

Aligarh Journal of Interfaith Studies



Peer Reviewed, , Open Access International Journal
ISSN: 2582-7553 | Impact Factor | ESTD Year 2020

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DIVINE REVELATION: AS A COMMONALITY AMONG RLIGIONS

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
Article History Published Online:	<p>Islam, the third great Abrahamic prophetic religion, has its basis in revelations received by Muhammad ﷺ (c. 7th century AD). These were collected shortly after his death into the Qur`an (Koran), which is regarded by Muslims as the final, perfect revelation--a human copy of the eternal book, dictated to the Prophet. While Islam accords prophetic status to Moses and Jesus, it looks upon the Qur`an as a correction and completion of all that went before. More than either Judaism or Christianity, Islam is a religion of the Book. Revelation is understood to be a declaration of God's will rather than his personal self-disclosure. Insisting as it does on the absolute sovereignty of God, on man's passivity in relation to the divine, and on the infinite distance between creator and creature, Islam has sometimes been inhospitable to philosophical speculation and mystical experience. Yet in medieval Islam there was both a remarkable flowering of Arabic philosophy and the intense piety of the mystical Sufis. The rationalism of some philosophers and the theosophical tendencies of some of the Sufis came into conflict with official orthodoxy.¹</p>
Keywords: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Revelation➤ The Quran➤ The Veda➤ Sruti➤ Gita	



Meaning of the Wahy:

To know the meaning of Revelation (*Wahy*), some excerpts from an article written by Maulana Waheeduddin Khan are reproduced for ready reference. The Qur'an is composed of verbal revelations made to Prophet Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam during a period of twenty three years at Makkah (610-622) and Madinah (622-632). The arrangement of the Qur'an is not in accordance with the chronological order of the revelation. The first revelation was verses 2-6 of Chapter 96. The last chapter revealed was chapter 110.

Literal meaning of *wahy* is to intimate or indicate; to communicate; to inspire; to put in somebody's heart or to converse secretly. The basic meaning however of the word *wahy* is to talk to others hiddenly or silently. The word *wahy* has been used in the Qur'an to express different meanings, for instance it is used to put some message into the heart:

We infused this into the (mind of) Moses's mother. (28:7)

Assignment of duty to both living and non-living things:

And thy Lord commanded the Bee to build its cells in the hills. (16:68)

And He assigned to each heaven its duty and command. (41:12)

To converse silently:

Then (*Zakariyya*) came out from the shrine and told them by signs to give glory to their Lord morning and evening. (19:11)

In the instance mentioned above the word *wahy* is used in its literal sense. But the word *wahy* has been used more often in the Qur'an for the divine revelation made to the prophets:



“Surely we have revealed (*awhaina*) to thee as we revealed to Noah and the Prophet after him.....”. (4:163)

Then we revealed to Moses to strike the Sea with his staff. (7:31)

And we revealed to Noah. (11:36)

FORMS OF REVELATION

The Quran is composed of *wahy matlu*, the recited words, [i.e. the designation reserved for the superior form of communication between Allah and His prophets, and is the ‘recital’, in their hearing, of the words of the message itself. It may be conveyed through a voice that is heard, or an actual messenger, usually the angel Gabriel, who himself appears.] and the traditions (*ahadith*) are composed of *wahy Ghair Matlu*. [no words are usually uttered, but the revelation is ‘cast’, as it were, into the mind of the person inspired, or else comes in a vision]

The Quran states:

He (Muhammad) does not speak out of his own fancy.

This is no other than an inspired revelation. He is taught by one who is mighty in power and vigorous. (53:1)

The external inspiration or *wahy matlu* has been divided into three categories.

- *Wahy* Quran, that which was given by the mouth of the angel Gabriel and which reached the ear of the Prophet after he knew it that it was Gabriel who spoke to him.
- *Isharatul Malik*: that which was received from Gabriel, but not by word of mouth. On such occasions the Prophet said: ‘The Holy Ghost has breathed into my heart.’
- *Ilham or Wahi Qalbi*: That which was made known to the Prophet by light of prophecy.



Ilham or inspiration of the *sufis* should not be confused with the *ilham* of the Prophets. *Wahy Matlu* is to be recited and forms part of the Quran while *wahy ghair matlu* is the *wahy* which is not meant to be recited. This is preserved in the form of the authentic traditions.

So far as *wahy matlu* is concerned it has reached us without the slightest possible error. The whole of it is preserved in the form of the Quran. But so far as *Wahy Ghair Matlu* is concerned the actual wordings of all the sayings have not been preserved intact.

The following are the different ways through which the revelation came to the Prophet. The Quran tells us that God has communicated to his messengers in the following ways:

It is not vouchsafed to any man that God should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a veil or through a messenger sent and authorized by Him to reveal His will. (42:51)

Another difference between *wahy matlu* and *wahy ghair matlu* is as follows:

Wahy ghair matlu is the suggestion thrown by God into the heart or mind of his messengers. The Prophet understands the substance of the message. It may be a command or prohibition or an explanation of a truth (a) *wahy matlu* is the verbal or literal revelation by which the actual words of God are conveyed to man in human language. This is also known as *wahy jalī* (the apparent revelation). (b) The second way through which God communicates with man is that He speaks from behind a veil.

The third way is through a messenger i.e. the angel Gabriel brings the revelations to the Holy Prophet.

The following ways of the coming down of revelation have been mentioned in the Hadith.

1. *Al-Ruya al Sadiqa* (true dreams)



According to a hadith the true dreams are 46th part of prophethood. Aisha, Prophet's wife has narrated that the commencement of the divine revelation to the Messenger of God was in the form of true dream which came true as the dawn of the day.

2. The second way of communication from God to Man is 'from behind a veil.' (38:51)

Some scholars say that this refers to dreams and visions. Because a certain light is shown in this case which has a deeper meaning than that which appears on the surface. The dreams mentioned in chapter 12 of the Quran are an illustration of this. Through dreams or visions God reveals certain truths.

This also refers to the case of Moses with whom God spoke while He remained invisible to him (20:13)

3. Angel used to suggest directly to the heart of the Prophet, remaining invisible to him. As the Prophet said:

The angel Gabriel has suggested to my heart that none of the living beings would pass away unless he finishes his providence (destined for him in the world).

Sometimes the *wahy* came in the form of the ringing sound of a big bell (*salsalatul jars*). According to a hadith 'sometimes the revelation, comes like the ringing of a bell.' This type of revelation is the hardest of all and when I have grasped what is revealed this condition passes away.

Commenting upon this type of revelation Aisha (Wife of Prophet) says: I saw the Prophet receiving revelation on a very cold day and noticed that the sweat was dropping from his forehead. This condition lasted till the revelation was over.

