



ISSUES OF INTEREST SERIES

# WORLD RELIGIONS

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SHAIKH MIR ASEDULLAH QUADRI

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Written By

**SHAIKH MIR ASEDULLAH QUADRI**

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## PREFACE

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على  
سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين

World Religions are divided into two major categories; Semitic and Non Semitic. Islam, Judaism and Christianity are known as Semitic Religions. Aryan and Non Aryan religions are Non Semitic religions.

Aryan group is sub divided into Vedic and Non Vedic religions. Hinduism is a Vedic religion while Sikhism, Jainism and Buddhism are Non Vedic religions. Non Aryan religions consist of Zoroastrianism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, etc.

The Semitic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam are prophetic religions. The Non-Semitic religions are non-prophetic, except Zoroastrianism which is claimed to be a prophetic religion.

There are many communities in the world who follow several religious theories, some believe in the existence of God and some are non-believers.

This book briefly describes the world religions and explains the difference between a truthful religion and philosophical theory developed into a religion over a period of time.

It is an interesting read for all those who are interested in this kind of subjects.

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## BRIEF HISTORY

When Adam (عليه السلام) and Hawwa (عليها السلام) descended on planet Earth, their children and the children of their children formed one community. As the population grew, people migrated to different fertile lands looking for prosperous living. This way communities evolved in different places. As the time passed, people started differing from the original teachings of their ancestors. The cause of their differences was rivalry between them. Gradually they evolved different ways of worship for themselves on the basis of some concocted theories. Some started making idols by their hands and started worshiping them as gods.

**It is in Quran -** كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّينَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ فِيهِ إِلَّا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَتْهُمْ الْبَيِّنَاتُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ فَهَدَى اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لِمَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ مِنَ الْحَقِّ بِإِذْنِهِ وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ [ Mankind was a single community, then Allah sent prophets to bring good news and warning, and with them He sent the Scripture with the Truth, to judge between people in their disagreements. It was only those to whom it was given who disagreed about it after clear signs had come to them, because of rivalry between them. So by His leave Allah guided the believers to the truth they had differed about: Allah guides whoever He will to a straight path. ] (Al-Baqara - 213)

Idols and deities have been worshiped in the world from time immemorial. These idols carried specific names and were regarded as gods. People worshiped different idols at different times during the history of mankind. History shows that people had been worshiping idols considering them as gods in all continents of the World. New idols were added as the time passed and people continued their age old practice in one form or other.

Greek idol gods were very popular before the advent of Christianity in Europe. Aryans, who came to India from Central Asia brought their own idols for worship which were different from the idols of aborigine Dravidian population. The traditions of Aryans and Dravidians are still continued in India.

People have different perceptions about religion and god. Some believe that stars and planets are gods. They ascribe imaginative characteristics with celestial objects. The sun is also worshiped as god. Sun is a popular god of Hindus. Some people give star specific signs to human beings as per their birth day calculations.

Some people believe in auspicious times and directions. Some people consider in 'Audait' (Unique god), 'Daudait' (the big god and the Cosmos) and 'Taudait' (

Parmatma – the big soul or spirit ). The Cosmos depends on these three gods. Some people worship everything excepting inorganic matter, vegetation and animals.

Some people believe that Divinity of Almighty and Servant-hood is combined in one body and believe Jesus Christ (Isa - عليه السلام ) as son of God. They believe in Trinity; (i) Heavenly Father (God), (ii) Son of God, and (iii) Holy Ghost. They say that all the three are permanent, absolute and existing on their own, but all the three are one. Indeed it is a strange claim.

Some people, like Salafis/Wahhabis and likeminded groups who call themselves Muslims, worship an imaginary Planet size Sky Idol God who has hands, eyes, face, legs like human beings who sits over the skies in a certain direction. They believe their God has limitations as he cannot mix up with his creatures and know them only by his knowledge. They impose all Quranic verses on this imaginary monstrous god and call it Allah.

People use words ‘god’ and ‘religion’ very loosely. Some people call football as religion. Some people call cricket as religion. Some people give extreme importance to a thing in life and call it religion. Some people say love is god, some say work is god and some say money is god.

Some earlier people developed certain moral principles as per the requirements of their times, deviating from the religions they professed. They had large followings during their life time. After their deaths, these principles were gradually developed into full fledged religions. We have several religions in the world that were started this way.

Some people did not start a new religion. They made new sects within a popular religion. They developed new theories, gave new directions to religious practices and traditions and spent their lives in convincing their dogmas to others. They had small followings in their life time. After their deaths, their followers developed these theories, wrote new books, conducted baptizing campaigns and converted a large number of people into their sects. Soon they became a powerful sect within their religious community. They claimed themselves to be on the right path of the religion and regarded other followers of religion as apostates.

## AUTHENTIC RELIGION

Allah's (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) sent prophets to different communities of people to remind them about the teachings they were supposed to follow. The people who were truthful accepted the guidance of their prophets. Others remained adamant on their wrongdoings.

