive nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after one's faith. And whoever does not repent - it is those who are the wrongdoers. O you who believe, avoid much negative assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother while he is dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.}[Al-Hujurāt: 11-12]The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:"Do not envy one another, do not raise prices by overbidding against one another, do not hate one another, do not turn your backs on one another, and do not undercut one another in trade; but be, O slaves of Allah, as brothers. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; he does not wrong him, he does not fail him (when he needs him), and he does not show contempt for him. Piety lies here - and he pointed to his chest three times. It is enough evil for a Muslim to hold his Muslim brother in contempt. All of a Muslim is inviolable to another Muslim: his blood, his property, and his honor."[Narrated by Muslim]

{And do not break oaths after their confirmation while you have made Allah a witness over you.}

[Al-Nahl: 91]

The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "When Allah will gather on the Day of Judgment all the earlier and later generations of mankind, a flag will be raised for every betrayer, and it will be announced: This is the betrayal of so and so, son of so and so."

[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri]

It warned against lying. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"Beware of lying, for indeed lying leads to immorality, and immorality leads to Hellfire, and a man would continue to lie and be keen on lying until he is recorded in the sight of Allah as a liar."

[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

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{O you who believe, let not a people ridicule another people; perhaps they may be better than them; nor let women ridicule other women; perhaps they may be better than them. And do not insult one another and do not call one another by offensive nicknames. Wretched is the name of disobedience after one's faith. And whoever does not repent - it is those who are the wrongdoers. O you who believe, avoid much negative assumption. Indeed, some assumption is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other. Would one of you like to eat the flesh of his brother while he is dead? You would detest it. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is Accepting of repentance and Merciful.}

[Al-Hujurāt: 11-12]

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"Do not envy one another, do not raise prices by overbidding against one another, do not hate one another, do not turn your backs on one another, and do not undercut one another in trade; but be, O slaves of Allah, as brothers. A Muslim is the brother of a Muslim; he does not wrong him, he does not fail him (when he needs him), and he does not show contempt for him. Piety lies here - and he pointed to his chest three times. It is enough evil for a Muslim to hold his Muslim brother in contempt. All of a Muslim is inviolable to another Muslim: his blood, his property, and his honor."

[Narrated by Muslim]

As this valuable social guidance reforms society, it also reforms religious matters and brings abundant reward in the Hereafter.

Islam is complete in terms of politics. It regulates domestic and foreign policies in the most perfect manner, in addition to serving people's interests. Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: "If a person considers the Shariah and its perfection and the fact that it serves people's interests with regard to worldly and religious affairs, and that it has come with justice for everyone, and that no justice is better than its justice and the interests it achieves are higher than any other interest, he will conclude that just policy is part of it and one of its branches; and if a person acquires thorough knowledge of its objectives, puts them in the proper position, and understands them well, he will not need any other policy whatsoever along with it."

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Domestic policy rests on four foundations:

- a. The relationship between the ruler and the ruled.
 - b. Preserving moral values.
 - c. Maintaining security.
 - d. Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong.
- a. In the relationship between the ruler and the ruled, each side has a role to play:

The role of the ruler:

1. Sincerity in governance by choosing the best and most effective way for achieving the worldly and religious interests of the subjects. He does not implement something while the people's best interest lies in preventing it, and he does not prevent something while the people's best interest lies in implementing it. He only assigns tasks to those who are qualified for them, and he does not appoint someone for a job if there is another person who is more qualified for it. Allah Almighty says: {Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due} [Al-Nisā': 58] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Any ruler who is given control over the affairs of Muslims

then does not strive diligently for their betterment and does not serve them sincerely will not enter Paradise with them.”[Narrated by Muslim]He also said:“Whoever hires a man from a group of people who include someone who is more pleasing to Allah than him has betrayed Allah, betrayed His Messenger, and betrayed the believers.”[Narrated by Al-Hākim; he said its Isnād is authentic]2. Justice among the subjects in implementing the divine rulings such that no one is favored with regards to establishing truth and justice. Allah Almighty says:{Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever All-Hearing, All-Seeing.}[Al-Nisā’: 58]The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: “If Fātimah, daughter of Muhammad, committed theft, I would cut off her hand.”[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

and he does not prevent something while the people’s best interest lies in implementing it.

He only assigns tasks to those who are qualified for them,

and he does not appoint someone for a job if there is another person who is more qualified for it. Allah Almighty says:

{Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due}

[Al-Nisā’: 58]

The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said:

“Any ruler who is given control over the affairs of Muslims then does not strive diligently for their betterment and does not serve them sincerely will not enter Paradise with them.”

