

LECTURE NO 1

TOPIC: FAITH

- Definition of faith
- Basic principles of faith
- The fruits of faith

Basic principles of faith

1. Faith in Allah (Tauheed / oneness of Allah)
2. Faith in prophets (Nubuwwat and Risalat)
3. The life in the Hereafter (Day of judgment)

Definition of faith

Belief in the special terminology of Islam, means to believe in the Prophets of God as such, that is to acknowledge that for our guidance God had vouchsafed to them knowledge that was beyond the range of our intelligence and understanding, and, on the basis of it, to affirm what was communicated to us by them as from God, and to accept religion brought by them as Divine religion.

Basic principles of faith

1. “FAITH IN ALLAH”

(قل هو الله احد 0 الله الصمد 0 لم يلد 0 ولم يولد 0 ولم يكن له كفوا احد 0)

“Faith in Allah is based on four premises”

1. Allah exists and nobody created Him.
2. He alone is the Lord of the whole Universe.
3. He alone is the Master and He alone is authorized to make any modifications in the universe according to His will.
4. He alone is to be exclusively worshipped and He has no associates.

The existence of Allah

The Qur’an has clearly told us that the proof of the existence of Allah lies within our selves. How can we, then deny something which is writ large on our very foreheads as the proof of its veracity Allah says.

وفي انفسكم افلا تبصرون

“Who have sure faith, and within your own selves, so do you not see?”

In the very depths of our hearts, it is etched that Allah exists. When struck with hardships and misfortune, we seek his shelter because of our faithful nature and religious instinct. There are, within us and all around us numerous proofs of His existence. Our sub conscious that is our heart, unconsciously in Him, but our conscious self, that is our reason, accepts His existence.

He alone is the Lord of the whole Universe

The second dogma of faith is that Allah is the Sustainer of the whole Universe. It means that you have to believe from the depth of Your heart that Allah alone is the Creator of all the world. He alone created, out of nothing, the living organisms, the heavenly bodies and the entire visible as well as invisible world. He devised such marvelous canons for all these worlds that the Scholars of medicine, chemistry, physics and astronomy, have been able to discover only a few of them. He alone has the Full knowledge about every big or small thing of all these worlds. It is written with Him that how many leaves a tree has, what shape does a leaf carry, or how many germs float in this world and what is their size and volume and what are their constituents. He only knows how many rotating electrons an atom has, what transitory changes occur in them, what the nature of their statics and dynamics is, what forms they take and what the characteristic of their transformation are.

He alone is the Master and He alone is authorized to make any modifications in the universe according to His will.

Thus, He is the sustainer of the world. He gave form to everything and he looks after them. He makes alteration and changes in their conditions and character. He has predetermined every detail and has placed such proofs in each atom of this universe that every person with sufficient reason can trace Him and seek guidance from him. This is the second dogma of faith and it is obligatory to accept it and believe it.

But, does one become a believer by just accepting this as an article of faith? Someone declares before You that Allah alone is the creator of this universe and He alone is the sustainer of everything. Would you accept him as a believer just because of his declaration? Nay, this declaration alone is not enough to be a believer, because many nations of the antiquity made this declaration. The idolaters of the Quresh, whose fetishism the prophet Muhammad repudiated and those against whom he waged Jihad, also declared Allah the God of Gods and never denied his existence.

He alone is to be exclusively worshipped and He has no association

When you admit that Allah exists, is the Sustainer of the worlds, is the lord of the incomparable Kingdom, then it follows out of necessity that there should be no associate with Him in worship nor should anyone besides him be worshipped in any form or shape to be construed as his adversary. By the Grace of Allah, I had the good fortune to arrive at a point in the interpretation of the Surah An-Nas(114), which no other exegesis carries for the guidance of those who admit that Allah exists is the master of all and is the lord of the worlds yet do not display that unadulterated belief in the unity of Allah which indeed is a requirement of the divinity of Allah this Surah says:

قل اعوذ برب الناس 0 ملك الناس 0 اله الناس 0

Thou say: "I came under the shelter of the Lord of men, The King of men, The God of men (114, 1-3)

2. FAITH IN PROPHETS

Definition of Prophet

The Prophets too are human beings; they are not endowed with divinity because Divinity merits only Allah the Peerless; The Prophets, however, have one distinctive feature that the Revelation descends upon them; Allah Almighty says:

وما ارسلنا قبلك من المرسلين الا انهم لياكلون الطعام ويمشون في الاسواق

"And we sent not before thee Messengers but that they ate food and walked in the markets (bazaars)."

Faith in the Prophets is based on three premises

1. Islam does not discriminate between Prophets.
2. All Prophets are human beings.
3. Faith in the Miracles of Prophets.

Islam does not discriminate between Prophets

There are people among the followers of other prophets who talk disparagingly about prophets other than the ones they follows, but Islam has made it incumbent that all prophets should be equally respected. If a person talks insolently of any prophet or reproaches him, he violates the dictates of Islam. Allah says:

امن الرسول بما انزل اليه من ربه والمؤمنون كل امن بالله وملئكته"
"وكتبه ورسله لانفرق بين احد من رسله وقالوا سمعنا واطعنا غفرانك ربنا واليك المصير

The Messenger accepted what was sent down on him from his Lord and the Muslims too. All of them believed in God and in His Angels and in His Books and His Messengers they say, "We make no division between any one of His Messengers" and they spoke out "We heard and accepted we want thy pardon, Our Lord and unto Thee is our return"

In other words, a Muslim loves and respects Moses and Jesus just as he loves and respect the prophet SAW. He reveres them all, like his own prophet SAW, without discrimination. This means that it a Jew becomes a Christian he does not undergo any loss of not believing in Moses; he rather, benefits by believing in both Moses and Jesus. If after this, this Christian becomes a Muslim, he is not

at a loss of not believing in the prophet SAW as well as believing in all the prophets and messengers.