According to the *Sahaba* (Companions' of Prophet) his body used to become very weighty during such a revelation until the camel on which he was riding used to sit down due to that load.



The Prophet would hang his head and his companions would do the same, and when that condition was over he would raise up his head. Sometimes the Angel came in the form of a man. The angel also visited the Prophet in the shape of Prophet's companion, Dahiya Kalbi.²

THEMES AND TOPICS

Recurrent questions concerning revelation include the relationship between general and special revelation; the relationship between word and deed as media of special revelation; the authority of the sacred books; the revelatory value of tradition; the nonverbal component in revelation; the interpersonal dimension of revelation; and the relationship between faith and reason.

GENERAL REVELATION: THE ROLE OF NATURE.

The Eastern religions, on the whole, differ from Western religions in that they place less emphasis on a special or exclusive revelation received by a "chosen people" and rather speak of the manifestation of the Absolute through the general order of nature. There is, however, no irreconcilable opposition between general and special revelation. Vedanta Hinduism and Buddhism, even if they do not speak of special revelation, believe that their religious books and traditions have unique value for imparting a saving knowledge of the truth. The Bible and the Qur'an, conversely, proclaim that although God has specially manifested himself to the biblical peoples, he also makes himself known through the order of nature. The failure of some nations to acknowledge the one true God is attributed not to God's failure to disclose himself but rather to the debilitating effects of sin on the perceptive powers of man.



SPECIAL REVELATION: THE ROLE OF HISTORY.

The Western religions differ somewhat among themselves in the ways in which they understand how special revelation occurs. Some focus simply on the direct inspiration of the divinely chosen prophets. The Judeo-Christian tradition, however, looks upon the prophets as witnesses and interpreters of what God is doing in history. Revelation through deeds is conceived to be more fundamental than revelation through words, though the words of the prophets are regarded as necessary to clarify the meaning of the events. Since the Old Testament term for "word" (davar) signifies also "deed" or "thing," there is no clear line of demarcation between word-revelation and deed-revelation in the Bible. The biblical authors look upon the national fortunes of Israel as revelations of God's merciful love, his fidelity to his promises, his unflinching power, his exacting justice, and his readiness to forgive the penitent sinner. The full disclosure of the meaning of history, for many of the biblical writers, will occur only at the end of time, when revelation will be given to all peoples in full clarity. The Judeo-Christian notion of history as progressive revelation has given rise to a variety of theological interpretations of world history, from St. Augustine (AD 354-430) to G.W.F. Hegel (1770-1831) and other modern thinkers.³

CONCEPT OF REVELATION IN HINDUISM AND IN ISLAM

Let us now study what the Hindu and Islamic scriptures state regarding God's revelations or books revealed by God for the guidance of humans:

CONCEPT OF REVELATION IN ISLAM

1. Allah (swt) has sent a revelation in every age. Allah (swt) says in the Qur'an: "For each period Is a Book (revealed) (Al Qur'an 13:38)



2. Four Revelations mentioned by name in the Qur'an: There are several revelations sent by Allah (swt) in different ages for the guidance of human beings of the respective ages. Only four revelations are mentioned by name in the Qur'an: these are the Torah, Zabur, Injeel and the Qur'an. Torah is the Wahi, the revelation which was revealed to Prophet Moses (pbuh). Zabur is the Wahi, the revelation which was revealed to Prophet David. Injeel is the Wahi, the revelation which was revealed to Prophet Jesus.(pbuh) and The Qur'an is the last and final Wahi, the final revelation, which was revealed to the Last and Final Messenger Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

3. All previous revelations were only meant for a particular group of people and for a particular time period. Each of the revelations, prior to the revelation of the Glorious Qur'an, was meant only for a particular period and for a particular group of people.

4. The Qur'an was revealed for whole of Humankind Since the Qur'an was the last and final revelation of Almighty Allah, it was revealed not only for the Muslims or the Arabs but it was revealed for whole of Humankind. Further, the Qur'an was not revealed only for the era of the Prophet but it was revealed for the all of Humankind until the Last Day. Allah says in the Qur'an:

Alif Ram Ra. A Book Which We have revealed Unto thee, in order that Thou mightest lead mankind Out of the depths of darkness Into light – by the leave Of their Lord – to the way Of (Him) the Exalted in Power, Worthy of all Praise! (Al Qur'an 14:1)

b. Here is a Message for mankind; Let them take warning therefrom, And let them know that He Is (no other than) One God: Let men of understanding Take heed (Al Qur'an 14:52)



c. Ramadan is the (month) In which was sent down The Qur'an, as a guide To mankind, also clear (Signs) For Guidance and Judgement (Between right and wrong) (Al Qur'an 2:185)

d. Verily We have revealed The Book to thee In truth, for (instructing) mankind (Al Qur'an 39:41)

Al Qur'an is God's Word. It is the most sacred scripture of Islam. It is the Last and Final Revelation of Almighty God which was revealed in the sixth century of the English Calendar to the last and final messenger Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

5. The Qur'an is mentioned in the previous scriptures and in scriptures of other religions It is mentioned in the Qur'an:

Without doubt it is (announced) In the revealed Books Of former peoples.(Al Qur'an 26:196)

The mention of the Glorious Qur'an, this last and final Revelation of Almighty God, is made in all the previous scriptures and in the scriptures of various religions.

6. Hadith The other sacred scripture of Islam besides the Qur'an are the hadith i.e. the sayings and traditions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). These hadith are supplementary to the Glorious Qur'an. They do not and cannot overrule the teachings of the Qur'an nor will they contradict the Qur'an.⁴

(ii) CONCEPT OF REVELATION IN BOOKS OF HINDUISM

There are two kinds of sacred writings in Hinduism: Sruti and Smrti. Sruti means that which has been heard, perceived, understood or revealed. It is the oldest and the most sacred of the Hindu's Scriptures. The Sruti is divided into two main parts: the Vedas and the Upanishads and these two are considered to be of divine origin.



Smṛti is not as sacred as the śruti. Yet it is considered to be important and is popular with the Hindus today. Smṛti means memory or remembered. This Hindu literature is easier to understand because it speaks about the truths of the Universe through Symbolism and Mythology. The smṛti are not considered to be of divine origin but are accepted as human composition. The Smṛti lists rules governing the actions of the individual, the community and the society, which regulate and guide individuals in their daily conduct. They are also known as Dharma Śāstra. Smṛtis consist of many writings including the Puranas and Itihāsa. There are several Holy Scriptures of the Hindus; among them are the Vedas, Upanishads and the Puranas.

