

Comprehensiveness of The Islamic ‘Aqeedah

One of the most critical and essential aspects of the Islamic ‘aqeedah is its comprehensiveness. The ‘aqeedah provides practical solutions for all problems that can arise in any aspect of life. On the individual level, the ‘aqeedah provides a definitive answer to all of the fundamental questions of human existence and gives clear concepts on what preceded life, what will transpire after life, as well as the purpose of life. Through this comprehensive set of concepts the Muslim, upon adopting the Islamic ‘aqeedah, has a clear connection with what is before and after life. Such a solid connection lays the foundation for a clear understanding of the Muslim’s purpose in life and a clear direction of how to proceed in life.

The Islamic ‘aqeedah is decisive in its concepts because it establishes the correct understanding upon clear, undisputed evidence arrived at by intellectual thought. Only through this intellectual process can the person fully understand the Islamic ‘aqeedah and absorb its implications. Through this process, Islam ensures that those who adopt the Islamic ‘aqeedah do so through full intellectual conviction that will establish a unique and comprehensive perspective on life. The comprehensive perspective produced by the Islamic ‘aqeedah manifests in the high intellectual and enlightened thought of the Muslim as well as in his noble conduct and behavior. Upon attaining the realisation of his position and purpose, the Muslim perceives the universe and everything within their correct context as creations of Allah (swt), and this clear vision frees his mind from the shackles of blind faith, imitation and shallow concepts that provide no clear answers. With a clear vision of his purpose, the Muslim is freed from the chains of living like an animal that lives only to satisfy its instinctive needs, freed from spiraling through life with uncertainty and doubt, and elevated to the status of living his life and conducting his affairs according to the commandments of Allah (swt) with full realisation of his position as a servant of Allah (swt). And instead of confining his horizons to chasing worldly desires and images, the Muslim’s horizons extend beyond the narrow confines of the worldly life to yearn for the pleasure of Allah (swt). Consequently, the Muslim with the clear understanding of the Islamic ‘aqeedah shapes his life, his actions, his thoughts and his emotions in submission to Allah (swt) for the hope of attaining His pleasure and avoiding His punishment.

Without this clear understanding, doubt would enter the mind. In the presence of doubt, the person would never attain the full realisation and conviction in the Islamic ‘aqeedah. If the ‘aqeedah is established with any amount of doubt or uncertainty, then that doubt will ultimately manifest in the actions, the thinking, and the behaviour of the individual. A Muslim with doubt in his ‘aqeedah would proceed through life in a haphazard, unfocused way, unsure of what action to take, and unclear in understanding the reasons behind certain actions. The ideas and concepts that such a person would adopt would contradict each other and such contradiction would only create confusion and uncertainty. In order to have a clear understanding of his purpose in life a clear direction as to how to proceed in life, the Islamic ‘aqeedah demands that the Muslim adopts it based upon decisive proof established upon an intellectual foundation.

Such a clear, comprehensive ‘aqeedah also establishes the basis of the Islamic society, unifies the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the society, and provides the society with a clear and unshakable foundation that gives it a clear, well-defined direction and agenda. The Islamic ‘aqeedah provides the sole source of rules and systems for the society, the sole source of solutions, the sole standard of measurement, and the sole source of concepts and culture. Because of this clear, comprehensive foundation, the Islamic society established solely upon the Islamic ‘aqeedah has a clear direction and purpose which leads it to advance and progress through life without any hindrance and prevents any foreign entity or thought from invading its body. Because the Islamic ‘aqeedah is comprehensive, then its limits are fixed and not subject to change; any need to change, revise, or alter the ‘aqeedah indicates a flaw in the ‘aqeedah itself, which is grounds for dismissing it as the correct creed. Similarly, if the ‘aqeedah encounters an issue or situation that it does not cover, then such an inability implies the ‘aqeedah is not comprehensive and correct. Because the Islamic ‘aqeedah is proven correct and comprehensive, then the Muslims must adopt it and submit to its limits and standards with full submission.