All Prophets are human beings

All Prophets are human beings; they are born like other human beings and die like them. They fall ill like other human beings and recover also like them. They are not any whit different from other human beings so far as the structure of their bodies, the outward appearance of their limbs and organs, the circulation of blood and the function of the heart is concerned. They eat and drink like other human beings. It is only to indicate that they have no features of Divinity which behaves only Allah and is reserved for Him. However, in spite of being human beings, they have one distinction that the Revelation descends on them from Allah.

And, this is not an ordinary thing. The earlier communities were flabbergasted when the Revelation descended upon man from Allah, on which Allah called their perplexity improper and said.

اكان للناس عجبا ان اوحينا الي رجل منهم ان انذر الناس وبشر الذين امنوا ان لهم صدق عند ربهم

Was it a wonder to the people that we revealed to a man from among them : ‘Warn the people and give good tidings to the Believers that they have a true footing with their Lord?’

قل انما انا بشر مثلكم يوحى الي انما الهكم اله واحد

Thou say: I am also a man as you are; the order comes to me that upon you the worship is of One Single Sovereign.

قالوا ابعث الله بشرا رسولا

They said : “Has God sent forth a mortal as Messenger?”

Faith in the Miracles of Prophets

When the incidence of Ascension {Mi’raj} took place and the prophet SAW was transported from Makkah to Quds .and he SAW returned the same night the Quresh did not believe it. In their opinion is impossible because it was inconceivable, with the then available means of transport {camels, horses, etc.}To travel such a long distance and return in the same night but this very impossible thing has not only become possible in our times but has become common...and nobody is amazed at that nor does any body deny it.

A century or two ago .if the greatest physicist was told that soon people will fly in “ metallic machines” and that they will fly faster than sound ,or that it will be possible to record somebody’s speech ,etc, which may be later reproduced at any time ,even after his death ,even that scholar would have shaken his head in disbelief, whereas, it has become a common thing today which all know .

How did all these impossible things become possible after all? It may be said that impossible are of two types: One is the Common impossible. A {muhal’adi} occurrence

which we are not used to see while happening and we consider them impossible only because of that. Its example is the incident of Ascension or other miracles. The second type of “impossible.” is that the occurrence of which is rationally impossible, such as the co-existence of opposites {ijtima-i-diddain} for example, existence and non-existence are opposites of each other, and is impossible for any one to be present at one place and absent from it at the same time. Similarly, things cannot assume different forms at the same time: a book, while it is a book, cannot become a morsel of bread at the same time.

The rationally impossible “occurrences” are inconceivable but the so-called impossible occurrences in ordinary circumstances have become possible through our scientific knowledge and progress and have become commonplace. Is it not possible for Allah, the All-Powerful, who originated these laws Himself, to make impossible, possible? Certainly, the Omnipotent Allah is competent to make a thing, impossible in the ordinary circumstances, happen. Therefore, if we hear through a true report that a thing impossible under the ordinary circumstances has occurred, we will take it as a real happening and will accept it.

3. THE LIFE IN THE HEREAFTER (DAY OF JUDGMENT)

The life in the Hereafter is the true life. The short-sighted are unable to see it and the feeble-minded do not believe what they are told about it. But one endowed with vision and possessed of wisdom and comprehension know that the human life passes through stages.

There was a time when this very man was lying in the womb of his mother in a contracted and shrunken position and as breathing in this limited world of his. If he could think at that time, he would have considered this state as his real life and would have never agreed to leave it and emerge from the womb of his mother, unless forcibly removed from it. If he were able to speak, he would have considered his emergence as his death and would have construed it as being buried in a dark dungeon, although it was his birth, which meant that he was to inhabit this vast and wide world after leaving the womb of his mother.

In the same way we consider death banishment from his world, although that too is a kind of our re-birth and progress to a very comfortable life, that is, transfer to purgatory or limbo {Barzakh} which is a temporary halting place between this material and transitory world and the eternal world of the Hereafter.

It is related that a Companion once enquired from the Prophet, “O Messenger of God, who will God raise up his creatures from the dead? Is there anything like it here in this world which may be cited as example?,” The Prophet replied, Has it never accrued to your that you may have passed by a stretch of land in your country and found it dry and bereft of all vegetation, and then, on coming upon it again, after sometime, discovered that it was covered lavishly with fresh, green grass? The Companion replied, “Yes”, may master. It has. The Prophet remarked, this typifies resurrection. God will rise from the dead in the same manner.

The fruits of faith

The fruit of faith is that mental attitude which the prophet {SWS} epitomized in one of his famous remarks, which is so comprehensive, positive and eloquent that no other remark can match it. In fact, these all_ comprehensive remarks are a testimony to his prophet hood. Defining kindness, {ihsan} he said

{Worship Allah as if your are seeing Him because if your do not see Him He surely sees you}

One of the fruits of faith is to remember Allah at all times. I once read about a pious man {whose name I do not remember } How his mystic initiation began. He had a devoted and virtuous uncle. He asked his uncle, one day, that he too wanted to be as devoted to Allah as he {the uncle } was and requested his uncle to guide him to such deeds as would make him virtuous.

His uncle told him "Repeat thrice a day that Allah is watching me and is aware of every thing. He continued this practice for a week. After which his uncle ordered him to repeat the same words thrice after every prayer. He started that practice as well and spent another week in it. Then his uncle ordered him to repeat these words mentally, instead of orally. The man continued this practice and as a result of this he always remembered Allah and never became oblivious of Him.

Allah, in the Qur'an, has not emphasized anything more than his remembrance and He has appreciated those who invoke Him more than anyone else.