1. VEDAS

i) The word 'Veda' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'vid', which means to know. The word 'Veda' therefore, means knowledge par excellence or sacred wisdom. There are four principal divisions of the Vedas. (Although according to their number, they amount to 1131 out of which about a dozen are available. According to MahaBhasya of Patanjali, there are 21 branches of Rig Veda, 9 types of Atharva Veda, 101 branches of Yajur Veda and 1000 of Sam Veda)

ii) The Rig Veda, the Yajur Veda and the Sam Veda are considered to be more ancient books and are known as 'Trai Vidya' or the 'Triple Sciences'. The Rig Veda is the oldest and has been compiled in three long and different periods of time. The 4th Veda is the Atharva Veda, which is of a later date. Rigveda is mainly composed of songs of praise. Yajurveda deals sacrificial formula. Samveda refers to melody. Atharva Veda has a large number of magic formulas.

iii) There is no unanimous opinion regarding the date of compilation or revelation of the four Vedas. According to Swami Dayanand, who was the founder of the Arya Samaj, the Vedas



were revealed 1310 millions of years ago and according to other scholars they are not more than 4000 years old.

iv) Similarly there is a difference of opinion regarding the places where these books were revealed and the Rishis to whom these Scriptures were given. In spite of these differences, the Vedas are considered the most authentic of the Hindu Scriptures and the real foundations of the Hindu Dharma.

UPANISHADS

(i) The word 'Upanishad' is derived from 'Upa' meaning 'near', 'ni' which means 'down' and 'shad' means 'to sit'. Therefore Upanishads means sitting down near. Groups of pupils sit near the teacher to learn from him the sacred doctrines.

According to Samkara, Upanishad is derived from the root word 'sad' which means 'to loosen', 'to reach' or 'to destroy', with 'upa' and 'ni' as prefix. Therefore Upanishad means 'Brahma knowledge' by which ignorance is loosened or destroyed.

The number of Upanishads exceeds 200 though the Indian tradition puts it at 108. There are 10 principal Upanishads however some consider them to be more than 10, while others state that there are 18.

ii) The Vedanta meant originally the Upanishads, though the word is now used for the system of philosophy based on the Upanishad. Literally, Vedanta means the end of the Veda, Vedasya-antah, the conclusion as well as the goal of Vedas. The Upanishads are the concluding portions of the Vedas and chronologically they come at the end of the Vedic period.

iii) Some Pundits consider the Upanishad to be superior to the Vedas.

ITIHAS – EPIC

There are two Itihas or epics namely the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

**i) Ramayana:**

Ramayana is an epic, which deals with the life story of Rama. Most Hindus are aware of the story of the Ramayana.

ii) Mahabharata:

Mahabharata is another great epic, which speaks about the feud between the cousins: the Pandavas and the Kauravas. It also contains the life story of Krishna. The story of this epic, the Mahabharata, is also commonly known to most Hindus.

4. BHAGVAD GITA

Bhagvad Gita is the most popular and well known amongst all the Hindu scriptures. It is a part of the epic Mahabharata and contains 18 Chapters in Bhishma Parva Chapters 25 to 42. It contains the advice given by Krishna, in the battlefield, to Arjun.

PURANAS

Next in order of authenticity are the Puranas, which are the most widely read scripture. The word 'Puranas' means 'ancient'. The Puranas contain the History of the Creation of the Universe, history of the early Aryan Tribes and life stories of the divines and deities of the Hindus. The Puranas are revealed books like the Vedas, which were revealed simultaneously with the Vedas or at sometime close to the revelation of the Vedas.

Maharishi Vyasa has divided the Puranas into 18 voluminous parts. Chief among the Puranas is a book known as Bhavishya Purana. It is called so because it gives prophecies of future events. The Hindus consider the Bhavishya Purana to be the word of God. Maharishi Vyasa is considered a mere compiler of the book the real author being God.



6. OTHER SCRIPTURES

There are several other Hindu Scriptures like Manu Smriti etc. Amongst all the Hindu Scriptures, the Vedas are considered the most authentic. No other Hindu Scriptures overrule the Vedas. If there is a contradiction between the Vedas and any other Hindu scripture, the opinion of the Veda will prevail, according to Hindu Scholars. Thus we have examined and highlighted similarities between the concept of angels and revelation in Islam and in Hinduism as mentioned in their respective scriptures.⁵

After going through the meaning of wahy or revelation in Islamic context and other divine religions, it will be interesting to see the synonymy of the word wahy with the word shabd as presented in the following excerpts of the book Naam or word covering commonality of the divine guidance in the major religions of the world.

SHABD: WHAT IT IS

In Sanskrit "Shabd" is a root but we do not know its construction, as with other words. It means awaz (sound), akhar (word), kalam (talk), Ism (name), zamir (essence), bachan (spoken word), wazahat (exposition), sarahat (clarity), izhar (expression), taqir (speech), etc. Whatever is spoken or heard is Shabd, and it reveals the real nature of things and explains the hidden reality or mystery thereof.

The subject of Shabd is such that we cannot do justice to it by discursive reasoning. All that can be said is that "Shabd" implies the Power of God that has created and is sustaining the various grand divisions, divisions and sub-divisions of the vast creation of God. It is a current from the Ocean of Consciousness and is characterized by Sound-vibration, or in other words, It is a live and active principle which, emanating from God, is enlivening all creation. It is the instrument with which God creates, controls and



sustains His vast universe. It acts as a life-line between the Creator and His creation and serves as a golden bridge between the two. The divine currents, like the ethereal waves of a radio, are spread out in the atmosphere in all the directions of the compass, giving out delectable strains of music. We, however, cannot catch the ethereal vibrations and listen to the divine melody until we get in tune with the Infinite by adjusting our mental apparatus. Therefore we become etherealized more and more as we come in tune with the heavenly music. Shabd is the connecting link between God and man. In brief, Shabd alone is the true religion - a binding force that rebinds us to our Source. All the powers of Nature depend on and work through this Shabd or the Sound Principle. The Pranas or the vital airs, that are the source of all energy - electrical, mechanical, magnetic or atomic - and are the most active agents in the physical material plane, are but an outer manifested form of the Shabd.

All the religious books, including the Vedas, the oldest of them, have described "Shabd" as the primal manifest form of God. In Sama Veda we have,

Shabd is *Brahm* and "Silence" too is *Brahm* ; *Brahm* alone is vibrating everywhere.

The Mohammedan divines tell us that the world owes its very life and existence to Shabd. Shamas Tabrez says:

World came into being through Saut (Shabd or Sound Principle). And from Saut spread all light. Again Abdul Razaq Kashi tells us,

The Great Name (ism-i-azam) is the very essence and life of all names. Its manifested form (Shabd) is supporting the entire creation, It is the great sea in which we all appear as waves. He alone can understand this mystery who belongs to our order.