Someone may argue that life has changed, and that the world many centuries ago is nothing like today's world of supercomputers, information highways, space exploration and scientific progress. Based upon this, those individuals see no sense in restricting themselves to the divine limits set by Islam. Such an argument has no basis because it fails to distinguish between what the 'aqeedah came to address and what things are universal regardless of the ideas and concepts. Islam addresses the human being, the human being's position in life and provides systems to regulate human beings as individuals and as societies. Because the human being (the aspect that Islam addresses) has not changed, then Islam does not need to change. Humans have certain instincts and needs that manifest in several drives. The survival instinct manifests in the drive to dominate, the need to acquire wealth and have luxury items, and the drive to protect the self and the personal interests. Also, human have sexual instincts that create attraction between the sexes, as well as instincts of kind that manifest in family relationships and humans looking out for one another. All human beings share these attributes regardless of time and place because these attributes are characteristic of the nature of humans that Allah (swt) has created humanity with.

When human beings live together in a society, these needs and instincts result in a myriad of relationships which need a system to organise them. Any system that emanates from human beings will suffer from the limitations, flaws and constraints characteristic of the human minds who designed them, and will only lead to confusion and doubt resulting from incorrect answers as well as oppression and misery resulting from incorrect systems. Because Islam emanates from the Creator, then its 'aqeedah is comprehensive and it gives the human being a clear perspective on life. Also, the system that emanates from this 'aqeedah, because it stems from the Creator, will be comprehensive. The Islamic System recognises these basic needs and instincts of the human being and regulates them with a divine system that keeps him satisfied and tranquil in this life and in the Hereafter. The limits, drawn by Islam, are the milestones that differentiate the Muslim society from any other society because no one in a Muslim society has any authority to alter these limits. The 'aqeedah defined intellectual milestones within which the mind can be unleashed, and defined behavioral milestones within which a person is free as long as he does not transgress those limits. Anyone who transgresses these limits is punished to protect the 'aqeedah as well as the integrity of the society.

When Islam came, the Arab world was a world devoid of thoughts except primitive thoughts like tribalism, nationalism and idolatry. They were a little people steeped in backwardness and played upon by the superpowers at the time. After Islam was revealed, the Arabs rose from the depths of tribalism and backwardness to a superpower established upon a clear 'aqeedah which soon dominated the world for over thirteen centuries. The Islamic 'aqeedah unified the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of people of different nationalities and culture into the Islamic culture and thought, and based upon this 'aqeedah, the Islamic society had a message that it carried to the entire world. This message was well understood by the companion Rib'ii ibn Amir when he said to Rustum, the Persian commander, "Allah sent us to take the people away from worshipping one another to worship Allah, and from the discomfort of this world to its comfort, and from the oppression of religions to the justice of Islam...."

All of the problems that the Islamic Ummah suffers from result from a lack of understanding the comprehensive nature of the Islamic 'aqeedah. Many false ideas and perceptions regarding the Islamic 'aqeedah still linger in the Ummah and stand as obstacles towards the correct understanding of Islam. Some Muslims claim that nobody needs to obey and follow the divine commands and prohibitions because "the belief is in the 'heart' and as long as the 'heart' is 'clean', Allah will grant us paradise". Others claim that pleasing Allah (swt) takes nothing but good morals. Another group claims that Islam is nothing more than praying and fasting, or a few rituals that have no effect on life. Others claim that Islam allows a person to simultaneously be a Muslim and a Nationalist, or a Muslim and a patriot to a certain piece of land, or a Muslim and a Capitalist, or even a Muslim and a Communist.

These people do not realise that Islam conflicts with all other ideologies. Allah (swt) says clearly in the Qur'an:

“There is nothing after the Truth (Islam) but Falsehood.”

[TMQ Yunus 10:32]

“Nay, We hurl the Truth against the Falsehood, so it knocks out its brains, and behold, the Falsehood vanishes.” [TMQ Al-Anbiya' 21:18]

Because Islam is the Truth, then anything else constitutes falsehood — be it Communism, Capitalism, Nationalism, Democracy or Freedom. And because truth and falsehood will battle each other, then it is inconceivable for them to coexist. No one can adhere to truth and falsehood simultaneously without contradicting the clear ayat in the Qur'an.

Other Muslims are constrained by their immediate horizons and think from a shortsighted perspective. They believe that the way to uplift this Ummah from the pit of ignorance is to raise Muslim children according to Islam and once the Islamic upbringing is accomplished, the Islamic Ummah will be leading the world again. Others think that the way to solve the problems of the Ummah is through attacking the strategic establishments of the enemies of Islam. Others think that acquiring some authority in the non-Islamic ruling systems would provide the Ummah with the means to restore the dignity and glory of the Islamic Ummah.

