

Series of Answers by the Ameer of Hizb ut Tahrir, Eminent Scholar Ata Bin Khalil Abu
Al-Rashtah to his Facebook Fiqhi Page

Answer to Question

Islam and the Religions (Adyan) of Prophets

To: Abu Sarah

(Translated)

Question:

Assalam Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuhu

Our shaikh, may Allah [bless you], we want to ask you a question,

In the book "Nizam Al-Islam" it is written that Islam is a Deen revealed to the Prophet Muhammad to regulate man's relationship with his creator, himself and other human beings.

My question is: is Islam only revealed to the Prophet Muhammad, and not to the previous prophets? What was the religion of the previous prophets?

I thank you for your answer, and may Allah reward you with great rewards.

Wassalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuhu.

Answer:

Assalam Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuh,

In your question, you refer to the definition of Islam that came at the beginning of the discussion of the book "The System of Islam" as follows:

[Islam is the Deen that Allah revealed to our master Muhammad, peace be upon him, to regulate man's relationship with his Creator, with himself, and with other human beings. The relationship of man with his creator includes the creeds and worship, and his relationship with himself includes ethics, food and clothes, and his relationship with other human beings includes transactions and punishments.] End of quote.

The word Islam and its derivatives and subject are used in the Shariah texts in the linguistic sense, i.e., the linguistic truth, and they are used in the technical meaning, i.e., the Shariah truth. As for the linguistic meaning of the word Islam, it is submission, obedience and sincerity. As for the technical meaning, it is to give term Islam as the name of the Deen that Allah (swt) revealed to our master Muhammad (saw) especially as it is the definition quoted from the book "The System of Islam" above, and here is the explanation:

First: The linguistic meaning (the linguistic truth) of the word Islam:

1- The linguistic meaning of the word Islam is stated in the language dictionaries as follows:

A- [Lisan Al Arab (12/ 289)

Islam (surrender) and Istislam (submission) and Inqiyad (obedience): Islam from the Shariah is to show submission, to make the Shariah dominant and to abide by what the Prophet brought... As for Islam, Abu Bakr Muhammad bin Bashir said, "So-and-so is said to be a Muslim." There are two sayings, **one of which is the one who submits to Allah's command, and the second is the one who is sincere to Allah in worship.** From their sayings: He submitted the thing to so and so, that is, he delivered it, he gave it up for him... And in the Hadeeth, there is no human being except that he has a devil with him, it was said,

and with you, He said yes, but Allah helped me against him, so he became Muslim, and in a narration, until he became Muslim, that is, he obeyed, and he stopped whispering to me].

B- [Al-Muhit fi al-Lughah (2/ 265, with automatic numbering of Ash-Shamila)

Islam: submission to Allah's command and His obedience. And they say: We have surrendered to Allah, our Lord: that is, we have surrendered to Him and submitted. And, peace is also: Islam. And the Muslim: the surrendered

Islam in language means submission, obedience and sincerity, and in the right of Allah (swt), it is obedience, submission, and surrender to Allah, and it is also sincerity to Him (swt).

2- The use of Islamic texts in the linguistic sense of the word Islam:

The Shariah texts have used the word Islam and its derivatives and subject in several places in the linguistic sense mentioned above, and we mention two of those Shariah texts for example:

a- His saying (swt): **﴿وَإِذْ يَرْفَعُ إِبْرَاهِيمُ الْقَوَاعِدَ مِنَ الْبَيْتِ وَإِسْمَاعِيلُ رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ * رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ وَمِن دُرِّيَّتِنَا أُمَّةً مُسْلِمَةً لَكَ وَأَرْنَا مَنْسَكَنَا وَثُبَّ عَلَيْنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ * رَبَّنَا وَابْعَثْ فِيهِمْ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِكَ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ * وَمَنْ يَرْغَبْ عَنْ مِلَّةِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ وَلَقَدْ اصْطَفَيْنَاهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَإِنَّهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ لَمِنَ الصَّالِحِينَ * إِذْ قَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ أَسْلِمْ قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِزَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ * وَوَصَّى بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبُ يَا بَنِيَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَى لَكُمْ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ * أَمْ كُنْتُمْ شُهَدَاءَ إِذْ حَضَرَ يَعْقُوبَ الْمَوْتَ إِذْ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ مَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي قَالُوا نَعْبُدُ إِلَهَكَ وَإِلَهَ آبَائِكَ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ إِلَهُهَا وَاحِدًا وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ * تِلْكَ أُمَّةٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَلَكُمْ مَا كَسَبْتُمْ وَلَا تُسْأَلُونَ عَمَّا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ﴾** And [mention] when Abraham was raising the foundations of the House and [with him] Ishmael, [saying], "Our Lord, accept [this] from us. Indeed You are the Hearing, the Knowing * Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and from our descendants a Muslim nation [in submission] to You. And show us our rites and accept our repentance. Indeed, You are the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful * Our Lord, and send among them a messenger from themselves who will recite to them Your verses and teach them the Book and wisdom and purify them. Indeed, You are the Exalted in Might, the Wise." * And who would be averse to the religion of Abraham except one who makes a fool of himself. And We had chosen him in this world, and indeed he, in the Hereafter, will be among the righteous * When his Lord said to him, "Submit", he said "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds." * And Abraham instructed his sons [to do the same] and [so did] Jacob, [saying], "O my sons, indeed Allah has chosen for you this religion, so do not die except while you are Muslims." * Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him." * That was a nation which has passed on. It will have [the consequence of] what it earned, and you will have what you have earned. And you will not be asked about what they used to do". [Al-Baqara: 127-134]

