



An Introduction to Islam

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Articles of Faith

1. Unity of God

The Islamic creed is that there is no God except Allah and Muhammad is his Prophet. (la ilaaha illa-Allah Muhammadur- rasoolillah).

Muslims believe that Allah is one. He was neither begotten nor does He beget. He has no Partner. He is the Beginning and He is the End. He is omniscient and omnipresent.

The Qur'an says that He is closer to man than his jugular vein yet He cannot be encompassed by human intellect.

See the following verses of the Qur'an:

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۚ فَأَيْنَمَا تُولُوا فَتَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

And Allah's is the East and the West, therefore, whither you turn, thither is Allah's purpose; surely Allah is Amplegiving, Knowing. (2:115)

وَاللَّهُكُمْ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ ۚ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ

And your Allah is one Allah! There is no god but He; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful. (2:163)

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۚ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۚ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ

Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Everliving, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission?

He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He pleases, His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not, and He is the Most High, the Great. (2:255)

بَدِيعُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ أَتَى يَكُونُ لَهُ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ صَاحِبَةٌ ۚ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۚ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ

Wonderful Originator of the heavens and the earth! How could He have a son when He has no consort, and He (Himself) created everything, and He is the Knower of all things. (6:101)

فَلَنَقُصَّنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِعِلْمٍ ۚ وَمَا كُنَّا غَائِبِينَ

Then most certainly We will relate to them with knowledge, and We were not absent. (7:7)

وَلَعَلَّا بَعْضُهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ ۚ إِذَا لَدَّهَبَ كُلُّ إِلَهٍ بِمَا خَلَقَ مَا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ مِنْ وَلَدٍ وَمَا كَانَ

Never did Allah take to Himself a son, and never was there with him any (other) god-- in that case would each god have certainly taken away

what he created, and some of them would certainly have overpowered others; glory be to Allah above what they describe!(23:91)

عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

The Knower of the unseen and the seen, so may He be exalted above what they associate (with Him). (23:92)

إِنَّ إِلَهَكُمْ لَوَاحِدٌ

Most surely your Allah is one (37:4)

رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَرَبُّ الْمَشَارِقِ

The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, and Lord of the east.(37:5)

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا مُنْذِرٌ ۚ وَمَا مِن إِلَهٍ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ

Say: I am only a warner, and there is no god but Allah, the One, the Subduer (of all) (38:65)

أَنْتُمْ عَنْهُ مُعْرِضُونَ

(And) you are turning aside from it (38:68)

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ

Say: He, Allah, is one. (32:1)

اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

Allah is He on Whom all depend.(32:2)

لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ

He begets not, nor is He begotten. (32:3)

وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ

And none is like Him. (32:4)

Imam 'Ali says in a supplication:

“Oh God, verily I ask Thee by Thy Name, in the name of Allah, the All-merciful, the All-compassionate, O the Possessor of Majesty and Splendour, the Living, the Self-subsistent, the Eternal, there is no God other than Thou, Oh He of Whom no one knows what He is, or how He is, or Where He is, or in respect of what He is, And yet, we know that He is.”

2. Justice of God

Allah is Just. The Qur'an says:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِأَحْكَمِ الْحَاكِمِينَ

“Is not Allah the best of the Judges?” (95:8)

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۚ وَإِنْ كَانَ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّةٍ مِنْ خَرْدَلٍ

أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۚ وَكَفَى بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

“And We will set up a just balance on the day of resurrection, so no soul shall be dealt with unjustly in the least; and though there be the weight of a grain of mustard seed, (yet) will We bring it, and sufficient are We to take account.” (21:47)

The Sunni School of thought subscribes to the view that nothing is good or evil per se. What God commanded us to do become good by virtue of His command. What he forbade became evil.

The Shi'as believe that there is intrinsic good or evil in things. God commanded us to do the good things and forbade the evil. God acts according to a purpose or design. Human reason cannot comprehend this design or purpose in its entirety though man must always strive to understand as much as he can.

Compulsion or Freedom?

The various schools of thought are divided.

- Mutazzilas believe that man is totally free and God exercises no power over his action. Those who subscribe to this view are also known as Qadariyyas.

- Mujabbira school of thought believes that man has no freedom and is only a tool in the hands of God.

- The Asharia school of thought to which most Sunnis subscribe believe that though man has no free will, he will earn the reward of his good deeds. The Sunni scholar Al-Ghazzali sums up this doctrine as follows: "No act of any individual, even though it be done purely for his benefit, is independent of the will of Allah for its existence. There does not occur in either the physical or the extra-terrestrial world the twinkle of an eye, the hint of a thought, or the most sudden glance except by the Decree of Allah, of His Power, Desire, and Will. This includes evil and good, benefit and harm, success and failures, sin and righteousness, obedience and disobedience, polytheism and true belief."

- The Shi'as believe that there is neither total compulsion nor total freedom. The true position is the one in-between. They maintain that Allah has fore-knowledge of human action but does not compel man to any particular course of action.

See Qur'an:

لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَإِنْ تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُمْ بِهِ اللَّهُ ۖ
فَيَغْفِرَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allah's; and whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it, Allah will call you to account according to it; then He will forgive whom He pleases and chastise whom He pleases, and Allah has power over all things. (2:284)

مَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِنْ نَفْسِكَ ۚ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ
رَسُولًا ۚ وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا

Whatever benefit comes to you (O man!), it is from Allah, and whatever misfortune befalls you, it is from yourself, and we have sent you (O Prophet!), to mankind as a messenger; and Allah is sufficient as a witness (4:79)

وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ وَإِنْ يَمْسَسْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And if Allah touch you with affliction, there is none to take it off but He; and if He visit you with good, then He has power over all things. (6:17)

قُلْ لَنْ يُصِيبَنَا إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَنَا هُوَ مَوْلَانَا ۖ وَعَلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ

Say: Nothing will afflict us save what Allah has ordained for us; He is our Patron; and on Allah let the believers rely. (9:51)

وَإِنْ يَمَسُّكَ اللَّهُ بِضْرٍ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ ۚ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ الرَّحِيمُ الْغَفُورُ

And if Allah should afflict you with harm, then there is none to remove it but He; and if He intends good to you there is none to repel His grace; He brings it to whom He pleases of His servants; and He is the Forgiving, the Merciful. (10:107)

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللَّهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا ۚ كُلٌّ فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

And there is no animal in the earth but on Allah is the sustenance of it, and He knows its resting place and its depository all (things) are in a manifest book. (11:6)

إِنِّي تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللَّهِ رَبِّي وَرَبِّكُمْ ۚ مَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ آخِذٌ بِنَاصِيَتِهَا ۚ إِنَّ رَبِّي عَلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ

Surely I rely on Allah, my Lord and your Lord; there is no living creature but He holds it by its forelock; surely my Lord is on the right path. (11:56)

أَمِنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ قَلِيلًا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Or, Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil, and He will make you successors in the earth. Is there a god with Allah? Little is it that you mind! (27:62)

فَاصْبِرْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۚ وَلَا يَسْتَخِفَّنكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُوقِنُونَ

Therefore be patient; surely the promise of Allah is true and let not those who have no certainty hold you in light estimation. (30:60)

أَوَلَمْ يَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Do they not know that Allah makes ample the means of subsistence to whom He pleases, and He straitens; most surely there are signs in this for a people who believe. (39:52)

وَأَنِيبُوا إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ وَأَسْلِمُوا لَهُ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَكُمُ الْعَذَابُ ثُمَّ لَا تُنصَرُونَ

And return to your Lord time after time and submit to Him before there comes to you the punishment, then you shall not be helped. (39:54)

وَمَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فَبِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ وَيَعْفُو عَنْ كَثِيرٍ

And whatever affliction befalls you, it is on account of what your hands have wrought, and (yet) He pardons most (of your faults). (42:30)

3. Prophethood

God created mankind to serve Him.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve me (51:56)

He endowed man with faculties and freedom of action and out of His Grace (LUTF) and Justice sent Prophets to instruct and guide mankind. No nation or community was left without such guidance.

وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولٌ فَإِذَا جَاءَ رَسُولُهُمْ قُضِيَ بَيْنَهُمْ بِالْقِسْطِ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ

And every nation had a messenger; so when their messenger came, the matter was decided between them with justice and they shall not be dealt with unjustly. (10:47)

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ ۚ فَمِنْهُمْ مَن هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

And certainly we raised in every nation a messenger saying: Serve Allah and shun the Shaitan. So there were some of them whom Allah guided and there were others against whom error was due; therefore travel in the land, then see what was the end of the rejecters. (16:36)

Some of these prophets were sent with Divine Revelation, scripture and miracles. The first Prophet was Adam and the last was Muhammad, the Seal of Prophets.

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ يُمِيتُكُمْ ثُمَّ يُحْيِيكُمْ ۚ هَلْ مِنْ شُرَكَائِكُمْ مَن يَفْعَلُ مِثْلَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

Allah is He Who created you, then gave you sustenance, then He causes you to die, then brings you to life. Is there any of your associate-gods who does aught of it? Glory be to Him, and exalted be He above what they associate (with Him). (30:40)

While Qur'an mentions only twenty-five most prominent of the prophets it also states that there were many more whose names have not been revealed in the Qur'an.

وَلَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلًا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْهُمْ مَن قَصَصْنَا عَلَيْكَ وَمِنْهُمْ مَن لَّمْ نَقْصُصْ عَلَيْكَ ۚ وَمَا

كَانَ لِرَسُولٍ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ بِآيَةٍ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَإِذَا جَاءَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ فُضِيَ بِالْحَقِّ وَخَسِرَ هُنَالِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ

And certainly We sent messengers before you: there are some of them that We have mentioned to you and there are others whom We have not mentioned to you, and it was not meet for a messenger that he should bring a sign except with Allah's permission, but when the command of Allah came, judgment was given with truth, and those who treated (it) as a lie were lost. (40:78)

Muslims believe that there have been 124,000 prophets. Amongst those specifically mentioned are Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Ismail, Issac,

Loot, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Aaron, Ezekiel, David, Solomon, Jonah, Zachariah, John the Baptist, Jesus and Muhammad (saws).

Five of these prophets brought new codes of law. These were Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (saws). These are called the “ulu l-azm” prophets meaning those of great constancy.

Qur'an mentions Five Divine books:

The Book of Abraham sometimes referred as the Booklet.

صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَى

The scriptures of Ibrahim and Musa. (87:19)

The Psalms given to David.

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُ اللَّهُ مَا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ فَأَعْرِضْ عَنْهُمْ وَعِظْهُمْ وَقُلْ لَهُمْ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ قَوْلًا بَلِيغًا

These are they of whom Allah knows what is in their hearts; therefore turn aside from them and admonish them, and speak to them effectual words concerning themselves.(4:63)

وَرُبُّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَقَدْ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَ النَّبِيِّينَ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ۖ وَآتَيْنَا

دَاوُودَ زَبُورًا

And your Lord best knows those who are in the heavens and the earth; and certainly We have made some of the prophets to excel others, and to Dawood We gave a scripture. (17:55)

The Torah granted to Moses:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ ۖ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ ۖ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ قَوْلِي وَتَقْتُلُونِ

And most certainly We gave Musa the Book and We sent messengers after him one after another; and We gave Isa, the son of Marium, clear arguments and strengthened him with the holy spirit, What! Whenever then a messenger came to you with that which your souls did not desire, you were insolent so you called some liars and some you slew. (2:87)

نَزَلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابُ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنْزَلَ التَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ

He has revealed to you the Book with truth, verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the Tawrat and the Injeel aforetime, a guidance for the people, and He sent the Furqan.(3:3)

مِنْ قَبْلُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَأَنْزَلَ الْفُرْقَانَ ۖ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ ۖ

وَاللَّهُ عَزِيزٌ ذُو انْتِقَامٍ

Surely they who disbelieve in the communications of Allah they shall have a severe chastisement; and Allah is Mighty, the Lord of retribution. (3:4)

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ إِذْ قَالُوا مَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَلَى بَشَرٍ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۖ قُلْ مَنْ أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ الَّذِي

جَاءَ بِهِ مُوسَى نُورًا وَهُدًى لِلنَّاسِ ۖ تَجْعَلُونَهُ قَرَاطِيسَ تُبْدُونَهَا وَتُخْفُونَ كَثِيرًا ۖ وَعُلِّمْتُمْ مَا لَمْ

تَعْلَمُوا أَنْتُمْ وَلَا آبَاؤُكُمْ ۖ قُلِ اللَّهُ ۖ ثُمَّ دَرَاهُمْ فِي خَوْضِهِمْ يَلْعَبُونَ

And they do not assign to Allah the attributes due to Him when they say: Allah has not revealed anything to a mortal. Say: Who revealed the Book which Musa brought, a light and a guidance to men, which you make into scattered writings which you show while you conceal much? And you were taught what you did not know, (neither) you nor your fathers. Say: Allah then leave them sporting in their vain discourses. (6:91)

ثُمَّ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ تَمَامًا عَلَى الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ وَتَفْصِيلًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لَّعَلَّهُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Again, we gave the Book to Musa to complete (Our blessings) on him who would do good (to others), and making plain all things and a guidance and a mercy, so that they should believe in the meeting of their Lord. (6:154)

The Evangel or the Gospel revealed to Jesus:

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَى آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ ۖ وَآتَيْنَاهُ الْإِنْجِيلَ فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوْعِظَةً لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

And We sent after them in their footsteps Isa, son of Marium, verifying what was before him of the Taurat and We gave him the Injeel in which was guidance and light, and verifying what was before it of Taurat and a guidance and an admonition for those who guard (against evil). (5:46)

The Qur'an revealed to Muhammad (saws).

