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First Edition الطبعة الأولى

Supervised by:
ABDUL MALIK MUJAHID



Published by:

DARUSSALAM دار السلام

Publishers & Distributors للنشر والتوزيع
P.O.Box 22743, Riyadh 11416 ص.ب: ٢٢٧٤٣-الرياض ١١٤١٦
Tel: 4033962 Fax: 4021659 ت: ٤٠٣٣٩٦٢ فاكس ٤٠٢١٦٥٩
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia المملكة العربية السعودية

© Darussalam, Riyadh, 1996

King Fahd National Library Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Zino, Muhammad bin Jamil
Islamic guidelines for individual and social reform =
توجيهات إسلامية لاصلاح الفرد و المجتمع / by Muhammad bin Jamil
Zino ; translated by Ibrahim M. Kunna
...p.,.... cm
ISBN: 9960-740-90-0
1. Islam I.Kunna, Ibrahim M. , tr. II. Title

210 dc

Legal Deposit no. 0883/17
ISBN: 9960-740-90-0

توجيهات إسلامية
لاصلاح الفرد والمجتمع

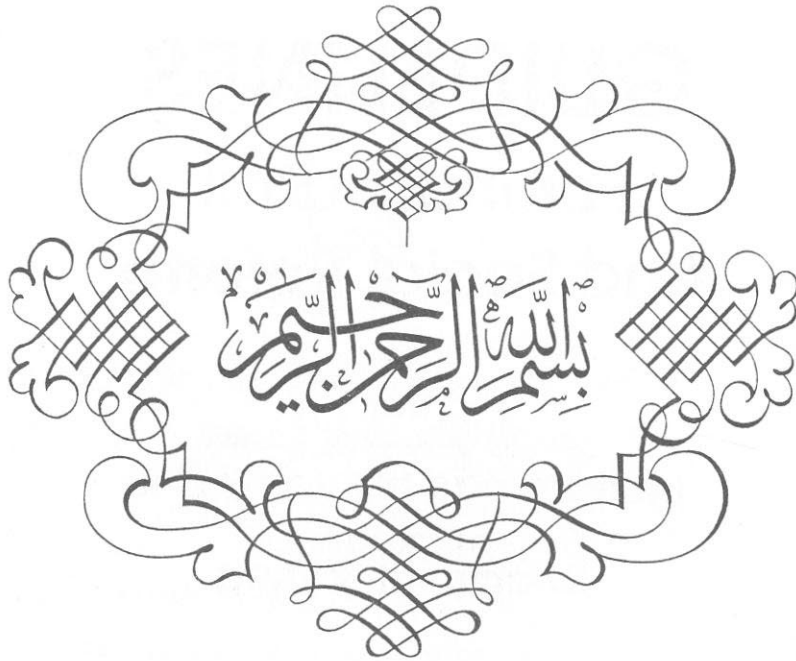
ISLAMIC GUIDELINES For Individual And Social Reform

By:
محمد بن جميل زينو
Muhammad bin Jamil Zino

Translated by:
Ibrahim M. Kunna



دار السلام
DARUSSALAM
Publishers & Distributors
Riyadh • Lahore • Houston



In the Name of Allah, the Most
Beneficent, the Most Merciful

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The Main Characteristics of Islam

1. Islam is a religion of monotheism. Belief in the existence of one creator for the universe is a fact that would persuade any thinking mind. This Creator is the Only God worthy of worship. Hence the acts of devotion such as blood sacrifice, votive offering and supplication—especially the latter because :

«الدُّعَاءُ هُوَ الْعِبَادَةُ»

“Supplication is the worship.” (Tirmidhi).