ALL RELIGIONS TEACH OF SHABD

In all religious books we find references to Shabd or the Creative Sound Current: Hindu scriptures speak of it as Shabd Brahm and Ashabd Brahm or Nad, that is responsible for the creation of the world. The ancient sages and seers sang of It in their songs, and called It Shruti, meaning "that which is heard." The esoteric teachings were passed on from Master to disciple and the Word was made manifest individually after years of spiritual discipline. In the Upanishadic Age, it came to be known as Udgit or Song of the Beyond, meaning at once of the other world (spiritual) and beyond the senses, for senses could not comprehend It and one had to transcend them to catch Its strains. 16 Other words that also came in to use for It are Pranav and Aum, for It could be heard in the mental ears alone and could be sung with the pranic vibrations without any outer aid of tongue or lips. In Chapter 6 of the Maitreya Upanishad it is stated that there are two Brahms, one Shabd Brahm and the other Ashabd Brahm and to reach Ashabd Brahm, one has to meditate, in the first instance, on the Shabd Brahm which has different kinds of Sounds that can be heard within by stop-cocking the ears with the thumbs; and by this means one can cross over to the Ashabd or Gupt Brahm, a state beyond the three Gunas and the three mental conditions, and called Turiya Pad or super-sensual plane.

Madam Blavatsky, the founder of the Theosophical Society, has described It as the "Voice of God." In the Masonic Order we hear of It as the "Lost Word" in search of which the Mason Masters set up their Order.

In Koran, there is an Ayat, "God commanded and it was done," Kun-feu-Kun. This, in fact, is the Kalma of the Muslims.

Hazrat Inayat Khan, a modern Sufi mystic, tells us that this creation is nothing but the "Music of God" for It is the outcome or manifestation of His Power. He calls it Saute Sarmadi or the



intoxicating vintage from the Garden of Allah (God) and has given an elaborate description of It, as appears from the following account:

All space is filled with *Saute Sarmad* or the "Abstract Sound." The vibrations of this Sound are too fine to be either audible or visible to the material ears or eyes, since it is even difficult for the eyes to see the form and colour of the ethereal vibrations on the external plane. It was the *Saute Sarmad*, the Sound of the abstract, which Mohammed heard in the cave, Ghar-e-Hira, when he became lost in his ideal. The Koran refers to this Sound in the words: "Be and all became" (*Kun-feu-Kun*). Moses heard this very Sound on Mount Sinai (*Koh-i-Toor*), when in communion with God. The same Word was audible to the Christ when absorbed in his Heavenly Father in the wilderness. Shiva heard the same *Anahad Naad* during his *Samadhi* in the Himalayas. The flute of Krishna is symbolic of the same Sound allegorically explained. This Sound is the source of all revelation to the Masters to whom It is revealed from within and it is, therefore, that they know and teach the one and the same Truth.

The knower of the mystery of the Sound knows the mystery of the whole Universe. Whosoever has followed the strains of this Sound has forgotten all earthly distinctions and differences; and has reached the same goal of Truth in which all the Blessed Ones of God unite. Space is within the body as well as around it; in other words the body is in space and space is in the body.

This being the case, the Sound of the Abstract is always going on within, around and about man. Man does not hear It as a rule, because his consciousness is entirely centered in his material existence. Man becomes so absorbed in his experiences in the external world through the medium of the physical body that space, with all its wonders of Light and Sound, appears to him blank . . . The limited volume of earthly sound is so concrete, that



it dims the effect of the Sound of the Abstract to the sense of hearing; although in comparison to It the sounds of the earth are like that of a whistle to a drum. When the Abstract Sound is audible, all other sounds become indistinct to the mystic.

The Sound of the Abstract is called *Anhad* in the Vedas, meaning unlimited sound. The Sufis name It *Sarmad*, which suggests the idea of intoxication. The word intoxication is here used to signify upliftment, the freedom of the soul from Its earthly bondage. Those who are able to hear the *Saute Sarmad* and meditate on It are relieved from all worries, anxieties, fears and diseases; and the soul is freed from captivity in the senses and in the physical body. The soul of the listener becomes All-pervading Consciousness; and his spirit becomes the battery which keeps the whole Universe in motion. . . .

This Sound develops through ten different aspects because of Its manifestation through the different tubes of the body (Nadis); it sounds like thunder, the roaring of the sea, the jingling of bells, running water, the buzzing of bees, the twittering of sparrows, the Vina, the whistle, or the sound of Shankha (Conch) until it finally becomes Hu the most sacred of all sounds. This Sound Hu is the beginning and end of all sounds, be they from man, bird, beast, or thing.

THE MYSTICISM OF SOUND

In the Muslim scriptures, It is variously described as *Kalam-i-Ilāhi* (The Voice of God), *Nidā-i-Āsmānī* (the Sound from Heaven), *Ism-i-‘Azam* (the Great Name), *Saut-i-Sarmadī* (the Intoxicating Sound), *Saut-i-Nasira* (the Sound Melodious), *Kalām-i-Majīd* (the Great Commandment) and *Kalām-i-Haq* (the Voice of Truth) which can be heard inside, and It was taught as *Sultān-ul-Azkār* or the King of prayers. We have innumerable references to this Sound in the teachings of the Mohammedan fakirs:

Rise above thy mental horizon, O brave soul,



And listen to the call of Music coming from above.

(Maulana Rūmī)

The whole world is reverberating with Sound,
To listen to It thou must unseal thine inner ears,
Then shalt thou hear an Unending Music,
And that shall lead thee beyond the confines of death.

(Shāh Niāz)

An unceasing Sound is floating down from the heaven,
I wonder how ye are engaged in pursuits of no avail.

(Hāfiz)

Drive away all skepticism from thy mind,
And listen to the strains of heavenly music,
And receive within thee the messages of God,
For these come only by holy Communion with the self.
The Prophet declared that he heard the Voice of God,
and it fell on his ears as clearly as any other sound;
but God has sealed thy ears,
And so ye listen not to His Voice. (Rūmī)

About the Prophet Mohammed it is said that at the age of forty he began receiving messages from God, after he had for fifteen years practiced communion with Awaz-Mustqim (Anhad Shabd or the Ceaseless Word), and had seen the glimpses of Truth (flashes of heavenly light) for seven years. At one time he remained for two years in the cave of Hira in meditation.

It is further stated that the prophet practiced in the cave of Hira, for six years, the Sultan-ul-Azkār (Surat Shabd Yoga) and that Hazrat ‘Abdul Qādir Jīllāni, did the same for twelve years in that sacred cave.