A Muslim must believe in all the Holy Books.

وَالَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ وَمَا أُنزِلَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ وَبِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُونَ

And who believe in that which has been revealed to you and that which was revealed before you and they are sure of the hereafter. (2:4)

أَمَنْ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ ۚ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۚ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ

The messenger believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord and (so do) the believers; they all believe in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers; we make no difference between any of His messengers; and they say: We hear and obey, our Lord! Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course. (2:285)

He must also believe in all the prophets.

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ أُولَٰئِكَ سَوْفَ يُؤْتِيهِمْ أَجْرَهُمْ ۖ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

And those who believe in Allah and His messengers and do not make a distinction between any of them-- Allah will grant them their rewards; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (4:152).

The Shi'as also believe that all the prophets were Infallible and Sinless. Not all the Sunnis subscribe to this belief.

4. Resurrection

The world will come to an end on the Day of the Rising (Qiyamah), the day of final human accountability. All men will be resurrected and presented before God Who will decide their fate according to their deeds. The good will be rewarded with paradise (jannah) and the evil will be punished with hell (jahannam).

ذَٰلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَأَنَّهُ يُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ وَأَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

This is because Allah is the Truth and because He gives life to the dead and because He has power over all things (22:6)

وَأَنَّ السَّاعَةَ آتِيَةٌ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهَا وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْعَثُ مَنْ فِي الْقُبُورِ

And because the hour is coming, there is no doubt about it; and because Allah shall raise up those who are in the graves. (22:7)

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ

And among men there is he who disputes about Allah without knowledge and without guidance and without an illuminating book, (22:8)

ثَانِي عَظِيمٍ لِيُضِلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۚ لَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا خِزْيٌ ۖ وَنُذِيقُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ

Turning away haughtily that he may lead (others) astray from the way of Allah; for him is disgrace in this world, and on the day of resurrection we will make him taste the punishment of burning (22:9)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۚ إِنَّ زَلْزَلَةَ السَّاعَةِ شَيْءٌ عَظِيمٌ

O people! Guard against (the punishment from) your Lord; surely the violence of the hour is a grievous thing. (22:1)

يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَارَىٰ

وَمَا هُمْ بِسُكَارَىٰ وَلَكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ

On the day when you shall see it, every woman giving suck shall quit in confusion what she suckled, and every pregnant woman shall lay down her burden, and you shall see men intoxicated, and they shall not be intoxicated but the chastisement of Allah will be severe. (22:2)

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ ۚ وَإِنَّمَا تُوَفَّقُونَ أُجُورَكُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ فَمَنْ زُحِرَ عَنِ النَّارِ وَأُدْخِلَ

الْجَنَّةَ فَقَدْ فَازَ ۚ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ

Every soul shall taste of death, and you shall only be paid fully your reward on the resurrection day; then whoever is removed far away from the fire and is made to enter the garden he indeed has attained the object; and the life of this world is nothing but a provision of vanities. (3:185)

ثُمَّ رُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمُ الْحَقُّ ۚ أَلَا لَهُ الْحُكْمُ وَهُوَ أَسْرَعُ الْحَاسِبِينَ

Then are they sent back to Allah, their Master, the True one; now surely His is the judgment and He is swiftest in taking account. (6:62)

The dominant factor in the administration of His Justice by Allah will be His Mercy.

قُلْ لِمَنْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ قُلْ لِلَّهِ ۚ كَتَبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ ۚ لِيَجْمَعَ كُفُّكُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ
الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۚ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Say to whom belongs what is in the heavens and the earth? Say: To Allah; He has ordained mercy on Himself; most certainly He will gather you on the resurrection day-- there is no doubt about it. (As for) those who have lost their souls, they will not believe. (6:12)

5. Imaamah

Only the Shi'as believe in the institution of Imaamat. Literally Imam" means a Leader. In Shi'a belief an Imam is the person appointed by God and introduced by the Prophet and then by each preceding Imam by explicit designation (nass) to lead the Muslim community, interpret and protects the religion and the law (shariah), and guide the community in all affairs.

An Imam is first and foremost the Representative of God and the successor of the Prophet. He must be sinless and possess divine knowledge of both the exoteric and the esoteric meaning of the verses of the Qur'an.

There are many Shiah sects e.g. the Zaidis, the Ismailis etc. The principal sect is the Twelvers (Ithnasharis).

(NOTE: In these Notes, unless specifically stated otherwise, references to the Shi'as and Shi'a beliefs, should be construed as references to the Shi'a Ithnashariyya school of thought.)

The Twelvers believe that the Prophet was succeeded by Twelve Imaams. These are:

1. 'Ali ibn Abu Talib (as) Died 40 A.H./659 A.D

He was the Prophet's son-in-law, having married his daughter Fatimah.

2. Hassan ibn 'Ali (as), Died 50 A.H./669 A.D.

3. Hussain ibn 'Ali (as), Died 61 A.H./680 A.D.

4. 'Ali ibn Hussain (as), Died 95 A.H./712 A.D.

5. Muhammad ibn 'Ali (as), Died 114 A.H./732 A.D.

6. Ja'far ibn Muhammad (as), Died 148 A.H./765 A.D.

7. Musa ibn Ja'far (as), Died 183 A.H./799 A.D.

8. 'Ali ibn Musa (as), Died 203 A.H./817 A.D.

9. Muhammad ibn 'Ali (as), Died 220 A.H./835 A.D.

10. 'Ali ibn Muhammad (as), Died 254 A.H./868 A.D.

11. Hassan ibn 'Ali (as), Died 260 A.H./872 A.D.

12. Muhammad ibn Hassan (ajtf), Born 256 A.H./868 A.D.

On the death of his father in 260 A.H. the twelfth Imam went into occultation (Gaybah), appearing only to a few leading Shi'as. Until 329 A.H./939 A.D. he performed the functions of the Imam through representatives appointed by himself. He then went into major occultation which will continue until the day God grants him permission to manifest himself.

The Sunni View

The Sunnis use the term Imam synonymously with the term khalifah. A khalifah may be elected, or nominated by his predecessor, or selected by a committee, or may acquire power through military force. A khalifah need

not be sinless. It is lawful for a person of inferior qualities to be made a khalifah while persons of superior qualities are present.

Development of Jurisprudence and Theology

A. The Shi'a School

During their life time the Imams remained the chief exponents of the shariah, the Islamic law. Many of the Imams, when the political atmosphere permitted, held theological classes and also taught other sciences.

Since the major occultation of the twelfth Imam the Shi'as have, as commanded not only by him but also most of the preceding Imaams, sought guidance from mujtahids and followed the institution of taqleed.

Taqleed literally means to follow or to imitate someone. In Islamic jurisprudence it means to follow a Mujtahid in matters pertaining to law.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا قَبْلَكَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا نُوحِي إِلَيْهِمْ ۖ فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

And we did not send before you any but men to whom we sent revelation, so ask the followers of the reminder if you do not (21:7)

وَإِذَا مَا أَنْزَلْنَا سُورَةً فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقُولُ أَيُّكُمْ زَادَتْهُ هَذِهِ إِيمَانًا ۚ فَأَمَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا فَرَزَادَتْهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَهُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

And whenever a chapter is revealed, there are some of them who say: Which of you has it strengthened in faith? Then as for those who believe, it strengthens them in faith and they rejoice.(9:124)

Taqleed applies only to matters of shariah. There is no taqleed in matters of beliefs (the articles of faith). A Muslim must seek to attain conviction of their truth through reflection and rational examination.

A Mujtahid must be a person learned in all the Islamic sciences. At any given time there would normally be a number of persons qualified as Mujtahids and it is not uncommon to have two members of the same family in taqleed of two different mujtahids.

Any muslim can address any question of law to any mujtahid, whether or not he is in the taqleed of that mujtahid and the mujtahid would issue a fatwaa giving his opinion on that subject. This would invariably be by way of a statement of the law which in the opinion of the mujtahid is the correct legal position. The fatwaa would be binding on all the persons in the taqleed of that mujtahid.

A mujtahid is so called because he does ijtehaad which term means to strive for deriving the laws of the shariah from its sources which are:

1. The Qur'an
2. The Sunnah which mean the traditions and the practice of the Prophet and the Imams.
3. Reasoning (Aql);
4. Consensus of the Mujtahids (Ijmaa).

B. The Sunni School

The ruling khalifah invariably assumed the mantle of the chief exponent of the shariah.

For nearly a hundred years following the death of the Prophet the State retained absolute control over authentication, collection and publication of the sayings (ahadees) of the Prophet. A few unscrupulous khalifahs did not

hesitate to use this power to legitimize their misdeeds by arranging to have apocryphal ahadees produced.

After the Banu Abbas came into power in 132 A.H. (750 A.D.), the formation of the Sunni community was formalised. Although there are many sects and sub-sects in the sunni school of thought, the four main sects are-

1 The Hanafis, founded by Imaam Abu Hanifa an-Nu'maan ibn Thabit (died 150 A.H./769 A.D.). He is a scholar greatly respected not only by his followers but also the other sunnis.

2. The Malikis, founded by Imaam Abu Abdullah Malik ibn Anas (died 179 A.H./797 A.D.).

3. The Shafeis, founded by Imaam Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafei (died 204 A.H./819 A.D.)

4. The Hanbalis, founded by Imaam Ahmed ibn Muhammad ibn Hanbal (died 241 A.H./855 A.D.)

Although there are many irreconcilable differences in the four Sunni schools, in the main, however, they agree on the fundamental bases of their doctrines and laws. Each claims to have derived them from the following four sources:

1. The Qur'an
2. The Sunnah of the Holy Prophet and at times the Sunnah of the first four khalifahs
3. The Ijmaa (consensus among the companions of the Prophet or of the religious leaders or among the followers)
4. The Qiyas (deduction of legal prescriptions from the Qur'an and the sunnah through rational analogy).

The extent of the acceptance of the theological and legal doctrines of any of the above four sunni schools depended largely on the inclination of the ruler of the time. For example, although Abu Hanifa himself did not gain great popularity with the khalifah, his successor Abu Yusuf became a powerful figure in the court and held office of the Chief Kadhi.

The khalifah, however, always continued to remain the final arbiter in the exposition of the law and the jurists were relegated to an advisory role.

Since the abolition of the institution of khilafah following the fall of the Ottoman Empire the sunni schools have not developed as fast as they need to so as to keep pace with the social, economic, political and scientific development. Some Sunni sects have recognized the need for Ijtehaad, a few appear to concentrate on Ijmaa as the main instrument for reform.

In addition to their differences in jurisprudence, the Sunnis and the Shi'as hold divergent theological views on various aspects of the articles of beliefs e.g. human freedom of action and the Justice of God (both discussed above), whether God has a corporeal form. Some sunni sects believe in anthropomorphism.

The Shi'as and the Sunnis, however, agree on the following fundamental beliefs:

1. That Allah is One and has no partners;
2. That Muhammad is the last Prophet of God;
3. That there will be Resurrection and Judgement.

Acts of Worship

The Arabic term used for Acts of worship is Ibaadah. This does not mean worship. It means service. To serve God in the manner in which He has commanded his creatures to serve Him is Ibaadah. The term would include all acts of piety as well as the mandatory acts of worship.

The mandatory acts of worship accepted by both the Sunnis and the Shi'as are:

1. Salaah (The Daily Prayers)

Every Muslim, from the time he or she attains puberty must perform the salaah. Except for a woman in menstruation, no person is excused from this act of worship.

Before a person begins his salaah he must perform the ritual ablution in the prescribed form. The object is symbolic preparation for the salaah and not, as often believed cleanliness. A person has to be clean to perform the ablution (wudhu). Then he stands facing Mecca and declares his intention to pray for gaining proximity to Allah. With this declaration he enters the formal state of salaah in which he remains until the completion of his prayers.