- should be for Allâh alone.
2. Islam unifies all the previous religions, and does not separate them. It believes in all the Messengers sent by Allâh to guide mankind, the last of whom was Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. He came with a religion that superseded the past religions. He was sent by Allâh to the whole humanity to save them from deviations in their religions and guide them to the right path of Islam.
 3. The teachings of Islam are simply explicit and easy to understand. Islam is against superstitions, misbeliefs and complex philosophies. It is valid for application at all times and in all places.
 4. Islam does not separate completely the materialistic and the spiritual aspects of life. It sees life as a single whole comprising both the aspects. It does not lay stress on one side at the expense of the other.
 5. Islam stresses the spirit of equity and brotherhood between Muslims. It does not accept discrimination, regional or racial:

﴿إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ﴾

“Verily the most honourable of you with Allâh are the most pious of you.” (49:13)

6. In Islam there is no clergy or religious monopoly. Islam does not involve abstract ideas that are hard to believe. It is easy for everyone to read and understand the Noble Qur’ân and the *Hadith* (Traditions of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم), and to adjust his life accordingly.

(See “The Main Characteristics of Islam” by Dr. Yusuf Qardawi).

Islam is a Complete Way of Life

1. Islam organizes human life in all its aspects: economic, political, cultural and social. It lays stress on the right way to solve the relevant problems.
2. Islam tries to organize our life by emphasizing the importance of time. Being a Muslim alone is a major factor for the success of a Muslim in this life and the next in the Hereafter.
3. Islam is mainly a belief rather than a law. While in Makkah, the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) concentrated his efforts on *Tauhid* (Monotheism). He applied *Shari’ah* (Legal Way) later after he moved to Al-Madinah to establish the Islamic State.
4. Islam calls for learning and thinking, and encourages scientific advance. There were many great Muslim scholars in the Middle Ages such as Ibn Al-Haitham and Al-Bairuni (and many others) who are considered the founders of modern sciences.
5. Islam calls for earning of *Halâl* (lawful) money without exploitation, cheating or corruption. It commends the *Halâl* money in possession of a pious person who pays a

share of it in charity and for *Jihâd* (fighting in the way of Allâh) and thus helps to achieve social justice, as mentioned in an authentic *Hadith* reported by Ahmad:

«نَعْمَ الْمَالُ الصَّالِحُ لِلْمَرْءِ الصَّالِحِ»

“What a good thing indeed is the lawful (*Halâl*) earning in possession of a pious man!”

As for the saying

“Wealth cannot be accumulated from a lawful source”,
it is false and baseless.

6. Islam advocates both *Jihâd* (fighting in the way of Allâh) and a noble easy life. While it ordains for every Muslim the devotion of his life and possessions for the triumph of Islam, it also allows him to enjoy life. One should not, however, indulge too much in the joys of this life at the expense of the life to come for which good deeds should be performed.
7. Islam revives free thinking within the Islamic framework. It is against intellectual stagnation and foreign ideas that tar the beauty of Islam and hinder the progress of Muslims, such as heresies, myths and false *Ahadith*.

(See Dr. Yusuf Qardawi, “The Main Characteristics of Islam”).

The Pillars of Islam

قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: «بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ، وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ»

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

“Islam is built on five (pillars):

1. to testify that there is no God but Allâh (i.e., none has the right to be worshipped but Him) and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh;
2. to perform the obligatory prayers [(*Salat*) perfectly fulfilling all its conditions and in full submission to Allâh];
3. to pay *Zakat* [(the obligatory charity) i.e., if a Muslim owns 75 grams of gold or an equivalent amount of money, he should pay 2.5 percent as *Zakat*. There are also fixed rates for all other types of wealth];
4. to perform *Hajj* (for those who can afford it in terms of money, health and legal company in case of women and security) and
5. to fast the month of Ramadân (i.e. abstain from eating, drinking, sex and all other things that are not permitted during fasting from dawn to sunset).”

[Agreed upon]

The Pillars of Faith

« أَنْ تُوْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ »

To believe in:

1. Allâh (in His Oneness of Lordship, worship, Names, Attributes and legislation),
2. His angels (as creatures whom Allâh created of light to execute His Orders),
3. His Books (the Torah, the Bible, the Psalms and the Qur’ân, the last of them as the best and everlasting),
4. His Messengers (from the first Noah to the last Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم),
5. The Last Day (the Day of Judgement when people will be held accountable for their deeds),
6. Predestination, and whether good or bad.

[Muslim]