Islam Essay, Research Paper

Islam

ISLAM

Islam is comprised of three essential beliefs: The belief in God, obeying his moral laws, and believing in the after-life. Submission to God is directly followed by obeying the moral standards of everyday life. The Qur’an makes morality reign supreme and ensures that the affairs of life, instead of dominated by selfish desires, be regulated by norms of morality. These laws are the standard by which God determines the life of the believers, and the disbelievers on the Day of Judgement.

The belief in life after death not only guarantees success in the Hereafter but also makes this world full of peace and happiness by making individuals responsible and dutiful in their activities. The Qur’an lays down a moral system which is the standard by which conduct a particular mode of conduct is judged and classified as good or bad. “It is not righteous that you turn your faces East or West; but it is righteous to believe in God and the Last Day and the Angels, and the Book, and the messengers; to spend the rest of your substance, out of love for Him, for you kin, for orphans for the needy, for the steadfast in prayers, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which you made; to be firm and patient in pain or suffering and adversity and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-conscious.” (2:177)

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To elaborate further, our faith should be true and sincere, we must be prepared to show it in deeds of charity to our fellow-men, we must be good citizens, supporting social organizations, and our own individual soul must be firm and unshaken in al circumstances. Along with these standards, there is also the five pillars of Islam that is essential to ensure a rewarding after life. These pillars include: The belief that Allah is the one and only God, and Mohammad is his prophet; Salat five times a day; Zakat; Pilgrimage to Meccah; Observe fasting ritual during the month of Ramadan. These standards provides a sanction to morality in the love and fear of God, which will impel man to obey the moral law even without external pressures. Through belief in God and the Day of Judgement it furnishes a force which enables a person to adapt the moral conduct with sincerity and devotion straight form the heart and the soul.

The Qur’an explains the Day of Judgement as the day when the whole universe will be destroyed and then again the dead will be resurrected to stand before God. That day will be the beginning of the life that will never end, and on that Day every person will be rewarded and punished by God according to his or her good or evil deed. “So set your face towards the straight path before the day arrives from God which is irreversible. Men will be segregated on that day so that he disbelievers will bear the consequence on his unbelief; and he who does the right will straighten out the way for himself, so that God may reward those who believed and did what was good, by His grace.” (30:43-45) It is by the moral laws of God that both the believers and the unbelievers will be judged.

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The reward for believing in God and the day of Judgement is as follows: “As for those who believe and do good, We never burden a souls beyond capacity. They are men of paradise where they will abide forever…Streams of running water shall ripple at their feet, and they will say: ‘ We are grateful to God for guiding us here. Never would we have been guided if God had not shown us the way. The apostles of our Lord had indeed brought the truth.’(7:42-43) If one accepts God and His moral laws, then they have accepted life after death. The believers are those who sacrifice their life on earth, in return for eternal salvation promised by God.

The Qur’an emphatically states that the Day of Judgement must come and God will decide about the fate of each soul according to his or her record of deeds. “Those who disbelieve say: The hour will never come unto us. Say: Nay, by my Lord, but it is coming unto you surely. He is the Knower of the Unseen. Not an atoms weight, or less than that or greater, escapes Him in the heavens or in the earth, but it is in a clear record. That He may reward those who believe and do good words. For them is pardon and a rich provision. But those who strive against our revelations, challenging Us, theirs will be a painful doom of wrath.” (34:3-5) The day of resurrection will be the day when God’s attributes of justice and mercy on those who suffered for his sake in the worldly life will be in full manifestation. God will give mercy for those who suffered for His sake in the worldly life, believing that an eternal bliss was waiting for him. But for the disbelievers there lies a different fate; one of misery and torture.

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The Qur’an placed so much emphasis on the belief of life after death, that even a slight doubt in it means denying God and becoming a disbeliever. The Qur’an very clearly says that the disbelievers have no sound basis for their denial of life after death. It is based on pure conjecture: “They say ‘There is nothing but our present life; and we live, and nothing but time destroys us.’ Of that they have no knowledge; they merely conjecture. And when our revelations are recited to them, their only argument is that they say, “Bring us our fathers, if you speak truly.’ (45:24-25) Everybody will get what they deserve on the day of judgement. Man has a very short span of life in this world, and this physical world is not eternal, therefore punishments or rewards equal to the evil or noble deeds of persons are not possible here. The day of Judgement must come so that God can decide the fate of each soul. The people who believe know that no matter where they are, or what they are feeling inside, they are constantly being watched by God. The disbelievers reject this idea altogether, denying the after life, and therefore denying God’s powers. The Qur’an clearly states that those who reject God and the after life will suffer for eternity. “Which we have reserved as punishment for the evil-doers? It is a tree that grows at the bottom of Hell. Its spathes are like the prickly pear. They will eat and fill their bellies with it, washing it down with boiling water. Then to hell they will surely be returned.” (37:63-67)

The Qur’an also states that this worldly life is a preparation for the eternal life after death. Those who deny the Day of Judgement become slaves of their passions and desires. It repeatedly states what happens to believers, and unbelievers when they die. “Until, when death

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comes unto one of them, he says, ‘My lord send me back, that In may do right in that which In have left behind! But nay! It is but a word he speaks; and behind them is a barrier until the say when they are raised. And when the Trumpet is blown there will be no kinship among them that day, nor will they ask of one another. Then those whose scales are heavy, they are successful. An those whose scales are light are those who lose their souls, in hell abiding, the fire burns their faces and they are glum therein.” (23:99-104) The scales that this passage refers to is the scales of moral conduct on earth. If one does good deeds on earth, the weight of those deeds are heavier on the Day of Judgement. Evil deeds constitutes less wieght on the scale of judgement. In essence, life on earth is a test for all humans. The more good deeds one accumulates, the better the chances are of eternal bliss in the afterlife.

The explanation that the Qur’an gives about the necessity of life after death is what the moral consciousness of man demands. If there is no life after death, the very belief in God becomes irrelevant, or even if one believes in God, that would be an unjust and indifferent God: having once created man and not concerned with his fate. This is not so in Islam. We know through the Qur’an that God is Just and Merciful. The day of resurrection will be the day when God’s attributes of Justice and Mercy will be in full manifestation. God will show his Mercy on those who suffered for his sake, and punish those who cared nothing about God and the after-life. Believing in God, obeying His laws, and believing in the after-life is what determines ones fate in the Hereafter.