[Narrated by Muslim]

He also said:

“Whoever hires a man from a group of people who include someone who is more pleasing to Allah than him has betrayed Allah, betrayed His Messenger, and betrayed the believers.”

[Narrated by Al-Hākim; he said its Isnād is authentic]

2. Justice among the subjects in implementing the divine rulings such that no one is favored with regards to establishing truth and justice. Allah Almighty says:

{Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice. Excellent is that which Allah instructs you. Indeed, Allah is ever All-Hearing, All-Seeing.}

[Al-Nisā’: 58]

The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said: “If Fātimah, daughter of Muhammad, committed theft, I would cut off her hand.”

[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

The role of the ruled:

1. Sincerely advising and guiding the ruler to the best means that achieve the purpose. The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said:“Verily, Allah likes three things for you: that you worship Him and not associate anything with Him, that you hold fast onto the rope of Allah, all of you, and not be disunited, and that you sincerely advise those Allah put in authority over you.”[Narrated by Muslim]2. Obeying the ruler where there is no disobedience to Allah. Allah Almighty says:{O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you}[Al-Nisā’: 59]If he commands something involving disobedience to Allah, then he must not be listened to or obeyed, for no created being is to be obeyed where disobedience to the Creator is involved. The Prophet (may Allah’s peace and blessings be upon him) said:“A Muslim person must listen and obey concerning what he likes and hates, unless he is ordered to commit a sin. If he is ordered to commit a sin, then he should neither listen nor obey.”[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]3. Patiently enduring the ruler’s

injustice and oppression. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever sees something which he dislikes on the part of his leader should be patient, for whoever departs the group (even) for the distance of a span will die as one belonging to Jāhiliyyah (pre-Islamic time of ignorance)." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim] Through this relationship between the ruler and the ruled, order prevails, the pillars of the state are established, and this Prophetic statement materializes: "The best of your rulers are those whom you love and who love you, who invoke Allah's blessings upon you and you invoke His blessings upon them." [Narrated by Muslim]

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[Narrated by Muslim]

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{O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you}

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If he commands something involving disobedience to Allah, then he must not be listened to or obeyed, for no created being is to be obeyed where disobedience to the Creator is involved. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:

"A Muslim person must listen and obey concerning what he likes and hates, unless he is ordered to commit a sin. If he is ordered to commit a sin, then he should neither listen nor obey."

[Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim]

3. Patiently enduring the ruler's injustice and oppression. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said:

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[Narrated by Muslim]

b. Moral values:

Moral values are the strong pillar for the continuation of the Ummah and the elevation of its glory. No nation rises without morals. That is why Islam pays utmost attention to these values and nurtures them in society by all possible means. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) urged and encouraged us to uphold these values and informed us that Allah Almighty sent him to perfect noble morals.

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In addition, Islam set the limits that deter people from destroying these morals, as manifest in the following examples:

1. The penalty for adultery: adultery destroys morality, violates honor, and causes mingling of lineages. Hence, Islam laid down stoning to death as the punishment for adultery if the perpetrator is married. If he/she is unmarried, the punishment is 100 lashes and banishment for a one-year

period. Allah Almighty says: {The woman or man found guilty of illegitimate sexual intercourse - lash each one of them with a hundred lashes, and do not be taken by pity for them in the religion of Allah, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day.} [Al-Nūr: 2] The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "(If) a virgin (commits adultery) with a virgin, (the punishment will be) one hundred lashes and exile for a year..." [Narrated by Muslim] 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Stoning in the Book of Allah is prescribed against a married man or woman who commits adultery if there is evidence, pregnancy, or confession." [Narrated by Al-Bukhāri and Muslim] 2. The penalty for sodomy: Sodomy is a heinous immoral crime and a major catastrophe, which destroys manhood, corrupts society, breaks people's spirits, and spoils worldly and religious affairs. Therefore, its punishment is execution under every circumstance. The perpetrator and the one to whom it is done are to be executed. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) said: "Whoever you find doing what the people of Lūt did, then kill the one who does it and the one to whom it is done." [Narrated by Abu Dāwūd, Al-Tirmidhi, Al-Nasā'i, and Ibn Mājah. Ibn Hibbān judged it to be authentic, and it fulfills the conditions of Al-Bukhāri] Ibn al-Qayyim reported the view of the majority of scholars that both are to be executed. For his part, Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, in his book Al-Siyāsah al-Shar'iyyah, cited the Companions' consensus on killing both persons, and that they did not differ over this ruling; rather, their difference of opinion was regarding the method of killing them. 3. The penalty for drinking wine: Wine refers to every intoxicant. Given the harm it causes to the body, religion, and society, and the fact that it leads to the commission of terrible crimes. Islam laid down a deterrent penalty for it, as authentically reported from the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and established by Muslim consensus. Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: "A man who had drunk alcohol was brought to the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) and he gave the man about forty lashes with two palm branches. Abu Bakr did the same, but when 'Umar became the Caliph, he consulted the people, and 'Abdur-Rahmān ibn 'Awf said: 'The lightest prescribed punishment is eighty (lashes).' So, 'Umar gave his commands accordingly." [Narrated by Muslim]

If he/she is unmarried, the punishment is 100 lashes and banishment for a one-year period.