From the above it is sufficiently clear that all Master-souls, whether Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and countless others, were conversant with the practice of the Word, though they did not necessarily expound it as a regular science. Most of them tell of Anhad Shabd only, leading up to Und and Brahmand or the subtle and cosmic regions.⁶

THE PECULIAR ASPECT OF ISLAMIC REVELATION

With a view to consider the importance of Islamic revealed guidance, it is felt necessary to put forth some excerpts from the review of book entitled “A Brief Introduction to Islamic Epistemology, Ilm Al Kalam & Muslim, Philosophy” written by Dr. Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi and reviewed by: Mushtaq ul Haq Ahmad Sikander are reproduced herewith:

The initial revelation of the Quran on Prophet Muhammad was the verses of Surah ‘Alaq exhorting and commanding to: *“Read in the name of your Lord who creates; creates man from a leech-like substance! Read, for your Lord is Most Generous; it is He who taught by means of the Pen, taught man what he did not know.”* This verse, injunction and commandment sets Islam apart from other religions, verses like this and many others enjoin upon Muslims to search, initiate, evolve, disburse and add to the ever increasing body of knowledge. Islam stands distinct with its own epistemology, i.e. theory of knowledge, which through the ages till now has proved a mercy for mankind, unlike Christianity where religion gave rise to a rigid fascist set of clergy who would persecute and suppress any system of science or independent epistemology or individual scientific



pursuits that would go against the rules or commandments of Holy Bible. In the past it resulted in the persecution of scientists like Copernicus and Galileo, known generally as inquisitions, which ultimately led to the stagnation and decline in the growth and exposition of new trends in epistemology or innovative scientific knowledge. This fascist domination of religion in the rational and epistemological spheres of life ultimately led the Christian Europe to rebel against God and Religion on which the foundations of the Renaissance or rebirth were laid then.

In Hinduism, the religion gave rise to a chosen few (elite) i.e. Brahmins, who had the Divine Right to persecute the other lower castes, thus arresting their intellectual, economic, educational and literary growth and advancement. Thus this religious outlook proved a stumbling block for Hinduism too and made it impotent to contribute anything substantial to the body of scientific knowledge, speculative mythology notwithstanding which is found in the Vedic traditions, Epic literature and even in the canonical books like the Manu Smriti. The exception being the Greek Civilization, where numerous gods and various views of religion were prevalent but they had opted the Policy which later on Christianity was forced to adopt, i.e.: Give God God's and Cesar Cesar's right.

The Greeks were pragmatically factual enough to keep the domains of gods and humans separated, thus their view of gods or religion couldn't hamper their growth in other fields of knowledge from Politics to Poetry, Mathematics to Metaphysics and Culture to Literature. After the decline of the Greek Civilization till the advent of Muslim Civilization much of the human thought, intellect and knowledge remained stagnant, persecuted and in shambles or dormant to be modest enough.



The distinction between the Greek and Muslim one being that the religion was responsible for its rationality, innovation and contribution towards knowledge as Islam and The Prophet commanded Muslims to search for knowledge and which was described as legacy of Prophets and scholars were described as heir apparent to the prophets. Thus Islam led to the renovated zeal and zest, encouragement as well as development of “knowledge culture” among the Muslim Ummah, and presently the decline of the Muslims is also due to the replacement of literary by an oratory culture. In the words of Jamal ud din Afghani, the solution to the present predicament lies in: “Return to the essence of Islamic Faith so as to overcome the developmental asymmetry that has come to differentiate Western and Muslim societies”. For Afghani: “The power and success of modern west rested on its rejection of the stultifying restrictions of Christianity and its turn towards reason; since Islam by contrast is rooted in rationalism, hence Muslims need to turn to it”.⁷

MUHAMMAD SEARCHES FOR GOD

W. R. W. Stephens has narrated some historical facts related with the divine revelation. He has stated that, for fifteen years after his marriage - that is, up to the age of forty - Muhammad followed the Abrahamic religion of his forefathers, but he became increasingly meditative, restless, dejected. He was courteous in company, but spoke little, and with downcast eyes. Gradually he withdrew altogether from worldly business, save such pastoral occupation as milking the goats, or tending the sheep. He spent much time in fasting and prayer in his favorite retreat, a cave on the bare and rugged side of Mount Hira, occasionally even being absent from home all night.

His mind became agitated by doubts respecting the truth of the religion of his forefathers. His seasons of seclusion were more



frequent, more prolonged. He renounced the customs which savored of idolatry.

There are several short chapters in the Quran which probably belong to this period. They read like the expression of an earnest, anxious, inquiring spirit, which has grasped some truths, and is searching for more. The vanity of worldly ambition; the sin of covetousness and slander; the inseparable connection between happiness and virtue, misery and vice; the error of supposing that adversity is always a sign of God's displeasure, or prosperity of His favor; the duty of providing for the fatherless, and of almsgiving; the certainty of future rewards and punishments, according to each man's deeds - these are doctrines insisted upon with the earnestness of profound conviction, mingled with prayers for further enlightenment and guidance (Suras 103, 100, 99 and 1).

He was wrought to a high pitch of mental tension, and felt constrained to preach, but he had no commission; he could not point to any credentials to enforce the authority of his messages. By some, indeed, he was respected as a poet or a genius; but by others he was scorned and derided as a soothsayer, a madman, a fool. He began himself to doubt what he was, a prophet or a *kāhin*, inspired by God or by an evil spirit.

His wife, his cousin Waraqa, and a few other intimate friends believed in his divine inspiration. Such pure conceptions of the Deity, and such a lofty standard of moral teaching and moral conduct, could not, they thought, be the offspring of diabolical influence. When he was yet in the agony of suspense and depression, sometimes even meditating self-destruction, light pierced the clouds. As he was wandering among the solitudes of Mount Hira, he beheld within two bows' length the dazzling figure of the angel Gabriel, and listened with rapture to the memorable command: *`Cry, cry aloud in the name of the Lord; the most*



merciful God who hath taught the use of the pen to record revelation.' (Sura 96)

Muhammad ﷺ hastened home, solaced and encouraged by the assurance that the long-desired commission from on high had come; but for some period, of which the length is uncertain, it was unheeded by all. At last, as he lay one day on the ground, recovering from one of his fits, and wrapped up in a mantle, he again heard the voice of the heavenly messenger uttering the words: *'O thou that art covered with a mantle arise, and preach and magnify the Lord, and depart from all uncleanness.'* (Sura 74)

MUHAMMAD ﷺ THE PERSECUTED PROPHET

This is the real starting point of Islam. From this date Muhammad's confidence in himself as the accredited messenger of God never wavered, and all the utterances of the Qoran are introduced by the words 'speak,' or 'say,' to intimate that they were put into the mouth of the prophet by his the Divine. The people, indeed, still demanded some visible evidence of his authority. Let him cause a spring of water to gush forth, or a grove of palms to rise in the desert, or let him ascend to heaven and bring down a book, and they would believe him. But these skeptical taunts no longer harassed the prophet's mind. He could proudly and calmly reply that he was but a man, not empowered to work miracles, but that the divine beauty of his message was its own evidence. It came from God; and, if men did not listen to it, destruction would, as surely overtake them as it overtook the cities in the plain [Sodom and Gomorrah].⁸