An authentic Religion is received through the Prophet of Allah and it is a gift of God to the humanity to lead a peaceful life free from wickedness and immorality.

## WHO ARE PROPHETS

Muslims believe in all Prophets sent by Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) to guide human beings. Prophets are human beings appointed by God to communicate His commandments to people.

To claim receiving revelations of God is exclusive with the Prophets. Religion is not originated from the mind of a human being. It comes from the God through a Prophet. The truthful Prophet of Allah cannot move on his own, he cannot talk a word on his own.

**It is in Quran -** (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ - إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ - (Prophet Mohammad - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) does not say anything with his self desire, except that this is the revelation which is coming to him (from Allah - سبحانه و - تعالى). (An-Najm - 2).



## WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy originates from human mind and its theories keep on changing. Philosophy has nothing to do with Religion. Terming the philosophy as religion is senseless. Idol worship is contrary to Monotheism and philosophy can never be regarded as religion. One cannot prove religion by concocting stories and claiming them to be divine scriptures. The claim has to be supported by evidence and without evidence, no utterance can be accepted as Truth.

If someone walks on burning coal without hurting his feet, or someone walks over the surface of water of a lake without getting drowned or someone spears an iron rod through his body without hurting himself, or someone stops breathing by several minutes or hours at a stretch, or someone is surviving without food and water for weeks and months, or someone is standing or sitting in particular position without plucking his eyes for days and months; all these cannot be accepted as truth of the religion he is professing. A sensible mind will conclude that there must be causes and reasons in the laws of nature that allows these people to perform these unusual acts.

Islam never insists upon miracles, but repeatedly invites people to think, to ponder, to meditate, to reason, to argument and to deduce the signs of Almighty God in the cosmos. The belief should be inner conviction rather than a passion.

## HOW CAN WE PROVE THE EXISTING OF GOD

This is a bizarre question in this advanced scientific era. Like someone is asking to prove if the Earth is round or flat? Some earlier people considered and argued Earth to be flat. Now we know the Earth and other planets are spherical. It was their ignorance about the facts.

A home where a few people live, cannot run without a father or guardian, a school or college cannot run without an efficient principal, a company cannot run without an efficient CEO, and a country cannot run without an efficient head of State; then how come the entire Cosmos is running so efficiently? Definitely there is someone who is the creator of this Cosmos and who is running it so efficiently. This is simple common sense. Even the so called atheists cannot deny such obvious signs of their Lord.

**It is in Quran -** وَالشَّمْسُ تَجْرِي لِمُسْتَقَرٍّ لَهَا ۚ ذَلِكَ تَقْدِيرُ الْعَزِيزِ الْعَلِيمِ - وَالْقَمَرَ قَدَرْنَا مَنَازِلَ حَتَّىٰ - عَادَ كَالْعُرْجُونِ الْقَدِيمِ - لَا الشَّمْسُ يَنْبَغِي لَهَا أَنْ تُدْرِكَ الْقَمَرَ وَلَا اللَّيْلُ سَابِقُ النَّهَارِ ۗ وَكُلٌّ فِي فَلَكٍ يَسْبَحُونَ [ And the Sun runs his course for a period determined for him: that is the decree of (Him) the Exalted in Might, the All-Knowing. And the moon - We have determined for it phases, until it returns (appearing) like the old date stalk. It is not permitted to the Sun to catch up the Moon, nor can the Night outstrip the Day: each (just) swims along in (its own) orbit (according to Law). ] **(Yasin - 38-40)**

**It is in Quran -** هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً ۖ لَكُمْ مِنْهُ شَرَابٌ وَمِنْهُ شَجَرٌ فِيهِ تُسِيمُونَ - يُنبِثُ لَكُمْ بِهِ الزَّرْعَ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالنَّخِيلَ وَالْأَعْنَابَ وَمِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَةً لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ - وَسَخَّرَ لَكُمْ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ ۗ وَالنُّجُومَ مُسَخَّرَاتٌ بِأَمْرِهِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ [ It is He who sends down rain from the sky; from it is drink and from it is foliage in which you pasture (animals). He causes to grow for you thereby the crops, olives, palm trees, grapevines, and from all the fruits. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who give thought. He has subjected for you the Night and the Day; the Sun and the Moon; and the Stars are in subjection by His Command: verily in this are Signs for men who are wise.] **(an-Nahl - 10-12)**

We all believe in the existence of God. Even the Non believing Atheists, at some point of time, must be wondering how come this Cosmos works on its own unless it is programmed to do so? If there is a system, then, sure there has to be someone who is the inventor, owner and Chief of Operations of this system.

## HOW CAN WE PROVE THE AUTHENTICITY OF RELIGION

If someone says that 'I belong to certain religion', then he has to provide proof of his religion. He needs to prove the tradition from himself to Almighty through the Prophet. He needs to present historical, documented evidence of the Prophet through whom the religion was received from the Almighty.

How can we prove that religious scripture we follow is the word of God?