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{The woman or man found guilty of illegitimate sexual intercourse - lash each one of them with a hundred lashes, and do not be taken by pity for them in the religion of Allah, if you should believe in Allah and the Last Day.}

[Al-Nūr: 2]

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There are requirements for these punishments to be executed. For a person to be punished, he must be a sane adult. An insane person or a minor should be deterred from committing such crimes in a way that suits them.

c. Maintaining security:

As security is the foundation of stability in which a person can devote himself to the fulfillment of his religious and worldly duties, Islam gave great care to it in terms of securing lives, property, and honor, and laid down certain principles that serve this purpose:

1. With regard to lives, Islam established legal retribution for killing and less serious crimes. Allah Almighty says:{O you who believe, prescribed for you is legal retribution for those murdered} [Al-Baqarah: 178]Regarding less serious crimes, He says:{And an eye for an eye, a nose for a nose, an ear for an ear, a tooth for a tooth, and for wounds is legal retribution}[Al-Mā’idah: 45]Establishing legal retribution is the best deterrent against crime. Allah Almighty says:{And there is for you in legal retribution [saving of] life, O you of understanding, that you may become righteous.}[Al-Baqarah: 179]If a would-be criminal knew that he would be subject to legal retribution, he would not commit his crime. This is why the countries where legal retribution is not applied see a high rate of crime.2. Regarding property, Islam made obligatory the penalty of hand-cutting for thieves, as an exemplary punishment. Allah Almighty says:{As for the thief - male or female - cut off the hands of both. This is a recompense for what they have done as an exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise.}[Al-Mā’idah: 38]This penalty is a strong deterrent against committing theft.3. With regard to honor, Islam laid down the obligatory punishment of 80 lashes against the slanderer of a chaste man or woman. Allah Almighty says:{And those who accuse chaste women and then do not produce four witnesses - lash them with eighty lashes.}[Al-Nūr: 4]

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[Al-Nūr: 4]

Execution of these legal retributions and punishments is quite effective in safeguarding people's lives, property, and honor.

d. Enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong:

This is a firm foundation upon which domestic policy rests. What is right is what the Shariah recognizes as right and approves it and what is wrong is what it prohibits and disapproves of. This foundation is the best pillar to support this policy, and it encompasses the preceding and other foundations. It is a privilege by which this Ummah is given superiority over all other nations. Allah Almighty says: {You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong} [Āl-'Imrān: 110] Furthermore, it unites the Ummah and reforms its religious and worldly affairs, and its absence leads to chaos in ideology, beliefs, and actions, as well as the division of people into different religious sects, with each sect rejoicing in what they have. Allah Almighty says: {And let there be a nation arising from you inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful. And do not be like those who became divided and differed after the clear proofs had come to them. And they will have a great punishment.} [Āl-'Imrān: 104-105]

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[Āl-'Imrān: 104-105]

As for foreign policy, namely the relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, Islam has divided this into three categories:

First: Warring non-Muslims:

We are required to fight them to make Islam dominant so that no one can prevent its call or rise up against it. Allah Almighty says: {And fight with them until there is no more persecution and religion

should be only for Allah.}[Al-Anfāl: 39]In case we fight them, we should treat them as commanded by our Lord, Who says:{So when you meet [in battle] those who disbelieve, strike their necks until, when you have inflicted slaughter upon them, then secure their bonds, and either confer favor afterwards or ransom them until the war lays down its burdens.}[Muhammad: 4]

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[Muhammad: 4]

We may also kill them after taking them into captivity if this serves an interest. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) killed Al-Nadr ibn al-Hārith and 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'īt after the Battle of Badr while in captivity.

The wisdom behind fighting them is to make the word of Allah supreme on His earth and show mercy to those disbelievers by subjecting them to the religion of Islam or their conversion to it.

