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Messengers 11 – Different from other Muslims?

Based on the works of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan (حفظه الله)
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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

QUESTION: Does Islam teach that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was distinguished in any way from the Muslims themselves?

ANSWER:

Yes, there were certain obligations (and also privileges) which he had which none of the other Muslims had or have. These include the following, although there are others:[1]

a) The prohibition for him and his family of accepting charity. All other Muslims are of course allowed to accept charity which is given to them.

b) The allowance to fight in Mecca – for this is something that is forbidden for the rest of the Muslims.

c) The forbiddance of inheriting from him, after his death.

d) The prohibition of his wives marrying someone else after his death.

The obvious questions that springs to mind is: why was Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) obliged to do certain things and given certain privileges which none of the other Muslims were?

Islam teaches that everything which Allaah, the Creator, does is done with wisdom. Sometimes the wisdom behind a certain ruling is apparent to us – but sometimes it is not.

Yet if a person submits to the idea that there is only One Creator and Sustainer of this Universe and that this Creator deserves all acts of worship – and the Arabic word for this submission is 'Islam' – then the person automatically knows that what the Omnipotent Creator tells him or her to do will have wisdom behind it and will be for their benefit.

The rulings that He ordains upon His creation may differ from one community to the next, even from one person to the next, but behind them all is the wisdom of a Creator who has full knowledge of everything and who guides the person who wishes to be guided to do that which is best for them.

[1] Refer to al irshaad ilaa saheeh il i'tiqaad of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan p200 for more information

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This is one of the benefits which a person who accepts Islam has over the one who does not – the former always has acceptance in his or heart that whatever happens to them in this life, there is a reason for it. The ruling that he has to abide by may sometimes not seem to make any sense to his very limited intellect but the Muslim submits – he hears and then obeys.

We have discussed this concept before when mentioning why different prophets had different legislations. It is the concept that the Creator, the All Knowledgeable One, the Most Merciful, the One who is severe in punishment, the All Hearing One who hears us at all times, when we are happy and also when our hearts are breaking, in the depths of despair and sadness – Allaah, the Exalted – ordains rulings on His creation which are appropriate for them, and this may differ from one person to the next.

So Islam may ask one thing of a grown up healthy man, but something different of a child or a woman, or an ill person, or a forgetful person in exactly the same circumstance. The rulings for Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) may have differed in some respects from the other Muslims, but there was a wisdom behind that, which we may never know. And the Muslim accepts this.

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