As a result of a lack of understanding of the Islamic 'aqeedah comprehensively, many of these shortsighted ideas, as well as those who champion them, are leading the Islamic Ummah. Unless the Muslims revisit their 'aqeedah and understand it in the correct manner as a comprehensive creed, then the Islamic Ummah will continue to remain in its state of ignorance and backwardness. Those who fool themselves into thinking that the change will come by itself and all they have to do is wait, should understand that the way to change is by changing what is within the Ummah (their thoughts, emotions and the systems applied upon them) to be in accordance with their 'aqeeda. Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an:

“Allah does not change the conditions of a people unless they change what it within themselves.” [TMQ Ar-Ra'd 13:11]

The Muslims must establish the Islamic 'aqeedah intellectually because Allah (swt) orders humans to examine their surroundings with intellect and warns against those people who follow and adopt certain ideas blindly or through imitation and guessing:

“Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of the night and the day, there are signs for men of

understanding.” [TMQ Al-'Imran 3:190]

“They say, ‘Enough for us are the ways we found our forefathers following.’ What! Even though their fathers had no knowledge whatsoever and no guidance?” [TMQ Al-Ma'idah 5:104]

Once the human being believes firmly that no one is worthy of worship but Allah (swt), that Allah (swt) created the whole universe, as well as being al-Hakim, then he will submit all of his thoughts, actions, feelings and standards to this idea. Along with this conviction in the existence and uniqueness of Allah (swt) comes the belief in the Prophethood of Muhammad (saw) by establishing that the Qur'an is a miracle based upon definitive proof. Allah (swt) challenges humanity to bring about a piece of literature equal to the Qur'an:

“Say, ‘Bring then a Surah like unto it, and call anyone you can (to your aid), besides Allah, if you are truthful.’” [TMQ Yunus 10:38]

Because the Qur'an is in Arabic, and the Arabs themselves failed in meeting this challenge, such a fact establishes proof that the Qur'an is a miracle. Allah (swt) in many other ayat challenged both Jinns and humans to bring something like it, and such a challenge will never be met.

Once the Muslim adopts this 'aqeedah, then his entire outlook on life should change, and such a revolutionary change should reflect in the manner in which he proceeds through life. The Muslim believes that none is worthy of worship except Allah (swt) and that, as a human being, he needs Allah (swt) to provide him with the correct answers and the correct system to organise his life and thoughts. Based upon this, the Muslim turns to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet (saw) as the source of guidance in this life. The Prophet's life is an integral and inseparable part of the Islamic 'aqeedah; Allah (swt) revealed Islam, and He (swt) chose the Prophet (saw) as the means of explaining and outlining Islam and the Islamic system. Without the Prophet's life, Islam remains a philosophy that has no place in this world. With this understanding, the Muslim develops a unique personality. He proceeds through life based on the commands and prohibitions of Allah (swt); he despises and avoids what Islam prohibits, and loves what Allah (swt) loves. Regardless of his circumstances, the Muslim submits to the Islamic 'aqeedah, and he works to change the circumstances around him to submit to the 'aqeedah of Islam after realising that Allah (swt) revealed Islam because He wants the world to be in a certain shape.

The Prophet Muhammad (saw), during the very early stages of the da'wah, was told by Allah (swt) that Islam was meant to change the entire world when He revealed the second surah:

“And this (Islam) is but a thikr (a reminder, a message, a warning) for the worlds.” [TMQ Al-Qalam 68:52]

At that time, the Sahabah (ra) did not exceed a dozen Muslims, yet they understood that the Islamic 'aqeedah would encompass all humanity in all of its affairs, establishing the comprehensive nature of the 'aqeedah during the early stages of Islam. Such a fact implied that the Islamic 'aqeedah was both spiritual and political in its nature, spiritual by answering the questions of what is before and after this life, and political by providing a system to proceed through life. Because of its comprehensive 'aqeedah, Islam by its nature would change the face of the world by demolishing the existing systems and establishing itself as a complete system encompassing all aspects of life. As a result, such a change was political by its nature, and the political dimension of the da'wah immediately manifested itself. Ayat in the Qur'an were revealed attacking the political leaders, the systems, the prevailing ideas and thoughts, and the culture of the Makkah society. The Prophet (saw) proceeded in Makkah with the eventual aim of establishing Islam, and he finally succeeded in Madinah by establishing the first Islamic State. Through this mechanism, the Prophet (saw) was able to implement the Islamic 'aqeedah comprehensively, as well as to carry the Islamic 'aqeedah to the entire world. Through this process, the Prophet (saw) established a specific method for adopting the Islamic 'aqeedah, carrying it, as well as establishing it in its totality.