THE CONCEPT OF TAWHEED i.e. ONENESS OF GOD IN ISLAM

For the first time in history of religions, Islam explained "Tawhīd" (Oneness of God) in such a way that there was no misunderstanding afterwards. The Jews believed in one God, but theirs was not the universal but tribal god. And even then, they had fallen in the pitfall of giving Uzair the title of 'son of God'. It is the direct result of the teaching of Islam that Jews left calling a man 'son of God'. Christians are trying to re-interpret the dogma of Trinity; Hindus were compelled to rediscover that Vedas teach Unity of God and that idol-worship was wrong. The Sura of Tawhīd is one of the shortest Suras of Qur'an. It established the pure belief in the oneness of God, rejecting all types of 'Shirk' is these words:

"Say: He is God, The One and Only; God, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, Nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him." (Sura CXII)

The first sentence of the Islamic Kalimah, i.e. "*There is no god except Allah*" leads a Muslim throughout his life not only in religious matters but in social behaviour also. "*There is no god*" shows a Muslim that nothing in the Universe is superior to Him. It is observed in Qur'an that "He it is Who created for you all that is in the earth." So a Muslim knows that nothing in this world is to be worshipped. Neither stone nor trees, neither animals nor human beings; neither the Sun, the Moon nor the Stars can be worshipped, because everything is created and created for His benefit. When a Muslim thus has rejected every falsehood and every idea of nature-worship, idol worship and human-worship, he is ready to believe in the positive truth of the Unity of God. Believing in a Supreme Being gives an aim to our life and provides a purpose for our actions. Had a man been left with the wrong impression that there was no God at all, his life would have



been aimless, and an aimless life is dangerous. So it is added that there is no god "except Allah". This sentence has a negative as well as a positive aspect. Both are instrumental in creating the belief that every man is equal to every other person. When nobody is superior, nobody is inferior. Thus, the belief in the Unity of God promotes the sense of brotherhood and equality and equity, which is another feature of Islam. The proper name, which Islam uses for God, is "ALLAH". 'ALLAH" means "One Who deserves to be loved" and "Into Whom everyone seeks refuge." ⁹

ISLAM: A COMPREHENSIVE SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL PROGRAM

Islam has given an integrative and unifying message for humankind at large through the Qur'an, which is the religious text of Islam. It is widely regarded as the finest piece of literature in the Arabic language. Muslims hold that the Qur'an is the verbal divine guidance and moral direction for mankind. Muslims also consider the original Arabic verbal text to be the final revelation of God.¹⁰

Zulkiflī bin Hāji Ismāil has highlighted that, Islam informs the whole range of the personal and public lives of its conscientious adherents; to them it is a comprehensive social and spiritual program. Muslims, ideally derive guidance in all matters of personal conduct, ethics, and belief; ritual practices and worship; and social, political, economic and legal affairs from Islam, which expands the notion of religion to a whole mode of existence. Islam resembles both Judaism and Christianity in many respects, since it participates in the same Judeo-Christian tradition. It may be more accurate to refer to a Judeo-Christian-Muslim tradition. However, the relationships between belief, practice and social community differ somewhat between these religious traditions both in terms of historical development and dogma.¹¹



THE MULTIFARIOUS CONCEPT OF *TAUHÎD* - ONENESS OF ALLÂH

And know, your God is One God, there is no other, cannot be and will never be one worthy of worship but He, the Most Gracious (- Rahmân), the Ever Merciful (- Rahîm). (2:163)

The cornerstone of all the basic attributes of Allâh is His *Tauhîd* or Unity. *La ilâha ill-Allah* - there is no other, cannot be and will never be one worthy of worship but He. It is this confession which when combined with the confession of the prophethood of the Holy Prophet of Islam admits a man or woman into the fold of Islam. The Unity of Allâh implies that Allâh is One in His Person, One in His attributes and One in His works. His Oneness in His Person means that there is neither plurality of gods nor plurality of persons in this Godhead. His Oneness in attributes implies that no other being possesses one or more of the Divine attributes in perfection. His Oneness in works implies that none can do that which Allâh has done and which He may do and no other being has influence over Him. This doctrine of Unity is very beautifully summed up in one of the shortest and earliest chapters of the Holy Qur'ân:

Say, "(The fact is) He is Allâh, the One and Alone in His Being. Allâh is that Supreme Being Who is the Independent and Besought of all and Unique in all His attributes. He begets none and is begotten by no one, and there is none His equal." (112:1-4)

The above sûrah of the Holy Qur'ân is called *al-Ikhlâs* (- The Purification of the Unity of Allâh). Another name of this sûrah is *al-Asâs* (- the Foundation), this is because the whole foundation of the Faith of Islam lies in the Unity of Godhead. The highest object of any revealed Book should be to furnish us with the correct and



sure knowledge of God. This small sūrah fulfils this very purpose. The verses in their four short sentences point out the fundamental errors of many religions and reject outright all forms of polytheism, including the doctrine of trinity, sonship and partnership.

The verses of this sūrah illuminate the heart of a human being with the true knowledge of Allāh and His glory and tell him that defective qualities should not be attributed to Him. They tell him that He is *Ahad*, the One, the Sole, Who has been and will ever be One and Alone, Who has no second to share in His Lordship nor in His Essence or Love, the idea of a second being inconceivable. He is also *Samad*, that Being Who is One and Alone in the sense that when we think of Him, the very idea that there is any other being or thing is absent from our minds. He is One and Alone in every sense. He is neither the starting link of any chain nor its last link. Nothing is like Him (42:16), nor is He like anything else. Soul and matter are not co-eternal with Him but are His creation. To Him alone obedience is rendered, without Whom no affair is accomplished. He will continue to exist forever, after all creation has ceased to exist, He is above time, for time is also His creation (103:1). He is above conception and conjecture. His attributes know no bound or limit. He requires the assistance of nobody without Whom He cannot carry on His work. Everything existing or conceivable goes back to Him as its source. Any attempt at depicting Allāh by means of figurative representation or by abstract symbols is wrong. It is also incorrect to describe Him as father or an incarnate according to which a man is likened to Him. Thus every kind of shirk is rejected. This is Allāh as presented by the Holy Qur'ân.