A Salaah consists of a number of units called rakaahs. Each unit (rakaah) consists of:

1. Recitation of the opening chapter and one other chapter of the Qur'an while in the standing position.
 2. The bowing down (ruku) and glorifying God in that position and
 3. Two Prostrations each called a Sajda in which again God is glorified.
- Then the second rakaah would commence.

The morning prayers, to be performed between the dawn and sunrise, have two rakaahs, the mid-day prayers four rakaahs, the sunset three and the evening four.

The prayers are ended by affirmation that Allah is one and has no partners and that Muhammad (saws) is His servant and messenger. Salutations are offered to the Prophet, all the righteous souls and all who are engaged in prayers.

Salaah is regarded as not only a ritual act of worship but a communion with the Maker. It is the most important form of Ibaadah and sickness (other than insanity), age or infirmity is no excuse for not performing prayers.

Lapsed prayers constitute a debt to God and are a first charge on a Muslim's time and conscience. In the event of a person having died without having said any of his lapsed prayers, the eldest son, or if the deceased is not survived by a son, his heir must say or pay someone to say the lapsed prayers of the deceased.

Seyyid Hossein Nasr writes in his Ideals and Realities of Islam:

"In the canonical prayers man stands before God as the representative of all creatures. He prays for and in the name of all beings."

Amongst the many sayings of the Prophet on the subject are:

"Salaah is the spiritual ascension of the faithful where he communes with Allah."

“The good deeds wipe out the evil deeds of a man. The salaah and patience (sabr) are the best of deeds.”

Salaah is a spiritual activity where the person performing it is totally immersed, mentally and physically, in the remembrance of God.

اٰثِلْ مَا اَوْجِيْ اِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَاَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ ۚ اِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ
وَلَذِكْرُ اللّٰهِ اَكْبَرُ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا تَصْنَعُوْنَ

Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book and keep up prayer; surely prayer keeps (one) away from indecency and evil, and certainly the remembrance of Allah is the greatest, and Allah knows what you do. (29:45)

لِكُلِّ اُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللّٰهِ عَلٰى مَا رَزَقْنَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْاَنْعَامِ ۗ فَاِلَهُكُمْ اِلَهٌ وَّاحِدٌ
فَلَهُ اَسْلِمُوْا ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِيْنَ

And to every nation We appointed acts of devotion that they may mention the name of Allah on what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds; so your god is One God, therefore to Him should you submit, and give good news to the humble, (22:34)

الَّذِيْنَ اِذَا ذُكِرَ اللّٰهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ وَالصّٰبِرِيْنَ عَلٰى مَا اَصَابَهُمْ وَالْمُكِّيْبِي الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ
يُنْفِقُوْنَ

(To) those whose hearts tremble when Allah is mentioned, and those who are patient under that which afflicts them, and those who keep up prayer, and spend (benevolently) out of what We have given them. (22:35)

طس ۚ تِلْكَ اٰيَاتُ الْقُرْاٰنِ وَكِتَابٍ مُّبِيْنٍ

Ta Sin! These are the verses of the Quran and the Book that makes (things) clear (27:1)

هُدًى وَبُشْرٰى لِلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ

A guidance and good news for the believers, (27:2)

الَّذِيْنَ يُقِيْمُوْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوْنَ الزَّكَاةَ وَهُمْ بِالْآخِرَةِ هُمْ يُوقِنُوْنَ

Who keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and of the hereafter, they are sure. (27:3)

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَمَا فِي الْاَرْضِ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمَا تَحْتَ الثَّرَى

His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth and what is between them two and what is beneath the ground. (20:6)

وَإِنْ تَجْهَرْ بِالْقَوْلِ فَآَنَّهُ يَعْلَمُ السِّرَّ وَأَخْفَى

And if you utter the saying aloud, then surely He knows the secret, and what is yet more hidden. (20:7)

اِنِّىْ اَنَا اللّٰهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنَا فَاعْبُدْنِيْ وَاَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِىْ

Surely I am Allah, there is no god but I, therefore serve me and keep up prayer for my remembrance (20:14)

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۖ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ

And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians of each other; they enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and obey Allah and His Messenger; (as for) these, Allah will show mercy to them; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise.(9:71)

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ

Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns, (74:38)

إِلَّا أَصْحَابَ الْيَمِينِ

Except the people of the right hand (74:39)

فِي جَنَّاتٍ يَتَسَاءَلُونَ

In gardens, they shall ask each other (74:40)

عَنِ الْمُجْرِمِينَ

About the guilty: (74:41)

مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ

What has brought you into hell? (74:42)

قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ

They shall say: We were not of those who prayed; (74:43)

وَلَمْ نَكُ نُطْعِمِ الْمِسْكِينَ

And we used not to feed the poor; (74:44)

وَكُنَّا نَخُوضُ مَعَ الْخَائِضِينَ

And we used to enter into vain discourse with those who entered into vain discourses. (74:45)

وَكُنَّا نَكْذِبُ بِيَوْمِ الدِّينِ

And we used to call the Day of Judgment a lie; (74:46)

حَتَّىٰ أَتَانَا الْيَقِينُ

Till death overtook us. (74:47)

فَمَا تَنْفَعُهُمْ شَفَاعَةُ الشَّافِعِينَ

So the intercession of intercessors shall not avail them. (74:48)

قُلْ أَدْعُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ مَا لَا يَنْفَعُنَا وَلَا يَضُرُّنَا وَنُرَدُّ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَانَا اللَّهُ كَالَّذِي

اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَيْرَانَ لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَىٰ ائْتِنَا ۖ قُلْ إِنَّ هُدَىٰ اللَّهِ هُوَ

الْهُدَىٰ ۖ وَأَمْرَنَا لِئُسَلِّمَ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Say: Shall we call on that besides Allah, which does not benefit us nor harm us, and shall we be returned back on our heels after Allah has guided us, like him whom the Shaitans have made to fall down perplexed in the earth? He has companions who call him to the right way, (saying): Come to us. Say: Surely the guidance of Allah, that is the (true) guidance,

*and we are commanded that we should submit to the Lord of the worlds.
(6:71)*

وَأَنْ أَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَاتَّقُوا ۖ وَهُوَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ (6:72)

And that you should keep up prayer and be careful of (your duty to) Him; and He it is to whom you shall be gathered. (6:72)

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَكُنْ مِنَ السَّاجِدِينَ

Therefore celebrate the praise of your Lord, and be of those who make obeisance. (15:98)

وَاعْبُدْ رَبَّكَ حَقًّا يَأْتِيكَ الْيَقِينُ

*And serve your Lord until there comes to you that which is certain.
(15:99)*

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفَيِ النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِنَ اللَّيْلِ ۚ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبُنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ
لِلذَّاكِرِينَ

And keep up prayer in the two parts of the day and in the first hours of the night; surely good deeds take away evil deeds this is a reminder to the mindful. (11:114)

2. Sawm (Fasting)

The second act of worship is fasting in the month of Ramadhan, the 9th month of the Islamic calendar. This is obligatory upon every mature Muslim except the sick, the traveller, a woman during her menstruation period and those infirm by age.

Fasting involves refraining from eating, drinking and sexual activity from the beginning of the nautical dawn to sunset. But these are not the sole objectives. Fasting is a conscious obedience of Allah's command. It is the human being's struggle to dedicate a whole month to activities which please his Maker. "It is the means", says Nasr, "by which man pulls the reins of his animal desires and realizes that he is more than an animal."

Fasting also begins with a declaration of intent to fast for the attainment of proximity to Allah.

أَيَّامًا مَعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ وَعَلَى الَّذِينَ يُطِيقُونَهُ فِدْيَةٌ طَعَامُ مِسْكِينٍ ۚ فَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ ۚ وَأَنْ تَصُومُوا خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۚ إِن كُنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

For a certain number of days; but whoever among you is sick or on a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; and those who are not able to do it may effect a redemption by feeding a poor man; so whoever does good spontaneously it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know. (2:184)

شَهْرَ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْفُرْقَانِ ۚ فَمَنْ شَهِدَ مِنْكُمُ الشَّهْرَ فَلْيَصُمْهُ ۚ وَمَنْ كَانَ مَرِيضًا أَوْ عَلَىٰ سَفَرٍ فَعِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَيَّامٍ أُخَرَ ۗ يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ بِكُمُ الْيُسْرَ وَلَا يُرِيدُ بِكُمُ الْعُسْرَ وَلِتُكْمِلُوا الْعِدَّةَ وَلِتُكَبِّرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَاكُمْ وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

The month of Ramazan 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)

أَحَلَّ لَكُمْ لَيْلَةَ الصَّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنْكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَحْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۚ فَالْآنَ بَاشِرُوهُمْ وَأَبْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۚ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصَّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۚ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

It is made lawful to you to go into your wives on the night of the fast; they are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them; Allah knew that you acted unfaithfully to yourselves, so He has turned to you (mercifully) and removed from you (this burden); so now be in contact with them and seek what Allah has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night at dawn, then complete the fast till night, and have not contact with them while you keep to the mosques; these are the limits of Allah, so do not go near them. Thus does Allah make clear His communications for men that they may guard (against evil). (2:187)

It is incumbent upon a Muslim to know why he prays and why he fasts. Imam 'Ali (as) says, "One who knows not why he prays or why he fasts, his prayers and fasts are little more than meaningless physical exertions, hunger and thirst."

3. Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca)

Every Muslim who has attained puberty and has sufficient means not only to undertake a journey to Mecca but also for the subsistence of his dependants during his absence, must once in his life time perform pilgrimage.

Kaaba is the edifice which was presented to God as a gift by His Prophets Abraham and Ismail.

The rites for the pilgrimage begin on the 8th of the eleventh month and culminate into the Idd of Sacrifice on the 10th.

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ ۚ فَمَنْ حَجَّ الْبَيْتَ أَوْ اعْتَمَرَ فَلَا جُنَاحَ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَطَّوَّفَ بِهِمَا ۚ وَمَنْ تَطَوَّعَ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ شَاكِرٌ عَلِيمٌ

Surely the Safa and the Marwa are among the signs appointed by Allah; so whoever makes a pilgrimage to the House or pays a visit (to it), there is no blame on him if he goes round them both; and whoever does good spontaneously, then surely Allah is Grateful, Knowing.(2:158)

وَأَتِمُّوا الْحَجَّ وَالْعُمْرَةَ لِلَّهِ ۚ فَإِنْ أُحْصِرْتُمْ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ وَلَا تَحْلِفُوا رُءُوسَكُمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبْلُغَ الْهَدْيُ مَحَلَّهُ ۚ فَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْكُمْ مَّرِيضًا أَوْ بِهِ أَذًى مِنْ رَأْسِهِ فَفِدْيَةٌ مِنْ صِيَامٍ أَوْ صَدَقَةٍ أَوْ نُسُكٍ ۚ فَإِذَا أَمِنْتُمْ فَمَنْ تَمَتَّعَ بِالْعُمْرَةِ إِلَى الْحَجِّ فَمَا اسْتَيْسَرَ مِنَ الْهَدْيِ ۚ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَجِدْ فَصِيَامُ ثَلَاثَةِ أَيَّامٍ فِي الْحَجِّ وَسَبْعَةٍ إِذَا رَجَعْتُمْ ۚ تِلْكَ عَشْرَةٌ كَامِلَةٌ ۚ ذَلِكَ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُهُ حَاضِرِي الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

And accomplish the pilgrimage and the visit for Allah, but if, you are prevented, (send) whatever offering is easy to obtain, and do not shave your heads until the offering reaches its destination; but whoever among you is sick or has an ailment of the head, he (should effect) a compensation by fasting or alms or sacrificing, then when you are secure, whoever profits by combining the visit with the pilgrimage (should take) what offering is easy to obtain; but he who cannot find (any offering) should fast for three days during the pilgrimage and for seven days when you return; these (make) ten (days) complete; this is for him whose family is not present in the Sacred Mosque, and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, and know that Allah is severe in requiting (evil).(2:196)

وَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَعْدُودَاتٍ ۚ فَمَنْ تَعَجَّلَ فِي يَوْمَيْنِ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ وَمَنْ تَأَخَّرَ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ ۚ لِمَنِ اتَّقَىٰ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْهِ تُحْشَرُونَ

And laud Allah during the numbered days; then whoever hastens off in two days, there is no blame on him, and whoever remains behind, there is no blame on him, (this is) for him who guards (against evil), and be careful (of your duty) to Allah, and know that you shall be gathered together to Him.(2:203)

فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۚ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ۚ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

In it are clear signs, the standing place of Ibrahim, and whoever enters it shall be secure, and pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds.(3:97)

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالْدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهْلَ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالطَّيْحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبْعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النَّصَبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ فُسْقٌ ۚ الْيَوْمَ يَبَيْسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَحْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنَ ۚ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۚ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ فِي مَخْمَصَةٍ غَيْرَ مُتَجَانِفٍ لِإِثْمٍ ۚ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed

by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is sacrificed on stones set up (for idols) and that you divide by the arrows; that is a transgression.