Allah (swt) mentioned the Islamic objective very clearly in the Qur'an:

“They wish to put out the light of Allah with their mouths, but Allah rejects, and He insists that His Light prevails. He it is who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad) with the Guidance and the Deen of Truth (Islam) so that it will dominate over all other Deens, even though the Disbelievers detest it.” [TMQ At-Taubah 9:32-33]

In order for the Muslims to achieve this objective, they must re-establish the Islamic way of life, and in order to re-establish the Islamic way of life, they must establish the link between the Islamic 'aqeedah and their thoughts in a comprehensive and correct manner. The Islamic Ummah must establish Islam as its only reference in all aspects of life – in its thoughts, its feelings, its culture, its systems and its solutions. To claim that Islam did not provide solutions, or that Islam provides even

partial solutions, or that Islam did not cover all aspects of life, or that Islam left some aspects of life undefined, completely contradicts the nature of the Islamic ‘aqeedah. Allah (swt) mentions in the Qur’an:

“It (this Qur’an) is not a forged statement but a confirmation of Allah’s existing Books and a detailed explanation of everything...”

[TMQ Yusuf 12:111]

“And We have sent down to you the Book as an exposition of everything...” [TMQ An-Nahl 16:89]

To claim that Allah (swt) sent an incomplete message or that Allah (swt) forgot to include everything in Islam not only contradicts these ayat but directly conflicts with the Islamic ‘aqeedah. Allah (swt) is beyond the capacity to forget or to make a miscalculation. Because Allah (swt) affirms that Islam is complete, then the Muslims must believe so and reject any notion that calls them to the ridiculous idea that Allah’s Knowledge needs to be updated, revised, or modified, or that human beings know reality better than Allah (swt) and can design a system that can replace the System of Allah.

Perhaps the main reason that the idea of Islam as a system frightens many Muslims today is because this generation of Muslims, along with the previous generations, are the only ones who never lived under Islamic rule. As a result, the Muslims find it difficult to picture life under Islamic rule, and they rush to the existing systems and ideas simply because there is nothing else. Also, the Islamic State was a reality for about 1300 years, and none of the scholars of the past ever mentioned in their books of Fiqh the methodology for re-establishing the Islamic State because they never imagined themselves living in the absence of the Islamic systems. As such, the idea of re-establishing the Islamic systems never materialised. The idea of establishing the Islamic State only existed during the time of the Sahabah (ra), after which Islam remained established as a superpower for thirteen centuries, and the idea of re-establishing the Islamic State remained dormant.

Only now, after 1400 years, is the idea reviving again, and it will take time for the Muslims to absorb a concept that was never discussed for so many centuries. The only sources discussing the methodology for re-establishing the Islamic state come from the works of modern scholars and movements. In spite of these obstacles, the fact remains that the Islamic ‘aqeedah is the only correct ‘aqeedah, and that the Islamic system remains the correct system for humanity. Such a system produced a civilisation of unheralded justice, peace and progress in all facets of life for the thirteen centuries it existed. These facts by themselves should motivate the Muslims to work for the re-establishment of the Islamic way of life comprehensively. When the Muslims lost their understanding of the Islamic ‘aqeedah, the weakness crept into the body of the Ummah and the problems began to arise. Only when the Muslim re-establish the Islamic State based on the Islamic ‘aqeedah can they return to their glory as the leaders of humanity, as Allah (swt) mentions:

“You are the best Ummah ever raised up for mankind; you enjoin Al-Ma‘ruf (all that Islam has allowed and commanded), you forbid the Munkar (all that Islam has prohibited), and you believe in Allah.”

[TMQ Al-‘Imran 3: 110]

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Khilafah Journal, Vol 1, No. 1