The true Unity of Allāh is to believe in God Who, in His Being, is free from every associate, whether it is an idol or a human being or the sun or moon or river or fire or tree or another human being



or one's ego or one's desires or deceit, and to conceive of no one as possessing power in opposition to Him, nor to accept anyone as sustainer, nor to hold anyone as bestowing honour or disgrace, nor to consider anyone as helper, and to confine one's love and one's worship and one's humility and one's hopes and one's awe to anyone other than Him. No Unity can be complete without the following three types of particularization. First, there is the Unity of Being. Secondly, the Unity of attributes, that is to say, that all good attributes and Godhead are confined to His Being, and that all others who offer or sustain or benefactor are only a part of the system set up by His hand. Thirdly, the Unity of love, sincerity, devotion, and worship, and not to consider anyone as an associate of God in the matter of love and worship and prayer. This drive is embedded in human nature.

He it is Who is (the Only) God in all the heavens and (the only) God in the whole of the earth and He alone is the All-Wise, the All-Knowing. And blessed be He to Whom belongs the sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and all that lies between them and He alone has the knowledge of the promised Hour and to Him you shall all be made to return. And all those whom they call upon, apart from Him, have no authority to intercede (with their Lord), but (this right is given to him) who bears witness to the truth and they know him (the Prophet) and his good conduct well. If you were to ask them, 'Who created them.' They will no doubt say, 'Allâh.' Then whither are they being led astray? (43:84-87)

TAUHÎD: UNITY OF THE HUMAN RACE

Never has there been an obstacle to human advancement so great as the idea of the inequality of mankind. So the greatest task to be performed in the socio-religious life of human race is to



establish the Unity of God and through this to bring about unity of human race. The Holy Qur'ân announced, “*Mankind are a single community*” (2:213; 10:19) therefore we should always keep this fact before us as Allâh is the *Rabb*, the Creator and the Nourisher to perfection of all nations (1:2) and all the nations of the world are, as it were, the children of the same God, and He takes equal care of all, deals with all alike and bring all to their goal of moral and spiritual completion by degrees. His people benefit from His earth, irrespective of their origin, colour or belief, His moon and sun shine for all. His dealings in the spiritual matters are also marked with the same equality. He hearkens to the supplication of everybody, whatever their religion, language, or nationality. He is equally Gracious and Merciful and forgives the sins whenever He likes because He is the Master and King of all nations. He rewards the good deeds of the believers and nonbelievers (2:62) male and female alike. He says:

O mankind! We have created you out of a male and a female, and We have made you tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize (and do good to) one another. Surely the most honourable of you in the sight of Allâh is he who guards against evil the most. Verily, Allâh is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (49:13)

So the racial and tribal sense of superiority is of later growth, and it is because of this sense that one section of humanity is fond to look down upon another section. This was not the motive of making different tribes and sub-tribes. Islam expresses disapproval of this feeling and points out that all people belong to one brotherhood and also that it is improper to take pride in one's race or parenthood, as it directs one's course to promote arrogance and to undermine the basic and fundamental unity of the human race.



O you who believe! Let no people look down upon another people for the (latter) people may be better than they, nor let women (look down) upon other women, who (- the women who are treated lightly) may be better than the other ones. And find not fault in one another (in order to defame your own people), nor call one another by nicknames. Bad is the reputation of wickedness after the (profession of) belief. (49:11)

Of course, a person should be honoured but only on the basis of righteousness and honest living. Similarly a nation who guards against evil the most and is actively engaged in rendering services to the fellow nations and to the creatures of Allâh becomes honourable in the eyes of Allâh and in the eyes of the rest of other nations. Thus, if the Holy Qur'ân has described Allâh as the Lord of all the nations, it has also presented its laws as of universal application. According to the Qur'ânic teachings it is immaterial to what race a person belongs and of what nation he is a member, so long as he guards against evil and is a doer of good deeds he will be favoured by Allâh. The Holy Prophet of Islam has elucidated this principle when he said, "Verily the people who are nearest to me are those who guard against evil, no matter of whatever race they are and to whatever country they belong." This is a message that deserves to be called a Gospel for humanity. The unity of the human race is a natural corollary of the doctrine of the Unity of God. Only the belief in One Lord of the world can bring solace and comfort and cheer up the hearts of all men and women and can prepare a person for a correct form of godliness and for service to the creatures of God. Surely a person who is mindful of Allâh is also mindful of his sympathy for his fellow beings.

All the languages and the art of intelligent speech are equally the creation of Allâh through His grace of *Rahmânîyyat*. The Holy Qur'ân says, "*He (- the Rahmân) created the human being and*



taught him intelligence and the art of distinct speech." (55:3-4). There are thousands of diversities in this universe and yet there is a unity in the midst of these diversities, and that is because the source of all these diversities lies in One All-Powerful Unity. Allâh, the Lord of the worlds and the nations, has created human beings with different complexions and has created different languages for the expression of their respective feelings, yet in spite of all these differences humanity at the bottom is one and the same.

“The creation of heaven and earth, and in the diversity of your tongues and colours are (also some) of His signs. Behold! There are sure signs for the learned people in this (unity of mankind and Oneness of God).(30:22).

TAUHÎD - UNITY OF RELIGION

He has ordained for you the same course of faith as He enjoined on Noah (to adopt), and which We have revealed to you, and it is that (same faith) which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, Jesus, so keep the faith and do not differ in it. (He ordains you) to establish obedience (to Allâh) and not to be divided (in sects) therein. (42:13)

The Unity of God should lead to the unity of religion. The recognition of Allâh is tied up with the recognition of all His Prophets. A Prophet is a mirror for beholding of Allâh. It is only through this mirror that the countenance of Allâh may be seen. It is a part of the Unity of Allâh to believe in those who have been appointed as a means of the recognition of Him. Without this belief, faith in the Unity of Allâh cannot be perfected. The Prophets do not precede Him in speech and they only carry out His bidding. Accordingly Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism are but different aspects of one and the same religion, which, in its original purity, is the religion of Islam (- submission



to the will of God and to make peace with God and mankind). Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Rama, Buddha or Confucius, all were Prophets of God and were sent for the guidance of their respective people. The Qur'ân repeatedly claims to be in conformation with the truth of all faiths as the Qur'ân defines the true believers: *And who (also) believe in that (Message) which has been revealed to you and in that which had been revealed before you (2:4)*

The Qur'ân, therefore, not only recognizes the truth of all the previous Divine Books and Prophets, but also makes it obligatory for Muslims to believe in the Divine origin of their teachings. The Qur'ân requires not only a belief in Divine revelation to the Prophet of Islam, but also belief in Divine revelation to all the Prophets sent to all nations of the world in all times (3:84). This is one of the matters relating to faith (*Îmân*) and a fundamental principle of Islam. This is also a broad doctrine of the Unity of God which is taught repeatedly in the Qur'ân (3:184; 13:4).