This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear me. This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion; but whoever is compelled by hunger, not inclining willfully to sin, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.(5:3)

وَنَزَعَ يَدَهُ فَإِذَا هِيَ بَيْضَاءُ لِلنَّاظِرِينَ

And he drew forth his hand, and lo! it appeared white to the onlookers.(26:33)

A Muslim's journey to the House of God, and there seeking his Maker's forgiveness through expression of repentance and the performance of all the rituals attending pilgrimage, is a spiritual experience so overwhelming that the pilgrim's very soul appears to undergo a purification.

The pilgrimage has another philosophical aspect.

In the Qur'an, like in the Old Testament, there is the story of Abraham having been commanded to sacrifice his son. The Qur'an, however, states that the son was Ismail.

The father communicates the message to the young lad who had just attained puberty. The lad exhorts the father to comply with the divine command adding, "God willing, you shall find me amongst the patient ones."

Unbeknown to the mother, the father and the son travel to the planes of Arafaa, a short distance from Mecca. There they spend the night in prayers. The following afternoon they travel to the town of Meena where the sacrifice was to take place. They spend the night on the outskirts of the town. The following morning they enter Meena.

On the way to the appointed place, the Satan tries thrice to lure them into abandoning the enterprise, but each time the father and the son chase him away by throwing pebbles at him.

When they get to the place of sacrifice, the father blindfolds his son saying that he did not wish the lad to see the anguish on the father's face. He then blindfolds himself for, as he reasoned, how could any father watch his son die?

God saves Ismail by substituting a ram and sends His salutations to Abraham for his act of obedience. God also promises Abraham to immortalize the event.

وَإِذْ جَعَلْنَا الْبَيْتَ مَثَابَةً لِّلنَّاسِ وَأَمْنًا وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلِّينَ ۖ وَعَهِدْنَا إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ أَن طَهِّرَا بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْعَاكِفِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ

And when we made the House a pilgrimage for men and a (place of) security, and: Appoint for yourselves a place of prayer on the standing-place of Ibrahim. And we enjoined Ibrahim and Ismail saying: Purify My House for those who visit (it) and those who abide (in it) for devotion and those who bow down (and) those who prostrate themselves. (2:125)

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا بَلَدًا آمِنًا وَارْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ مَنْ آمَنَ مِنْهُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ
الْآخِرِ ۖ قَالَ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَأُمَتِّعُهُ قَلِيلًا ثُمَّ أَضْطَرُّهُ إِلَىٰ عَذَابِ النَّارِ ۖ وَبِئْسَ الْمَصِيرُ

And when Ibrahim said: My Lord, make it a secure town and provide its people with fruits, such of them as believe in Allah and the last day. He said: And whoever disbelieves, I will grant him enjoyment for a short while, then I will drive him to the chastisement of the fire; and it is an evil destination. (2:126)

وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And when Ibrahim and Ismail raised the foundations of the House: Our Lord! Accept from us; surely Thou art the Hearing, the Knowing (2:127)

إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

Most surely the first house appointed for men is the one at Bekka, blessed and a guidance for the nations. (3:96)

فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ ۖ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا ۗ وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنِ

اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ۚ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ

In it are clear signs, the standing place of Ibrahim, and whoever enters it shall be secure, and pilgrimage to the House is incumbent upon men for the sake of Allah, (upon) everyone who is able to undertake the journey to it; and whoever disbelieves, then surely Allah is Self-sufficient, above any need of the worlds.(3:97)

فَبَشِّرْنَاهُ بِغُلَامٍ حَلِيمٍ

So we gave him the good news of a boy, possessing forbearance. (37:101)

فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ مَعَهُ السَّعْيَ قَالَ يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَرَىٰ فِي الْمَنَامِ أَنِّي أَذْبَحُكَ فَانْظُرْ مَاذَا تَرَىٰ ۚ قَالَ يَا أَبَتِ

أَفْعَلْ مَا تُؤْمَرُ ۖ سَتَجِدُنِي إِن 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)

فَلَمَّا أَسْلَمَا وَتَلَّهُ لِلْجَبِينِ

So when they both submitted and he threw him down upon his forehead, (37:103)

وَنَادَيْنَاهُ أَنْ يَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ

And we called out to him saying: O Ibrahim! (37:104)

قَدْ صَدَقْتَ الرُّؤْيَا ۚ إِنَّا كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

You have indeed shown the truth of the vision; surely thus do we reward the doers of good. (37:105)

إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ الْبَلَاءُ الْمُبِينُ

Most surely this is a manifest trial. . (37:106)

وَقَدَرْنَا بِهِ ذَنْجَ عَظِيمٍ

And we ransomed him with a Feat sacrifice. . (37:107)

وَتَرَكْنَا عَلَيْهِ فِي الْآخِرِينَ

And we perpetuated (praise) to him among the later generations. . (37:108)

سَلَامٌ عَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

Peace be on Ibrahim. . (37:109)

كَذَلِكَ نَجْزِي الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Thus do we reward the doers of good. (37:110)

إِنَّهُ مِنْ عِبَادِنَا الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

Surely he was one of our believing servants. . (37:111)

The mother, on learning what had happened, screams and falls unconscious at the thought of what might have happened had Allah not intervened to save her beloved son. Shortly afterwards she dies and is buried close to Kaaba. Her burial place is treated as being included in the hallowed ground around which the pilgrim circumambulates.

Every pilgrim takes the same route which Abraham and Ismail had taken. He too spends the first night, as they did, in Arafaa and the second night outside Meena. He too symbolically stones the satan at the three places in Meena.

While of-course the visit to the House of Allah has its own great spirituality, the pilgrim also must reflect upon the rituals which appear to enshrine family values, parents' love for their off-spring, the vanquishing of the satan, the one within man's heart, by symbolically stoning him and above all the willingness to make sacrifices for the pleasure of God.

4. Zakaat (The Wealth Tax)

Zakaat, which literally means purity or purification, is a wealth tax of a small percentage (usually 2.5%) for the benefit of the needy in the society. It is regarded as a debt to God and must be distributed for the pleasure of Allah to the less fortunate amongst one's relatives, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarers, and the beggars, and for the freeing of slaves.

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ ۚ فِيهِ ۚ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

This Book, there is no doubt in it, is a guide to those who guard (against evil). (2:2)

الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ

Those who believe in the unseen and keep up prayer and spend out of what we have given them. (2:3)

وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ (2:43)

And keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and bow down with those who bow down. (2:43)

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ
وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۖ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي
الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۗ أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۗ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflicts-- these are they who are true (to themselves) and these are they who guard (against evil).(2:177)

فَإِنْ تَابُوا وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِخْوَانُكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ ۗ وَنُفِّصِلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

But if they repent and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, they are your brethren in faith; and we make the communications clear for a people who know. (9:11)

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ
وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۗ أُولَئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ
حَكِيمٌ

And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians of each other; they enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and obey Allah and His Messenger; (as for) these, Allah will show mercy to them; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise.(9:71)

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah's is the end of affairs.(22:41)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَمَاتُوا وَهُمْ كُفَّارٌ فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْ أَحَدِهِمْ مِلْءُ الْأَرْضِ ذَهَبًا وَلَوْ افْتَذَى بِهِ ۗ
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ نَاصِرِينَ

Surely, those who disbelieve and die while they are unbelievers, the earth full of gold shall not be accepted from one of them, though he should offer to ransom himself with it, these it is who shall have a painful chastisement, and they shall have no helpers.(3:91)

وَلَا يَأْتِلُ أُولُو الْفَضْلِ مِنْكُمْ وَالسَّعَةِ أَنْ يُؤْتُوا أُولِي الْقُرْبَى وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ
اللَّهِ ۗ وَلْيَعْفُوا وَلْيَصْفَحُوا ۗ أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

And let not those of you who possess grace and abundance swear against giving to the near of kin and the poor and those who have fled in

Allah's way, and they should pardon and turn away. Do you not love that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (24:22)

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ لَهوَ الْعَزِيزُ الرَّحِيمُ

And most surely your Lord is the Mighty, the Merciful. (26:9)

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ

And when Ibrahim said: My Lord! Make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols (14:35)

رَبِّ إِنَّهُمْ أَضَلَلَنَ كَثِيرًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ ۖ فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِي فَإِنَّهُ مِنِّي ۖ وَمَنْ عَصَانِي فَإِنَّكَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ

My Lord! Surely they have led many men astray; then whoever follows me, he is surely of me, and whoever disobeys me, Thou surely art Forgiving, Merciful (14:36)

رَبَّنَا إِنِّي أَسْكَنْتُ مِنْ ذُرِّيَّتِي بِوَادٍ غَيْرِ ذِي زَرْعٍ عِنْدَ بَيْتِكَ الْمُحَرَّمِ رَبَّنَا لِيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ فَاجْعَلْ

أَفئِدَةً مِّنَ النَّاسِ تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِمْ

وَارْزُقْهُمْ مِّنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَشْكُرُونَ

O our Lord! Surely I have settled a part of my offspring in a valley unproductive of fruit near Thy Sacred House, our Lord! That they may keep up prayer; therefore make the hearts of some people yearn towards them and provide them with fruits; haply they may be grateful (14:37)

وَقَالُوا اتَّخَذَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَلَدًا ۚ سُبْحَانَهُ ۚ بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُّكْرَمُونَ

And when we assigned to Ibrahim the place of the House, saying: Do not associate with me aught, and purify My House for those who make the circuit and stand to pray and bow and prostrate themselves. (22:26)

There are innumerable traditions of the Prophet insisting upon zakaat being paid by every Muslim. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (as) said that the one who does not give zakaat cannot expect his salaah to be accepted by Allah.

The Doctrine of Five Pillars

Many Sunni theologians, instead of enumerating the Articles of Faith and Acts of Worship separately, state that belief in God and the Prophet as affirmed in the creed (the Kalemah), together with the foregoing four acts of worship constitute the Five Pillars of Faith.

The Shi'as list the five Articles of Faith as the roots of religion (Usool al-Deen) and the Acts of Worship as the branches of religion (Furoo al-Deen).

In addition to the above acts of worship the Shi'as believe in the following acts of worship (The sunnis regard them as mandatory acts of piety):

1. Jihad Struggle or Striving

There are two kinds of jihad, the major jihad and the minor jihad.

The Major Jihad: (Jihad Al-Akbar)

This is the struggle against one's inner self (nafs) to subjugate and control one's passions and carnal desires. The base self (nafs al-ammara) must be controlled by the conscience (nafs al-lawwama), and only when one succeeds in this struggle does one attain the perfect self, the self at peace with itself (nafs al-mutmainna).

To those who attain this state, the God says:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ

O soul that art at rest! (89:27)

ارْجِعِي إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ رَاضِيَةً مَّرْضِيَّةً

Return to your Lord, well-pleased (with him), well-pleasing (Him), (89:28)

فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي

So enter among my servants, (89:29)

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي

And enter into my garden. (89:30)

The Minor Jihad (Jihad Al-Asghar)

This means to struggle for Islam. Not for extension of boundaries, not for personal glory, not for the glory of any tribe, community or nation, but for the defense of Islam and the protection of its values. Such a struggle can take many forms, through the use of pen, through the use of tongue or through the use of the sword. This last form is often referred to in the Qur'an as Qitaal (warfare).

In the Shi'a theology, a general qitaal can be declared only by an Imaam. A mujtahid has no authority to summon Muslims to a jihad involving qitaal.

2. Amr Bi'l-Ma'Aroof (Directing Others towards Good)

It is an act of worship for a Muslim to advise and direct others to the doing of good deeds for the pleasure of Allah.

3. Nahy 'An Al Munkir (Directing Others Away From Evil).

Similarly it is the duty of every Muslim to advise others against committing sins.

وَاَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا ۚ وَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ إِخْوَانًا وَكُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِنَ النَّارِ فَأَنْقَذَكُمْ مِنْهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ آيَاتِهِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ

And hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together and be not disunited, and remember the favor of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts so by His favor you became brethren; and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His communications that you may follow the right way.(3:103)

وَلِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۚ وَإِلَى اللَّهِ تُرْجَعُ الْأُمُورُ

And whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allah's; and to Allah all things return (3:109)

لَيْسُوا سَوَاءً ۚ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ أُمَّةٌ قَائِمَةٌ يَتْلُونَ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ آنَاءَ اللَّيْلِ وَهُمْ يَسْجُدُونَ

They are not all alike; of the followers of the Book there is an upright party; they recite Allah's communications in the nighttime and they adore (Him). (3:113)

خُذِ الْعَفْوَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْعُرْفِ وَأَعْرِضْ عَنِ الْجَاهِلِينَ

Take to forgiveness and enjoin good and turn aside from the ignorant. (7:199)

وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتُ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ۚ يَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَيُقِيمُونَ الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُونَ الزَّكَاةَ وَيُطِيعُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

And (as for) the believing men and the believing women, they are guardians of each other; they enjoin good and forbid evil and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and obey Allah and His Messenger; (as for) these, Allah will show mercy to them; surely Allah is Mighty, Wise.(9:71)

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِشِرْكَ لَدُنْهُمْ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ سَيَرْحَمُهُمُ اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْحَافِظُونَ لِحُدُودِ اللَّهِ ۚ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ

They who turn (to Allah), who serve (Him), who praise (Him), who fast, who bow down, who prostrate themselves, who enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and who keep the limits of Allah; and give good news to the believers.(9:112)

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَآمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۚ وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah's is the end of affairs.(22:41)

لَوْ أَرَدْنَا أَنْ نَتَّخِذَ لَهُمْ لَهَوًا لَا نَتَّخِذُنَاهُ مِنْ لَدُنَّا ۚ إِنَّ كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ

Had we wished to make a diversion, we would have made it from before ourselves: by no means would we do (it). (21:17)

3. Khums (The One-Fifth Tax)

Only the Shi'as believe in this additional tax and they regard it as a major obligation of every Shi'a Muslim. It was instituted by God as a token of regard for the Prophet and his family.

المص

Alif Lam Mim Sad.(7:1)

لَهُمْ مِنْ جَهَنَّمَ مِهَادٌ وَمِنْ فَوْقِهِمْ غَوَاشٍ ۚ وَكَذَلِكَ نُجْزِي الظَّالِمِينَ

They shall have a bed of hell-fire and from above them coverings (of it); and thus do We reward the unjust. (7:41)

وَأَوْرَثَكُمْ أَرْضَهُمْ وَدِيَارَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ وَأَرْضًا لَمْ تَطْثُوهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرًا

And He made you heirs to their land and their dwellings and their property, and (to) a land which you have not yet trodden, and Allah has power over all things. (33:27)

وَمَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْهُمْ فَمَا أَوْجَفْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ خَيْلٍ وَلَا رِكَابٍ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَلِّطُ رَسُولَهُ عَلَى مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

And whatever Allah restored to His Messenger from them you did not press forward against it any horse or a riding camel but Allah gives authority to His messengers against whom He pleases, and Allah has power over all things. (59:6)

مَا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنْكُمْ ۚ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ

Whatever Allah has restored to His Messenger from the people of the towns, it is for Allah and for the Messenger, and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, so that it may not be a thing taken by turns among the rich of you, 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)

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا وَيَنْصُرُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الصَّادِقُونَ

(It is) for the poor who fled their homes and their possessions, seeking grace of Allah and (His) pleasure, and assisting Allah and His Messenger: these it is that are the truthful.(59:8)

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

And those who made their abode in the city and in the faith before them love those who have fled to them, and do not find in their hearts a need of what they are given, and prefer (them) before themselves though poverty may afflict them, and whoever is preserved from the niggardliness of his soul, these it is that are the successful ones. (59:9)

It is a 20% tax on all earnings after deduction of house-hold and commercial expenses.

Khums is paid to the mujtahid and is divided into two equal portions. One half of all receipts of khums by the mujtahid is the portion belonging to the Imaam in occultation and the mujtahid spends this portion in educational, social and economic projects for the betterment of the Shi'a community.

First priority is accorded to the community from which the khums was received. The second half is distributed amongst the poor and deserving descendants of the Prophet (the sayyids) each of whom may receive only up to a year's subsistence.

Other Acts of Piety

Theocentricity

Islam does not have the concept of secularism. All human activities must be either in accordance of the law (the shariah) or the prescribed code of conduct. An act which accords with either is an act of piety.

A Muslim's must consider his life on this earth as a journey from his Maker to his Maker and must strive to gain the pleasure of his Maker. "Give glad tidings to the steadfast who say.....`We are from Allah and to Him we return'. Such are they upon whom are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. Such are the rightly guided."

لَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

And we will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient (2:155)

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

Who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah's and to Him we shall surely return. (2:156)

أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord, and those are the followers of the right course. (2:157)

The purpose of every creation, other than humans) is to serve mankind.

أَلَمْ تَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ سَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعَمَهُ ظَاهِرَةً وَبَاطِنَةً ۗ وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يُجَادِلُ فِي اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَلَا هُدًى وَلَا كِتَابٍ مُّنِيرٍ

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? And among men is he who disputes in respect of Allah though having no knowledge nor guidance, nor a book giving light. (31:20)

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect. (45:13)

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَابِيحَ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لَهُمْ عَذَابَ السَّعِيرِ

And certainly we have adorned this lower heaven with lamps and we have made these missiles for the Shaitans, and We have prepared for them the chastisement of burning. (67:5)

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

Man, who has been created of the best structure, must serve none other than Allah.

Certainly We created man in the best make. (95:4)

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me. (51:56)

مَا أُرِيدُ مِنْهُمْ مِنْ رِزْقٍ وَمَا أُرِيدُ أَنْ يُطْعَمُوا

I do not desire from them any sustenance and I do not desire that they should feed Me. (51:57)

إِنَّ اللَّهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِينُ

Surely Allah is the Bestower of sustenance, the Lord of Power, the Strong. (51:58)

It will be beneath the dignity and status of man to worship any being, thing or power other than Allah.

The doctrine of the Unity of God is not just an article of faith. It is an important factor in man's comprehension of himself and his raison d'être. God the One, the Indivisible must be his sole Guide in his journey on this earth.

The sixth Imam explaining the Unity of God said, "The true ibaadah is for the human being to ensure that the essence of the unity of God lies between his intent and his deed.

The Prophet has said, "Man's every action must incline towards Allah".

The Islamic ethical code is too vast and extensive to permit a full discussion in this course. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a cursory glance at a few aspects of the code of conduct.

Pursuit of Knowledge

Islam regards ignorance as impure (najasah) and the acquisition of knowledge as a great act of piety. "One who has knowledge can never be equal to the one who is ignorant".

أَمَّنْ هُوَ قَانَتْ آثَاءَ اللَّيْلِ سَاجِدًا وَقَائِمًا يَحْذَرُ الْآخِرَةَ وَيَرْجُو رَحْمَةَ رَبِّهِ ۖ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ۚ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ

What! He, who is obedient during hours of the night, prostrating himself and standing, takes care of the hereafter and hopes for the mercy of his Lord! Say: Are those who know and those who do not know alike? Only the men of understanding are mindful. (39:9)

The Prophet has said:

"It is the duty of every Muslim male and every Muslim female to seek knowledge".

"Seek knowledge even if you have to travel as far as China for it."

"Sitting an hour in a learned gathering is better than a thousand nights spent in performance of (optional) salaah, and better than engaging in a battle for the sake of God on thousand occasions. If one leaves one's house with the intention of gaining knowledge, for every step that he takes God shall bestow upon him the reward reserved for a prophet."

Parents

Respect for, and obedience and kindness to, parents are enjoined upon Muslims. Obedience is, however, excused where the parents require injustice to be perpetrated.

وَقَضَىٰ رَبُّكَ أَلَّا تَعْبُدُوا إِلَّا إِيَّاهُ وَبِالْوَالِدَيْنِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ إِمَّا يَبُلُغَنَّ عِنْدَكَ الْكِبَرَ أَحَدُهُمَا أَوْ كِلَاهُمَا فَلَا تَقُلْ لَهُمَا أُفٍّ وَلَا تَنْهَرْهُمَا وَقُلْ لَهُمَا قَوْلًا كَرِيمًا

And your Lord has commanded that you shall not serve (any) but Him, and goodness to your parents. If either or both of them reach old age with you, say not to them (so much as) "Ugh" nor chide them, and speak to them a generous word. (17:23)

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا ۖ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۖ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

And We have enjoined on man goodness to his parents, and if they contend with you that you should associate (others) with Me, of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them, to Me is your return, so I will inform you of what you did. (29:8)

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهْنًا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفَصَّالَهُ فِي سَامَيْنِ أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ

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. (31:14)

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ إِحْسَانًا ۖ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ كُرْهًا وَوَضَعَتْهُ كُرْهًا ۖ وَحَمَلُهُ ثَلَاثُونَ شَهْرًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً قَالَ رَبِّ أَوْزِعْنِي أَنْ أَشْكُرَ نِعْمَتَكَ الَّتِي أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَىٰ وَالِدَيَّ وَأَنْ أَعْمَلَ صَالِحًا تَرْضَاهُ وَأَصْلِحْ لِي فِي ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ إِنِّي تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَإِنِّي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

And We have enjoined on man doing of good to his parents; with trouble did his mother bear him and with trouble did she bring him forth; and the bearing of him and the weaning of him was thirty months; until when he attains his maturity and reaches forty years, he says: My Lord! grant me that I may give thanks for Thy favor which Thou hast bestowed on me and on my parents, and that I may do good which pleases Thee and do good to me in respect of my offspring; surely I turn to Thee, and surely I am of those who submit. (46:15)

أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ نَتَقَبَّلُ عَنْهُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا عَمِلُوا وَنَتَجَاوَزُ عَنْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ فِي أَصْحَابِ الْجَنَّةِ ۖ وَعَدَ الصَّادِقُ الَّذِي كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ

These are they from whom we accept the best of what they have done and pass over their evil deeds, among the dwellers of the garden; the promise of truth which they were promised. (46:16)

وَالَّذِي قَالَ لِوَالِدَيْهِ أُفٍّ لَّكُمَا أَتَعِدَانِي أَنْ أَخْرَجَ وَقَدْ خَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ مِنْ قَبْلِي وَهُمَا يَسْتَعْجِلَانِ اللَّهَ وَيْلَكَ آمِنْ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ فَيَقُولُ مَا هَذَا إِلَّا أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

And he who says to his parents: Fie on you! do you threaten me that I shall be brought forth when generations have already passed away before me? And they both call for Allah's aid: Woe to you! Believe, surely the promise of Allah is true. But he says: This is nothing but stories of the ancients. (46:17)

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ حَقَّ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلُ فِي أُمَمٍ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ مِنَ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنسِ إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا خَاسِرِينَ

These are they against whom the word has proved true among nations of the jinn and the men that have already passed away before them; surely they are losers. (46:18)

The Prophet has said:

“It is an act of worship to look at either parent with affection and kindness”.

“Allah is pleased when one has pleased his parents, and Allah is angry when one has angered either parent”.

“Paradise lies under the feet of your mother”.

Charity

Qur'an enjoins the spending of one's wealth in the cause of Allah, for the poor, the needy, the freeing of slaves, the curing of the sick and other good causes. Charity is a precondition to the attainment of piety.

وَأَنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلَا تُلْقُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَى التَّهْلُكَةِ وَأَحْسِنُوا إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

And spend in the way of Allah and cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands, and do good (to others); surely Allah loves the doers of good. (2:195)

يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلْ مَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلِلَّوَالِدَيْنِ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ وَالْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ وَمَا تَفْعَلُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

They ask you as to what they should spend. Say: Whatever wealth you spend, it is for the parents and the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, and whatever good you do, Allah surely knows it. (2:215)

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيرَةً وَاللَّهُ يَقْبِضُ وَيَبْسُطُ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

Who is it that will offer of Allah a goodly gift, so He will multiply it to him manifold, and Allah straitens and amplifies, and you shall be returned to Him. (2:245)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَا بَيْعَ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

O you who believe! Spend out of what we have given you before the day comes in which there is no bargaining, neither any friendship nor intercession, and the unbelievers-- they are the unjust. (2:254)

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سُنبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ ۗ 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)

الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ لَا يُتْبِعُونَ مَا أَنْفَقُوا مَنًّا وَلَا أَذًى ۖ لَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

(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.(2:262)

وَلِ مَعْرُوفٍ وَمَغْفِرَةٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ يَتْبَعُهَا أَذًى ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَنِيٌّ حَلِيمٌ

Kind speech and forgiveness is better than charity followed by injury; and Allah is Self-sufficient, Forbearing (2:263)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى كَالَّذِي يُنْفِقُ مَالَهُ رِئَاءَ النَّاسِ وَلَا يُؤْمِنُ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ ۖ فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ صَفْوَانٍ عَلَيْهِ تُرَابٌ فَأَصَابَهُ وَابِلٌ فَتَرَكَهُ صَلْدًا ۖ لَا يَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى شَيْءٍ مِمَّا كَسَبُوا ۗ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْكَافِرِينَ

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.(2:264)

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَتَثْبِيتًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ كَمَثَلِ جَنَّةٍ بِرَبْوَةٍ أَصَابَهَا وَابِلٌ فَآتَتْ أُكُلَهَا ضِعْفَيْنِ فَإِنْ لَمْ يُصِبْهَا وَابِلٌ فَظُلٌّ ۗ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

And the parable of those who spend their property to seek the pleasure of Allah and for the certainty 'of their souls is as the parable of a garden on an elevated ground, upon which heavy rain falls so it brings forth its fruit twofold but if heavy rain does not fall upon it, then light rain (is sufficient); and Allah sees what you do. (2:265)

أَيُّودٌ أَحَدُكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونَ لَهُ جَنَّةٌ مِنْ نَخِيلٍ وَأَعْنَابٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ لَهُ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ وَأَصَابَهُ الْكِبَرُ وَلَهُ ذُرِّيَّةٌ ضُعَفَاءُ فَأَصَابَهَا إِعْصَارٌ فِيهِ نَارٌ فَاحْتَرَقَتْ ۗ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Does one of you like that he should have a garden of palms and vines with streams flowing beneath it; he has in it all kinds of fruits; and old age has overtaken him and he has weak offspring, when, (lo!) a whirlwind with fire in it smites it so it becomes blasted; thus Allah makes the communications clear to you, that you may reflect. (2:266)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْفِقُوا مِنْ طَيِّبَاتِ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَمِمَّا أَخْرَجْنَا لَكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ۖ وَلَا تَيَمَّمُوا
الْحَيِّثُ مِنْهُ تُنْفِقُونَ وَلَسْتُمْ بِآخِذِيهِ إِلَّا أَنْ تُغْمِضُوا فِيهِ ۖ وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ حَمِيدٌ

O you who believe! spend (benevolently) of the good things that you earn and or what We have brought forth for you out of the earth, and do not aim at what is bad that you may spend (in alms) of it, while you would not take it yourselves unless you have its price lowered, and know that Allah is Self-sufficient, Praiseworthy. (2:267)

لَشَّيْطَانٌ يَعِدُكُمُ الْفَقْرَ وَيَأْمُرُكُم بِالْفَحْشَاءِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ يَعِدُكُم مَغْفِرَةً مِنْهُ وَفَضْلًا ۖ وَاللَّهُ
وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Shaitan threatens you with poverty and enjoins you to be niggardly, and Allah promises you forgiveness from Himself and abundance; and Allah is Ample-giving, knowing. (2:268)

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۖ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا ۖ وَمَا يَذَّكَّرُ إِلَّا أُولُو
الْأَلْبَابِ

He grants wisdom, to whom He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom, he indeed is given a great good and none but men of understanding mind. (2:269)

وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ نَفَقَةٍ أَوْ نَذَرْتُمْ مِنْ نَذْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُهُ ۖ وَمَا لِلظَّالِمِينَ مِنْ أَنْصَارٍ

And whatever alms you give or (whatever) vow you vow, surely Allah knows it; and the unjust shall have no helpers. (2:270)

إِنْ تُبْدُوا الصَّدَقَاتِ فَنِعِمَّا هِيَ ۖ وَإِنْ تُخْفُوهَا وَتُؤْتُوهَا الْفُقَرَاءَ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ ۖ وَيُكَفِّرُ
عَنْكُم مِّن سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ ۖ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

If you give alms openly, it is well, and if you hide it and give it to the poor, it is better for you; and this will do away with some of your evil deeds; and Allah is aware of what you do. (2:271)

لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ هُدَاهُمْ وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۖ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَلَأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۖ وَمَا

تُنْفِقُونَ إِلَّا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ يُؤَفِّ إِلَيْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تُظْلَمُونَ

To make them walk in the right way is not incumbent on you, but Allah guides aright whom He pleases; and whatever good thing you spend, it is to your own good; and you do not spend but to seek Allah's pleasure; and whatever good things you spend shall be paid back to you in full, and you shall not be wronged. (2:272)

لِلْفُقَرَاءِ الَّذِينَ أُحْصِرُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ضَرْبًا فِي الْأَرْضِ يَحْسَبُهُمُ الْجَاهِلُ أَغْنِيَاءَ

مِنَ التَّعَفُّفِ تَعْرِفُهُمْ بِسِيمَاهُمْ لَا يَسْأَلُونَ النَّاسَ إِلْحَافًا ۖ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

(Alms are) for the poor who are confined in the way of Allah-- they cannot go about in the land; the ignorant man thinks them to be rich on account of (their) abstaining (from begging); you can recognize them by their mark; they do not beg from men importunately; and whatever good thing you spend, surely Allah knows it. (2:273)

لَنْ تَتَّالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ وَمَا تُنْفِقُوا مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ بِهِ عَلِيمٌ

By no means shall you attain to righteousness until you spend (benevolently) out of what you love; and whatever thing you spend, Allah surely knows it. (3:92)

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ أَنْفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقَكُمُ اللَّهُ قَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْطَعِمُ مَنْ لَوْ يَشَاءُ اللَّهُ أَنْطَعِمَهُ إِنْ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ

And when it is said to them: Spend out of what Allah has given you, those who disbelieve say to those who believe: Shall we feed him whom, if Allah please, He could feed? You are in naught but clear error. (36:47)

وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تُنْفِقُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَلِلَّهِ مِيرَاثُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ لَا يَسْتَوِي مِنْكُمْ مَنْ أَنْفَقَ مِنْ قَبْلِ الْفَتْحِ وَقَاتِلَ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ أَكْثَرُ دَرَجَةً مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَنْفَقُوا مِنْ بَعْدِ وَقَاتَلُوا ۚ وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرٌ

And what reason have you that you should not spend in Allah's way? And Allah's is the inheritance of the heavens and the earth, not alike among you are those who spent before the victory and fought (and those who did not): they are more exalted in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards; and Allah has promised good to all; and Allah is Aware of what you do. (57:10)

مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُقْرِضُ اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا فَيُضَاعِفَهُ لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ

Who is there that will offer to Allah a good gift so He will double it for him, and he shall have an excellent reward. (57:11)

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ ۚ وَاللَّهُ عِنْدَهُ أَجْرٌ عَظِيمٌ

Your possessions and your children are only a trial, and Allah it is with whom is a great reward. (64:15)

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ وَأَسْمِعُوا وَأَطِيعُوا وَأَنْفِقُوا خَيْرًا لِّأَنْفُسِكُمْ ۚ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شُحَّ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ

Therefore be careful of (your duty to) Allah as much as you can, and hear and obey and spend, it is better for your souls; and whoever is saved from the greediness of his soul, these it is that are the successful. (64:16)

إِنْ تُقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا يُّضَاعِفْهُ لَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ۚ وَاللَّهُ شَكُورٌ حَلِيمٌ

If you set apart for Allah a goodly portion, He will double it for you and forgive you; and Allah is the Multiplier (of rewards), Forbearing, (64:17)

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

The Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Wise. (64:18)

There are innumerable traditions of the Prophet and the Imams on the merits of charity. In one of these it is said, "If you have nothing to give, give a kind word or even just an affectionate smile."

Dissemination of knowledge by a scholar is an act of charity. So is the visiting of a sick.

Caring for the bereaved is also a great act of piety. There is a tradition which requires the extended family or the community to feed the immediate family of the deceased for at least three days after the death has occurred and to offer them solace and comfort.

Resisting Oppression

Imam 'Ali (as) has said:

“To suffer oppression passively is as bad as to commit oppression”.

“He who makes no effort to alleviate the suffering of an oppressed one is an oppressor”.

Justice

A Muslim is required to act with justice in all his dealings with other human beings and in all circumstances.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ نِعِمَّا يَعِظُكُم بِهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ سَمِيعًا بَصِيرًا

Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners and that when you judge between people you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Hearing.(4:58)

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِتَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا أَرَاكَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَا تَكُنْ لِلْخَائِنِينَ خَصِيمًا

Surely we have revealed the Book to you with the truth that you may judge between people by means of that which Allah has taught you; and be not an advocate on behalf of the treacherous. (4:105)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۚ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا ۚ وَإِنْ تَلُونَا أَوْ تُعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

O you who believe! be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness of Allah's sake, though it may be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives; if he be rich or poor, Allah is nearer to them both in compassion; therefore do not follow (your) low desires, lest you deviate; and if you swerve or turn aside, then surely Allah is aware of what you do. (4:135)

قُلْ أَمَرَ رَبِّي بِالْقِسْطِ ۚ وَأَقِيمُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ عِندَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ ۚ كَمَا بَدَأَكُمْ تَعُودُونَ

Say: My Lord has enjoined justice, and set upright your faces at every time of prayer and call on Him, being sincere to Him in obedience; as He brought you forth in the beginning, so shall you also return.(7:29)

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)

In the Qur'an also says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدَيْنِ
وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ ۚ إِنْ يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا ۖ فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَنْ تَعْدِلُوا ۚ وَإِنْ تَلُوتُوا أَوْ
تُعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا

O you who believe! be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness of Allah's sake, though it may be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives; if he be rich or poor, Allah is nearer to them both in compassion; therefore do not follow (your) low desires, lest you deviate; and if you swerve or turn aside, then surely Allah is aware of what you do. (4:135).

Lewdness and Indecencies

These are totally forbidden.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ ۚ
يَعْظُمُ 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)

Idle Chatter, Slander and Infringement of Privacy

These are totally forbidden.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ
عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ ۚ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ ۚ بِئْسَ الْإِسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ
بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ ۚ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَتُبْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

O you who believe! let not (one) people laugh at (another) people perchance they may be better than they, nor let women (laugh) at (other) women, perchance they may be better than they; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames; evil is a bad name after faith, and whoever does not turn, these it is that are the unjust. (49:11)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اجْتَنِبُوا كَثِيرًا مِّنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِثْمٌ ۚ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا وَلَا يَغْتَبَ بََعْضُكُم بَعْضًا ۚ
أُحِبُّ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ لَحْمَ أَخِيهِ مَيْتًا فَكَرِهْتُمُوهُ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَوَّابٌ رَّحِيمٌ

O you who believe! Avoid most of suspicion, for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you backbite others. Does one of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? But you abhor it; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, surely Allah is Oft-returning (to mercy), Merciful. (49:12)

The Freeing of Slaves

This is not only an act of piety but is also prescribed as the primary penalty for certain willful acts or omissions e.g. failure to fast or repay a lapsed fast, infringement of any regulation required to be observed during pilgrimage etc. Liberation of slaves was also highly recommended as atonement for various sins. Ill treatment of slaves and servants is also forbidden.

It is highly recommended that zakaah and other alms be spent for liberating slaves.

وَلْيَسْتَغْفِرِ الَّذِينَ لَا يَجِدُونَ نِكَاحًا حَتَّى يُغْنِيَهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَالَّذِينَ يَبْتِغُونَ الْكِتَابَ
مِمَّا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ فَكَاتِبُوهُمْ إِنْ عَلِمْتُمْ فِيهِمْ خَيْرًا ۚ وَآتُوهُمْ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ الَّذِي آتَاكُمْ ۚ وَلَا
تُكْرِهُوا فَتِياتِكُمْ عَلَى الْبِغَاءِ إِنْ أَرَدْنَ تَحَصُّنًا لِيَبْتِغُوا عَرَضَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَمَنْ يُكْرِهِنَّ فَإِنَّ
اللَّهَ مِنْ بَعْدِ إِكْرَاهِهِنَّ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

And let those who do not find the means to marry keep chaste until Allah makes them free from want out of His grace. And (as for) those who ask for a writing from among those whom your right hands possess, give them the writing if you know any good in them, and give them of the wealth of Allah which He has given you; and do not compel your slave girls to prostitution, when they desire to keep chaste, in order to seek the frail good of this world's life; and whoever compels them, then surely after their compulsion Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (24:33)

إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَاتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَامِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَارِمِينَ
وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ ۚ فَرِيضَةً مِنَ اللَّهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials (appointed) over them, and those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth) and the (ransoming of) captives and those in debts and in the way of Allah and the wayfarer; an ordinance from Allah; and Allah is knowing, Wise. (9:60)

لَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ
وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا ۚ وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي
الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا ۚ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the East and the West, but righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah and the last day and the angels and the Book and the prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate; and the performers of their promise when they make a promise, and the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflicts-- these are they who are true (to themselves) and these are they who guard (against evil). (2:177)

وَمَا أَدْرَاكَ مَا الْعَقَبَةُ

And what will make you comprehend what the uphill road is? (90:12)

فَلْكَ رَقَبَةٍ

(It is) the setting free of a slave, (90:13)

Reasoning and Reflection

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَى قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا

Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Nay, on the hearts there are locks. (47:24)

قُلْ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبْسُطُ الرِّزْقَ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَقْدِرُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

“Say unto them, O Muhammad: I exhort you unto one thing only. That you awake for Allah's sake, by two or singly, and then reflect.” (34:46)

وَمَا تَأْتِيهِمْ مِنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ آيَاتِ رَبِّهِمْ إِلَّا كَانُوا عَنْهَا مُعْرِضِينَ

And there comes not to them a communication of the communications of their Lord but they turn aside from it. (36:46)

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ

Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who understand. (3:190)

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَى جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا

خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire: (3:191)

The eighth Imam has said:

“Worship does not lie in engaging oneself in saying prayers endlessly or in fasting copiously, but in engaging oneself in the contemplation of the works of Allah.”