Second: Non-Muslims with whom a treaty is made:

We are required to fulfill the treaty with them, as long as they uphold it, do not fail us in any way, and do not support anyone against us. Allah Almighty says:{Excepted are those with whom you made a treaty among the polytheists and then they have not failed you in anything or supported anyone against you; so complete for them their treaty until their term has ended. Indeed, Allah loves the righteous.}[Al-Tawbah: 4]If it is feared that they would break the treaty, they should be notified of canceling the treaty. It may not be canceled before notifying them, for this would be an act of betrayal. Allah Almighty says:{If you fear from a people betrayal, throw their treaty back to them, putting you on equal terms. Indeed, Allah does not like traitors.}[Al-Anfāl: 58]But if they break the treaty, it becomes obligatory to fight them. Allah Almighty says:{And if they break their oaths after their treaty and defame your religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief, for indeed, there are no oaths sacred to them; [fight them that] they might cease.}[Al-Tawbah: 12]

{Excepted are those with whom you made a treaty among the polytheists and then they have not failed you in anything or supported anyone against you; so complete for them their treaty until their term has ended. Indeed, Allah loves the righteous.}

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If it is feared that they would break the treaty, they should be notified of canceling the treaty. It may not be canceled before notifying them, for this would be an act of betrayal. Allah Almighty says:

{If you fear from a people betrayal, throw their treaty back to them, putting you on equal terms. Indeed, Allah does not like traitors.}

[Al-Anfāl: 58]

But if they break the treaty, it becomes obligatory to fight them. Allah Almighty says:

{And if they break their oaths after their treaty and defame your religion, then fight the leaders of disbelief, for indeed, there are no oaths sacred to them; [fight them that] they might cease.}

[Al-Tawbah: 12]

The wisdom behind the permissibility of entering into such a treaty is that necessity might call for it, like when the Muslims are few in number, weak, or expecting reinforcements.

Third: Non-Muslims living under Muslim protection (Dhimmīs):

They are those who pay the tribute in return for their stay in Muslim land under the protection of the Muslim state. It is an obligation to fulfill the conditions agreed upon with them, as long as they do not break the agreement. Allah Almighty says: {Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the tribute willingly while they are humbled.} [Al-Tawbah: 29] Buraydah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: Whenever the Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) sent a commander over a military expedition, he would say: "When you meet your enemy of polytheists, call them to three things. If they agree to any of them, then accept it from them and refrain from fighting them. Call them to Islam. If they agree, accept it from them and refrain from fighting them. But if they refuse, call them to pay the tribute. If they agree, accept it from them and refrain from fighting them. But if they refuse, seek help from Allah and fight them." [Narrated by Muslim and Abu Dāwūd - abridged]

{Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the tribute willingly while they are humbled.}

[Al-Tawbah: 29]

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[Narrated by Muslim and Abu Dāwūd - abridged]

The agreement with Dhimmīs involves certain requirements and rulings tackled by the scholars. We will not touch upon them here for the sake of brevity.

e. Muslims taking pride in their religion:

Given the aforementioned great characteristics of Islam, it becomes clear that Muslims should be proud of their religion and should protect and defend it:

1. Allah Almighty informs us that honor belongs to the believers, and He prohibits them from showing weakness or humiliation while they are superior. He says: {But honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and to the Believers} [Al-Mu'minūn: 8] He also says: {So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.} [Āl-'Imrān: 139] 2. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) warned against imitating non-Muslims. He said: "Whoever imitates a people is one of them."

{But honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and to the Believers}

[Al-Mu'minūn: 8]

He also says:

{So do not weaken and do not grieve, and you will be superior if you are [true] believers.}

[Āl-'Imrān: 139]

2. The Prophet (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him) warned against imitating non-Muslims. He said:

"Whoever imitates a people is one of them."

This means that a Muslim should be independent and distinct from the wrongful disbelievers, and he should not be a follower of others; rather, he should be a leader to be followed.

3. Islam is the religion which Allah Almighty has perfected and approved for His servants until the Day of Judgment. In the Qur'an, He says: {This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed

My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.}[al-Mā'idah: 3]4. Islam prevails over all religions, has an authority over them, and includes all the good things contained in them. Allah Almighty says:{And We have revealed to you the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and has the authority over it.}[Al-Mā'idah: 48]5. Adherence to Islam leads to happiness in this world and the Hereafter. Allah Almighty says:{Whoever does righteousness, whether male or female, while he is a believer - We will surely cause him to live a good life, and We will surely give them their reward according to the best of what they used to do.}[Al-Nahl: 97]

{This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion.}

[al-Mā'idah: 3]

4. Islam prevails over all religions, has an authority over them, and includes all the good things contained in them. Allah Almighty says:

{And We have revealed to you the Book in truth, confirming that which preceded it of the Scripture and has the authority over it.}

[Al-Mā'idah: 48]

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[Al-Nahl: 97]

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and all his Companions.

Muhammad ibn Sālih al-'Uthaymīn

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