In short, Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the unity and equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and service of humanity are matters of real merit. Distinction of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family and only Islam can weld the black and the white, east and west, rich and poor, into one fraternal whole.¹²

OTHER ASPECTS RELATED WITH THE CONCEPT OF TAUHID

The most profound meaning to this life which is in fact the universal truth is in the concept of attestation to the Oneness of God, referred to in the Arabic term "*Tauhîd*." The recognition of which started with the history of mankind itself, propounded and reasserted throughout the ages by the prophets and messengers of God, until it blossomed and bloomed, and became established in



“*Al-Islam*” as a perfect way of life (“*Ad-Dīn*”) by the Last Messenger of God, *Muhammad ibn ‘Abdullah* ﷺ.

Tauhiid is the very essence, the lifeblood and living force of the religion of Islam. It is the basis from which the rest of its teachings spring forth. It was inculcated from the beginning of the first thirteen years in Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ. early mission, and was the living force to the successes of the Muslims, until its culmination into perfection and completion.

This day have those who reject Faith given up all hope of your religion: yet fear them not but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you, and have chosen for you ‘al-Islam’ as your religion. (Qur’an: Surah al-Ma-idah: 5: 4)

The whole message of this concept, from which Islam is founded is simply but concisely expressed in the *Kalimah* (word): *Lā-Ilā-hā-ilAllāh* (There is no god except Allah) “*Tauhīd*” is the belief in the Absolute Oneness of God, Who is the Creator, Preserver, Sustainer and Nourisher of all creations. “*Allāh*” (proper noun or name for God, in the Arabic) is Unique and only One. There is no other god except Allah. He does not have partners nor does He share His Divinity with anything or anyone. He alone is Lord and Master of the Universe and all that is contained in it are His. Nothing moves without His knowledge and His permission. He is the source of all existence. He has created mankind and has accorded to each human being a fixed period of life in this world. He has given human, organs and faculties and has created the earth and all other things for the benefit of human.

Through His messengers and prophets, He reveals the knowledge of Himself, and the purpose of man’s creation. To help



mankind to achieve that purpose, He prescribes certain codes for living which is the correct way of life—a code of life which is practical and achievable; and in harmony with the Reality (*Haqiqah*). Allah has also given man freedom of choice as to whether or not to follow and adopt this code as the actual basis of his life. With this freedom, mankind shall be responsible for the choice he made. And all the messengers of Allah have forewarned mankind of the Day of Requitah and have repeatedly reminded mankind of the ultimate destination of this life in the Hereafter.

It is not enough for a person to say that he believes in One God. Many idolaters will tell you that they actually believe that there is only one supreme God. Yet they take on other things as gods. Islam teaches that in *Tauhid* – believing in the Oneness of Allah, a person must not only acknowledge the fact that the Creator, Allah is One, but also that it is Allah alone that deserves to be worshipped and served. And the believer has to show and express this (faith) belief in his deeds and words, throughout his life.

In Islam, worship or serving Allah is called “*ibāah*” and has a wide meaning. This term is derived from the word “*abd*”-meaning “*slave*”. It is thus, not restricted only to rituals of prayers and devotions but includes servitude to Allah in every aspect of our life. Therefore a believer’s life is an acknowledgement of his belief that he worships none except Allah and shows it by obedience to the laws given by Allah. A Muslim strives to do all that which Allah has commanded and refrain from all that which Allah has forbidden; by following the complete code of life that was brought and established by the Last and Final Messenger of Allah, *Muhammad ibn ‘Abdillah* s.a.w. Thus the *Kalimah* of *Tauhid* is followed by the *Kalimah: MUHAM-MADUR RA-SUU-LULLAAH* Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.



Therefore the concept of *Tauhīd* is the essence of the teaching of Islam which motivates a Muslim to strive towards becoming a true Muslim. With this concept of *Tauhīd*, it develops the Muslim towards a higher level of consciousness, righteousness and piety – in his relationship with Allah, with himself and with the rest of creation – as the obedient and faithful servant and representative of Allah on this earth.

To implement *Tauhīd* (the attestation in the Oneness of Allah) there are three (3) important aspects that have to be realized and established, as taught by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ

[1] Aspect of Practice – ‘*Amal* – which constitute ‘obedience and submission’ i.e. “Islam”.

[2] Aspect of Belief and Conviction- “*iiman*”.

[3] Aspect of Righteousness or Best Conduct – “*ihsan*”.

All three constitute the aspects that every Muslim should fulfil. One without the other is insufficient to truly realise the concept of attesting to the Oneness of Allah. For there cannot be obedience without faith; faith without obedience is meaningless; and faith and obedience must lead to best and righteous conduct – of a Muslim who truly submits to the will of Allah.

“But those who believe and work righteousness will be admitted to Gardens beneath which rivers flow to dwell therein for aye with the leave of their Lord: Their greeting therein will be: "Peace!" Seest thou not how Allah sets forth a parable?— a goodly Word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its branches (reach) to the heavens— It brings forth its fruit at all times, by the leave of its Lord. So Allah sets forth parables for men, in order that they may receive admonition.”
(Qur’an: Surah Ibrahim: 14: 23-25)¹³



CONCLUSION

In view of whatever has been put forth, it becomes clear that the Revelation is the means of communication in between God and man. It is a source of guidance or a code of conduct provided by the Creator to the creature i.e. man. Since God is the Creator of man he knows the dos and don'ts related with human life. The Holy Books of all the religions have got relevance with the revelation. The Vedas are called Apaurushiy i.e. Non-Human Divine Books. Such is the case with Torah, Bible and Quran. The Eastern religions, on the whole, differ from Western religions in that they place less emphasis on a special or exclusive revelation received by a "chosen people" and rather speak of the manifestation of the Absolute through the general order of nature. There is, however, no irreconcilable opposition between general and special revelation. Vedanta Hinduism and Buddhism, even if they do not speak of special revelation, believe that their religious books and traditions have unique value for imparting a saving knowledge of the truth. The Bible and the Qur'an, conversely, proclaim that although God has specially manifested Himself to the biblical peoples, He also manifests Himself through the order of nature. The failure of some nations to acknowledge the one true God is attributed not to God's failure to disclose Himself but rather to the debilitating effects of sin on the perceptive powers of man. The Western religions differ somewhat among themselves in the ways in which they understand how special revelation occurs. Some focus simply on the direct inspiration of the divinely chosen prophets. The Judeo-Christian tradition, however, characteristically looks upon the prophets as witnesses and interpreters of what God is doing in history. All the major religions believe in God one way or the other. But the perception of God among all the major religions is somewhat different. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to find common ground in



between all the major religions so that the process of communication and mutual understanding will start. The Unity of God should lead to the unity of religion, unity of culture and unity of mankind which is essential for sustainable human development and peace.



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