The Prophet has said, “Allah has endowed man with the most precious gift, the reason. The slumber of a man of reason is better than the movement of the ignorant.”

Other Good Deeds

1. Respect for the elders.
2. Respect for teachers and scholars.
3. The Fourth Imam has said, “Your teacher has the following rights. Firstly, total respect from you. Secondly that you listen attentively when he speaks. Thirdly, that you never raise your voice in his presence”.
4. Hospitality.
5. The keeping of promises, adhering to contracts and covenants, and repayment of debts. All these are mandatory. God says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَوْفُوا بِالْعُقُودِ

O you who believe! Fulfill the obligations.....(5:1)

6. The forgiving of any debt owed to one by a person unable to repay.

Women in Islam

Islam does not accept that the first woman was created of any inferior composition

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

O people! be careful of (your duty to) your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship; surely Allah ever watches over you. (4:1)

Or that it was Eve who fell to the promptings of Satan in disobeying God. Both were equally to blame.

فَوَسَّوَسَ لَهُمَا الشَّيْطَانُ لِيُبْدِيَ لَهُمَا مَا وُورِيَ عَنْهُمَا مِنْ سَوْآتِهِمَا وَقَالَ مَا نَهَاكُمَا رَبُّكُمَا عَنْ هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةِ إِلَّا أَنْ تَكُونَا مَلَكَتَيْنِ أَوْ تَكُونَا مِنَ الْخَالِدِينَ

But the Shaitan made an evil suggestion to them that he might make manifest to them what had been hidden from them of their evil inclinations, and he said: Your Lord has not forbidden you this tree except that you may not both become two angels or that you may (not) become of the immortals. (7:20)

وَقَاسَمَهُمَا إِنِّي لَكُمَا لَمِنَ النَّاصِحِينَ (7:21)

And he swore to them both: Most surely I am a sincere adviser to you. (7:21)

Women play an important role and are equal partners of men.

أَحَلَّ لَكُمُ لَيْلَةَ الصَّيَامِ الرَّفَثُ إِلَى نِسَائِكُمْ ۚ هُنَّ لِبَاسٌ لَكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ لِبَاسٌ لَهُنَّ ۗ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ كُنْتُمْ تَخْتَانُونَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَعَفَا عَنْكُمْ ۚ فَالآنَ بَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَابْتَغُوا مَا كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ ۚ ثُمَّ أَتِمُّوا الصَّيَامَ إِلَى اللَّيْلِ ۚ وَلَا تُبَاشِرُوهُنَّ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسَاجِدِ ۚ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرُبُوهَا ۚ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ

It is made lawful to you to go into your wives on the night of the fast; they are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for them; Allah knew that you acted unfaithfully to yourselves, so He has turned to you (mercifully) and removed from you (this burden); so now be in contact with them and seek what Allah has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night at dawn, then complete the fast till night, and have not contact with them while you keep to the mosques; these are the limits of Allah, so do not go near them. Thus does Allah make clear His communications for men that they may guard (against evil). (2:187)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

O people! be careful of (your duty to) your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women; and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship; surely Allah ever watches over you. (4:1)

As a daughter, she is to be shown greater affection than a son. The Prophet commands that a daughter must receive twice as much love and affection as a son.

As a wife, the woman has no obligation to provide for her husband or the children out her income or wealth. The husband has this responsibility. What a woman earns, or receives by way of inheritance or gift, is her own property over which she has sole control.

It is injustice for the husband to require the wife to do the house-hold chores. It is for the parties to agree on the division of labor.

The wife, however, is under a duty to obey the lawful and just commands of her husband.

As a mother the woman occupies a unique position. She is placed upon an almost divine pedestal. She must be obeyed (save where obedience would lead to injustice), revered and her feelings never hurt. The Prophet has said that while both parents must be obeyed and respected, the father's place is three rungs below that of the mother.

The woman is the pivot of the family, and Islam holds the family as being the most important unit of the society. From the moment of conception to birth and up to the attainment of puberty, it is the mother who shapes the mind, the thinking and the behavior of that future member of the society.

The Prophet repeatedly emphasized the importance of the upbringing of children and the role of the mother. He is reported to have said: "It is better to bring up your children so that they have good manners and morals than to spend your wealth for the pleasure of Allah."

There are also several traditions of the Prophet and the Imams about the treatment and conduct of pregnant mothers.

Dress

The Qur'an commands both men and women to 'lower their gaze and be modest'.

The women have been further commanded 'not to display their ornaments except what appears thereof and to wear their head-coverings over their bosom and not to display their ornaments except to their husband (and other members of their family within the prohibited degree of marriage e.g. a son, father, brother, uncles excluding uncles by marriage etc.)'.

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَرَزَكُنِي لَهُمْ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ

Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely Allah is Aware of what they do. (24:30)

وَقُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَغْضُضْنَ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ وَيَحْفَظْنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا ۚ وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَىٰ جُيُوبِهِنَّ ۚ وَلَا يُبْدِينَ زِينَتَهُنَّ إِلَّا لِبُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِهِنَّ أَوْ آبَائِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ أَبْنَاءِ بُعُولَتِهِنَّ أَوْ إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ بَنِي إِخْوَانِهِنَّ أَوْ نِسَائِهِنَّ أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُهُنَّ أَوِ التَّابِعِينَ غَيْرِ أُولِي الْإِرْبَةِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ أَوِ الطِّفْلِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يَظْهَرُوا عَلَىٰ عَوْرَاتِ النِّسَاءِ ۚ وَلَا يَضْرِبْنَ بِأَرْجُلِهِنَّ لِيُعْلَمَ مَا يُخْفِينَ مِنْ زِينَتِهِنَّ ۚ وَتَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and do not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments except to their husbands or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or the male servants not having need (of women), or the children who have not attained knowledge of what is hidden of women; and let them not strike their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may be known; and turn to Allah all of you, O believers! so that you may be successful. (24:31)

Again in 33:59 God says:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنَاتِكَ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِهِنَّ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ أَدْنَىٰ
أَنْ يُعْرَفْنَ فَلَا يُؤْذَيْنَ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

O Prophet! say to your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers that they let down upon them their over-garments; this will be more proper, that they may be known, and thus they will not be given trouble; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (33:59)

The above verses have been interpreted by some jurists as requiring a veiled face and body and others as requiring a scarf over the head to conceal the hair (an essential ornament) and the rest of the body, except the face, the hands and the feet, to be covered by a loose fitting outer garment. In different cultures different forms of women's dress, or veil or "purdah" have evolved.

The Qur'anic object clearly appears to be protection of women from molestation and disrespect, and not their treatment as inferior beings.

Marriage

Marriage is a solemn contract between a man and a woman, each giving his or her consent freely and without any duress, to become life partners and enjoy the rights conferred and fulfill the obligations imposed by the shariah.

The basic requirements are free consent, the mahr (dowry) and the recitation of the marriage formula (the aqd) in the prescribed form and perfect Arabic. The mahr is the giving or a promise to give any sum of money to the bride and/or to fulfill any condition or obligation that the bride may impose.

The parties may recite the aqd themselves or appoint agents to do so on their behalf.

According to some Shiah jurists the bride may, in the mahr, confer upon herself a right to divorce, or provide for the division of property of property in the event of divorce or any other condition to reserve for herself any right or benefit which under the shariah she would not normally enjoy.

The relationship between husband and wife must be founded upon love and mutual tolerance:

“And of His (God's) signs is that He has created for you mates from amongst yourselves so that you might find comfort and solace in them, and He has ordained between you love and mercy.”

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

And one of His signs is that He created mates for you from yourselves that you may find rest in them, and He put between you love and compassion; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect. (30:21)

There are many traditions and sayings on this subject. Two are given below:

1. May Allah bless the man who lays the foundation of his relations with his wife on goodness. (Imam Ja'far Sadiq)
2. A man must honor and love his wife. (The Prophet)

Temporary Marriage (Mutah)

The Shiah law also permits temporary marriages. It has the same rights and obligations as a permanent marriage except that the marriage will terminate by effluxion of time, and, if the parties so agree, the relationship may be for companionship only without consummation.

Polygamy

A marriage with up to four wives is permitted. There are, however, strict conditions as to equal and just treatment of all the wives.

Divorce

Islam permits divorce where the marriage has irreparably broken down. But first there must be a process of reconciliation in which the elders of the two families as well as of the community must strive to get the parties to reconcile.

The Prophet has said that of all the permissible things divorce is the most detestable to Allah.

Political Science

Sovereignty belongs to God. The ruler, whether a king or an elected or nominated representative, can only rule as His vicegerent and in accordance with His laws.

وَالَّذِينَ اسْتَجَابُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ وَأَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَمْرُهُمْ شُورَى بَيْنَهُمْ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنفِقُونَ

And those who respond to their Lord and keep up prayer, and their rule is to take counsel among themselves, and who spend out of what We have given them. (42:38)

الَّذِينَ إِنْ مَكَّنَّاهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ أَقَامُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَوُا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَمَرُوا بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ ۗ
وَلِلَّهِ عَاقِبَةُ الْأُمُورِ

Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah's is the end of affairs. (22:41)

When Imaam ‘Ali (as) was finally elected the khalifah he endeavored to establish an Islamic government but alas he was not permitted to rule for long.

However, during the five years of ‘Ali's reign he wrote several letters to his Governors and Commanders restating the principles of governance in Islam. These letters and instructions have been compiled into a book called ‘Nahjul Balagah’, English translations of which are available.

The most famous of these documents is ‘Ali's letter to his Governor in Egypt, Maalik Ashtar, which deals with a variety of subjects including administration, judiciary, treatment of non-muslims, the army and the conduct of a ruler or his representative. In the preamble of the letter ‘Ali says:

“This is what Allah's servant ‘Ali (as) has ordered Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar when he appointed him Governor of Egypt, for the collection of its (Egypt's) revenues, fighting against its enemies, seeking the good of its people and making its cities prosperous.”

The Qur'an & Modern Science

The French author Maurice Bucaille has written a book entitled 'La Bible, le Coran et la Science', which has been translated into English. In this book the author writes:

"The relationship between the Qur'an and science is a priori a surprise, especially when it turns out to be one of harmony and not of discord.....The totally erroneous statements made about Islam in the West are sometimes the result of ignorance and some times of systematic denigration."

The author then proceeds to take various scientific subjects and give Qur'anic references which fully accord with the modern scientific conclusions. While it is not proposed to deal with the subject in any detail in this course, it might be interesting to give here a few of the scientific subjects dealt with by Bucaille and the corresponding Qur'anic verses cited by him.