You have to provide undisputed historical proof of the scripture in its original form and original dialect (language), as disclosed to the Prophet from God. Translated versions, or versions which were altered during various regimes in the past, cannot be regarded as true word of God.

**It is in Quran -** أَفَتَطْمَعُونَ أَنْ يُؤْمِنُوا لَكُمْ وَقَدْ كَانَ فَرِيقٌ مِنْهُمْ يَسْمَعُونَ كَلَامَ اللَّهِ ثُمَّ يُحَرِّفُونَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا عَقَلُوهُ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ [(Allah says about the Jews) 'Have you any hope that they will be true to you (O' Prophet - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) when a party of them used to listen to the Word of Allah , then used to change it, after they had understood it, knowingly] (Al-Baqara - 75).

How can we prove that the rules of the religion we follow are actually the commandments of God?

If a person claims 'it is a rule in his religion' then he has to prove that it is the commandment of Almighty. He has to provide an undisturbed link of the commandment reaching him from Almighty through the Prophet, in an authentic, documented, historically established chain of narrators / reporters.

If the Creator of this Cosmos is one and over 7 billion people of this world have been created by Him, then should not they all follow only one religion?

The religions of all the Prophets is same which is monotheism (oneness) of Almighty. There are no differences of teachings among prophets with regard to Allah because all of them are honest. Allah is the same who is there from the beginning and who will remain existent eternally. However, differences could be in some practices of prayers and in some divine commandments which change due to change of time.

**It is in Quran -** **إِنَّا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْكَ كَمَا أَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى نُوحٍ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَعِيسَى وَأَيُّوبَ وَيُونُسَ وَهَارُونَ وَسُلَيْمَانَ وَآتَيْنَا دَاوُدَ زُبُورًا** [(O' Mohammad - صلى الله عليه و آله وسلم) We (Allah) have revealed (sent commandments) to you, as We revealed to Noah (عليه السلام), and the Prophets after him, and We revealed to Abraham (عليه السلام), Ishmael (عليه السلام), Isaac (عليه السلام), Jacob (عليه السلام) and the offspring of Jacob (عليه السلام), and Jesus (عليه السلام), and Job (عليه السلام), and Jonah (عليه السلام), and Aaron (عليه السلام), and Solomon (عليه السلام), and We gave to David (عليه السلام) Psalms'. **(An-Nisa - 163).**

Human beings are exclusive creatures of Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ). They are provided with seven basic attributes (i) Life, (ii) Knowledge, (iii) Will, (iv) Power, (v) Seeing, (vi) Listening and (vii) Speaking. In addition, they have been provided with intelligence to differentiate between good and bad. Through prophets, Allah (عَزَّ وَجَلَّ) has shown them the right path, walking on which they can reach Him. Humans are told that if they do good deeds, they will get rewarded. If they commit evil, they will be subject to torment. The period of their life is a test time for them. Whoever passes this test will spend their next life in heaven. Everything in this world has been made subordinated to humans.

**It is in Quran -** **وَسَخَّرَ لَكُم مَّا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا مِنْهُ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ** [Whatever is there in skies and earth, We made them subdued and subordinated (to Human beings)]. **(Al-Jasia - 13).**

**It is in Quran -** **لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ ۚ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ ۚ فَمَنْ يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انفِصَامَ لَهَا ۗ وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ** (There is no compulsion in Islam. Truth and untruth is abundantly clear and distinct from each other. Now whoever wishes accepts the faith, whoever wishes reject the faith, negate it). **(Al-Baqara - 256).**

People took advantage of the freedom of choice and in their short-sightedness started doing evil things for their lust and material comforts. In their desire for some worldly comforts, fame, leadership, etc., they drifted away from their Lord.

There are two types of people in the world, (i) those who are on the right path, (ii) those who have drifted away from the right path.

People who drifted away from the right path are those (i) who do not believe in the existence of God; (ii) who ascribe partners for Him and (iii) who believe in multiplicity of Gods.

In addition, (i) those who claim divinity in creatures; (ii) those who claim divine attributes associated with creatures; (iii) those who ascribe a body form to Him and (iv) those who believe that God has hands, ears, eyes, etc., have also been drifted away from the right path.

What is the right belief in Islamic Monotheism or unification (Tawheed)?

The issue of Islamic monotheism (Tawheed) is very clear. There cannot be two opinions about it. The question is the perception (observation) of an individual. The understanding of the facts of things is dependent upon individual perception. The one who considers the Unity of Allah (ذاتِ الهی) as the source of all manifestations and considers the real source to be Unity of Allah (ذاتِ الهی) and gains Allah's visualization in such a way that he considers himself a place of manifestation of the Being and sees the reflection of His Being (وجودِ الهی) on facts of creatures, certainly he recognizes the Sustainer of worlds (ربُّ العالمین). This is the truthful monotheism Prophet Mohammad (صلی الله علیه و آله وسلم) taught to us. I have written an important book titled '**Belief in Allah**'. Read this book for details.

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