The Sky

أَفَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَى السَّمَاءِ فَوْقَهُمْ كَيْفَ بَنَيْنَاهَا وَزَيَّنَّاهَا وَمَا لَهَا مِنْ فُرُوجٍ

Do they not then look up to heaven above them how we have made it and adorned it and it has no gaps? (50:6)

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَاوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ۖ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ۚ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۖ كُلٌّ يَجْرِي لِأَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۖ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ بِلِقَاءِ رَبِّكُمْ تُوقِنُونَ

Allah is He Who raised the heavens without any pillars that you see and He is firm in power and He made the sun and the moon subservient (to you); each one pursues its course to an appointed time; He regulates the affair, making clear the signs that you may be certain of meeting your Lord. (13:2)

وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِنْهُ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

And He has made subservient to you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, all, from Himself; most surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect. (45:13)

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الشَّمْسَ ضِيَاءً وَالْقَمَرَ نُورًا وَقَدَرَهُ مَنَازِلَ لِتَعْلَمُوا عَدَدَ السِّنِينَ وَالْحِسَابَ ۚ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ ۚ يُفَصِّلُ الْآيَاتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْلَمُونَ

He it is who made the sun a shining brightness and the moon a light, and ordained for it mansions that you might know the computation of years and the reckoning. Allah did not create it but with truth; He makes the signs manifest for a people who (10:5)

The Planets

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ مِثْلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكَاةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۚ الْمِصْبَاحُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ ۚ الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ 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)

إِنَّا زَيْنًا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِزَيْنَةِ الْكَوَاكِبِ

That you may warn a people whose fathers were not warned, so they are heedless. (37:6)

Celestial organization

لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ ۚ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ

Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the day; and all float on in a sphere. (36:40)

يُولِجُ اللَّيْلُ فِي النَّهَارِ وَيُولِجُ النَّهَارُ فِي اللَّيْلِ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرَ كُلٌّ لِّإَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ
ذَٰلِكُمْ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ لَهُ الْمُلْكُ ۚ وَالَّذِينَ تَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ مَا يَمْلِكُونَ مِنْ قِطْمِيرٍ

He causes the night to enter in upon the day, and He causes the day to enter in upon the night, and He has made subservient (to you) the sun and the moon; each one follows its course to an appointed time; this is Allah, your Lord, His is the kingdom; and those whom you call upon besides Him do not control a straw. (35:13)

وَالسَّمَاءَ بَنَيْنَاهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ

And the heaven, we raised it high with power, and most surely we are the makers of things ample. (51:47)

Conquest of space

فَيَأْتِي آلَاءُ رَبِّكُمَا تُكَذِّبَانِ

O assembly of the jinn and the men! If you are able to pass through the regions of the heavens and the earth, then pass through; you cannot pass through but with authority. (55:13)

وَلَوْ فَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ بَابًا مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ فَظَلُّوا فِيهِ يَعْرُجُونَ

And even if we open to them a gateway of heaven, so that they ascend into it all the while, (15:14)

لَقَالُوا إِنَّمَا سُكِّرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا بَلْ نَحْنُ قَوْمٌ مَّسْحُورُونَ

They would certainly say: Only our eyes have been covered over, rather we are an enchanted people. (15:15)

The Earth

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ رِزْقًا لَكُمْ ۖ فَلَا تَجْعَلُوا لِلَّهِ أَنْدَادًا وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ

Who made the earth a resting place for you and the heaven a canopy and (Who) sends down rain from the cloud then brings forth with it subsistence for you of the fruits; therefore do not set up rivals to Allah while you know. (2:22)

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِنْ نَبَاتٍ شَتَّى

Who made the earth for you an expanse and made for you therein paths and sent down water from the cloud; then thereby we have brought forth many species of various herbs. (20:53)

كُلُوا وَارْعَوْا أَنْعَامَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي النَّهْيِ

Eat and pasture your cattle; most surely there are signs in this for those endowed with understanding. (20:54)

The Water Cycle

اللَّهُ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّاحَ فَتُثِيرُ سَحَابًا فَيَبْسُطُهُ فِي السَّمَاءِ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ وَيَجْعَلُهُ كِسْفًا فَتَرَى الْوَدْقَ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ خِلَالِهِ ۚ فَإِذَا أَصَابَ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ إِذَا هُمْ يَسْتَبْشِرُونَ

Allah is he Who sends forth the winds so they raise a cloud, then He spreads it forth in the sky as He pleases, and He breaks it up so that you see the rain coming forth from inside it; then when He causes it to fall upon whom He pleases of His servants, lo! They are joyful (30:48)

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيَّاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۚ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَقْلَّتْ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُقْنَاهُ لِبَلَدٍ مَيِّتٍ فَأَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۚ كَذَٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ

And He it is Who sends forth the winds bearing good news before His mercy, until, when they bring up a laden cloud, We drive it to a dead land, then We send down water on it, then bring forth with it of fruits of all kinds; thus shall We bring forth the dead that you may be mindful. (7:57)

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ الرِّيَّاحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ۚ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً طَهُورًا

And when they are called to Allah and His Messenger that he may judge between them, lo! a party of them turn aside. (25:48)

لِنُحْيِيَ بِهِ بَلَدَةً مَيِّتًا وَنُسْقِيَهُ مِمَّا خَلَقْنَا أَنْعَامًا وَأَنَاسِيَّ كَثِيرًا

And if the truth be on their side, they come to him quickly, obedient. (25:49)

Origin of Life in Water

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ كَانَتَا رَتْقًا فَفَتَقْنَاهُمَا ۚ وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ

شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ ۚ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

Do not those who disbelieve see that the heavens and the earth were closed up, but we have opened them; and we have made of water everything living, will they not then believe? (21:30)

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ
أَنْوَاجًا مِنْ نَبَاتٍ شَتَّى

Who made the earth for you an expanse and made for you therein paths and sent down water from the cloud; then thereby we have brought forth many species of various herbs. (20:53)

Vegetable and animal reproduction

الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَسَلَكَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ
أَنْوَاجًا مِنْ نَبَاتٍ شَتَّى

Who made the earth for you an expanse and made for you therein paths and sent down water from the cloud; then thereby we have brought forth many species of various herbs. (20:53)

حُنْ نَقُصُّ عَلَيْكَ أَحْسَنَ الْقَصَصِ بِمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ وَإِنْ كُنْتَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ لَمِ
يَن

We narrate to you the best of narratives, by our revealing to you this Quran, though before this you were certainly one of those who did not know. (12:3)

وَأَنَّهُ خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَى

And that He created pairs, the male and the female (53:45)

مِنْ نُطْقَةٍ إِذَا تُمْنَى (53:46)

From the small seed when it is adapted (53:46)

Animal communities

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ ۚ مَا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ
شَيْءٍ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ

And there is no animal that walks upon the earth nor a bird that flies with its two wings but (they are) genera like yourselves; we have not neglected anything in the Book, then to their Lord shall they be gathered. (6:38)

Bees

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنْ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا يَعْرِشُونَ

And your Lord revealed to the bee saying: Make hives in the mountains and in the trees and in what they build: (16:68)

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلُلًا ۚ يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَانُهُ فِيهِ
شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ (16:69)

Then eat of all the fruits and walk in the ways of your Lord submissively. There comes forth from within it a beverage of many colors,

in which there is healing for men; most surely there is a sign in this for a people who reflect. (16:69)

Spiders

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا ۖ وَإِنْ أَوْهَنَ الْبُيُوتِ
لَبِيتُ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ ۖ لَوْ كَانُوا يَعْلَمُونَ

The parable of those who take guardians besides Allah is as the parable of the spider that makes for itself a house; and most surely the frailest of the houses is the spider's house did they but know. (29:41)

Human reproduction

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّبَكَ رَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ

O man! What has beguiled you from your Lord, the Gracious one, (82:6)

الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّاكَ فَعَدَلَكَ

Who created you, then made you complete, then made you symmetrical? (82:7)

فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ

Into whatever form He pleased He constituted you. (82:8)

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ

He created man from a small seed and lo! he is an open contender. (16:4)

ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاهُ نُطْفَةً فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ

Then we made him a small seed in a firm resting-place, (23:13)

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِنَ الْبَعْثِ فَإِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ
عَلَقَةٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ مُضْغَةٍ مُخَلَّقَةٍ وَغَيْرِ مُخَلَّقَةٍ لِنُبَيِّنَ لَكُمْ ۖ وَنُقَرِّ فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مَا نَشَاءُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُسَمًّى
ثُمَّ نُخْرِجُكُمْ طِفْلًا ثُمَّ لِتَبْلُغُوا أَشَدَّكُمْ ۖ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُتَوَفَّىٰ وَمِنْكُمْ مَنْ يُرَدُّ إِلَىٰ أَرْذَلِ الْعُمُرِ
لِكَيْلَا يَعْلَمَ مِنْ بَعْدِ عِلْمٍ شَيْئًا ۖ وَتَرَى الْأَرْضَ هَامِدَةً فَإِذَا أَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا الْمَاءَ اهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ
وَأَنْبَتَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ زَوْجٍ بَهِيجٍ

O people! if you are in doubt about the raising, then surely We created you from dust, then from a small seed, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, complete in make and incomplete, that We may make clear to you; and We cause what We please to stay in the wombs till an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies, then that you may attain your maturity; and of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life, so that after having knowledge he does not know anything; and you see the earth sterile land, but when We send down on it the water, it stirs and swells and brings forth of every kind a beautiful herbage. (22:5)

ثُمَّ خَلَقْنَا النُّطْفَةَ عَلَقَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْعَلَقَةَ مُضْغَةً فَخَلَقْنَا الْمُضْغَةَ عِظَامًا فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَامَ لَحْمًا ثُمَّ
أَنْشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ ۖ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ

Then we made the seed a clot, then We made the clot a lump of flesh, then We made (in) the lump of flesh bones, then We clothed the bones with flesh, then We caused it to grow into another creation, so blessed be Allah, the best of the creators. (23:14)

وَأَنَّهُ خَلَقَ الذَّكَرَ وَالْأُنثَىٰ

And that He created pairs, the male and the female (53:45)

مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ إِذَا تُمْنَىٰ

From the small seed when it is adapted (53:46)

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَكُمْ أَزْوَاجًا ۚ وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أَنْثَىٰ وَلَا تَضَعُ إِلَّا
بِعِلْمِهِ ۚ وَمَا يُعَمَّرُ مِنْ مُعَمَّرٍ وَلَا يُنْقَصُ مِنْ عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ ۚ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَى اللَّهِ يَسِيرٌ

And Allah created you of dust, then of the life-germ, then He made you pairs; and no female bears, nor does she bring forth, except with His knowledge; and no one whose life is lengthened has his life lengthened, nor is aught diminished of one's life, but it is all in a book; surely this is easy to Allah. (35:11)

Islamic Jurisprudence

This too is a subject beyond the scope of this course. The main sources of Islamic Jurisprudence are the Qur'an and the sunnah, and encompasses inheritance, marriage, divorce, paternity, waqfs (trusts), contracts, penal laws, evidence and procedure.

Islamic Culture?

Culture has been defined as “the totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or a population. It is the set of shared beliefs, attitudes, values, and behavioral patterns of a group or organization.” (Readers Digest Universal Dictionary)

Religion on the other hand is “the expression of man's belief in and reverence for God or gods who created the Universe and govern it.”

It is as naive to think that any religion encompasses the totality of culture as it is to think that any culture is solely the product of a religion.

Islam like many other religions claims to be universal accommodating within its fold the cultures of all its adherents provided that the bounds of the religious laws are not transgressed.

Islam has broad parameters of rules and regulations and within these parameters an African can remain as much a Muslim as a Pakistani or a Bangladeshi or an English-man or Scots-man or an American or Chinese or any individual from any country anywhere in the world.

Nevertheless there is a difference of opinion on whether Islam has its own distinct culture. Scholars are divided on whether there is a central cultural theme in Islam.

Some vehemently argue that there is such a central theme.

Others maintain that because of the universality of Islam it is wrong to insist upon a common cultural theme.

This latter school of thought argue that culture is an historical heritage of a nation, people or society in the fields of art, architecture, dress, cuisine, language, literature and other cultural norms and pursuits. Islam, on the other hand, consists of beliefs, acts of worship, a code of conduct and jurisprudence. So long as the culture of a society lies within the parameters of Islamic beliefs, acts of worship, code of conduct and the shariah, that culture would be acceptable in Islam. Many an artist, architect, poet, author and chef has, upon acceptance of Islam, adjusted himself/herself so as conform to the Islamic requirements.

Muslims in Great Britain

There is a substantial Muslim community in Great Britain and at times there occur conflicts between them and other communities.

It is wrong to link racism with religion. Racism is an attitude of hostility based upon racial prejudice. This is often exploited by unscrupulous politicians and community leaders for their own ends.

Unfortunately, both the victims and the perpetrators of racial prejudice tend to foster the image of it being the result of the diversity in religious beliefs. This often rallies support for the victim community and provides the perpetrators with the mantle of defending their faith.

At the same time there is amongst the indigenous population a fear, nurtured by irresponsible media, that Islam poses a threat to their community.

If a solution is not found, and found soon, the Muslim communities could be driven to extreme ethnicity with the future generation growing up as pariahs in their own country.

Consideration must be given to promoting a better understanding of Islam in the indigenous population. For this both the communities will need to strive hard.

Islam is a tolerant religion. It accepts Christianity and Judaism as sister faiths and respects other religions as well. The Muslims are enjoined to respect churches, synagogues and other places of worship.

There is a need to ensure that each side is enriched by the values of the religion of the other through amicable inter-action without anyone from either side losing his identity.

To ensure harmony efforts must be made to create a community of British Muslims rather than a community, or a number of communities, of Muslims in Britain.

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