All the expressions in these verses related to the subject of Islam: (Muslimeen, Muslimah, Aslam, Aslamt, Muslimoon, Muslimoon), are in the linguistic sense of the term Islam, i.e. submission, obedience and sincerity to Allah (swt). The truth of this matter is clarified by what came in the books of tafseer about the meanings of these verses. I quote a brief explanation from al-Nasafi's tafseer:

[Tafsir al-Nasafi (1/ 76, with automatic numbering of Ash-Shamila)

﴿رَبَّنَا وَاجْعَلْنَا مُسْلِمِينَ لَكَ﴾ "Our Lord, and make us Muslims [in submission] to You and" [Al-Baqara: 128]. Sincerely we direct our faces towards you, from His (swt) saying: ﴿أَسْلَمَ﴾ "whoever submits his face in Islam" [Al-Baqara: 112] Or surrendering, it is said to surrender to him and surrender if he submits and obey, and the meaning is to increase our sincerity and submission to you ﴿وَمِن دُرِّيَّتِنَا﴾ "...and from our

descendants” [Al-Baqara: 128] And make from our offspring, ﴿أُمَّةً مُّسْلِمَةً لَّكَ﴾ **“a Muslim nation [in submission] to You”** [Al-Baqara: 128]. The word “Min” is used to indicate being part of something or to clarify something. And it was said: By the Ummah, he meant the Ummah of Muhammad, (saw), but he singled out the supplication for their offspring because they are more deserving of compassion, as Allah (swt) says ﴿فَوَأْنَفْسُكُمْ وَأَهْلِيكُمْ نَارًا﴾ **“protect yourselves and your families from a Fire”** [At-Tahrim: 6] ﴿إِذْ قَالَ﴾ **“when he said”** an adverb ‘that we would have chosen him’, or implicitly mean to “remember” as if it was said: Remember that time so that you know that he is the righteous chosen one who does not turn away from a religion like him ﴿لَهُ رَبُّهُ أُسْلِمَ﴾ **“When his Lord said to him, "Submit",”** [Al-Baqara:131] **Submit and obey and be sincere in your Deen** ﴿قَالَ أَسْلَمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾ **“he said "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds.”** [Al-Baqara:131] **That is, I became sincere or I obeyed** ﴿فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُونَ﴾ **“so do not die except while you are Muslims.”** [Al-Baqara: 132] Your death should only be on the state of you being steadfast in Islam ﴿وَوَحْنُ لَهُ مُّسْلِمُونَ﴾ **“and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.”** [Al-Baqara: 136] to **Allah we are sincere...**] End of quote.

b- Allah (swt) saying: ﴿وَإِذْ أُوحِيَتْ إِلَى الْوَحَارِيِّينَ أَنْ آمِنُوا بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا آمَنَّا وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُّسْلِمُونَ﴾ **“And [remember] when I inspired to the disciples, "Believe in Me and in My messenger Jesus." They said, "We have believed, so bear witness that indeed we are Muslims [in submission to Allah].”** [Al-Ma’ida: 111]. It is clear from the verse that the Hadeeth is about the disciples, the followers of Jesus, peace be upon him, and that they said that they are Muslims, i.e., they are submissive, in obedience to Allah’s command, sincere to Him... The following was stated in Al-Nasafi’s tafseer of this verse:

[Tafsir al-Nasafi (1/ 314, with automatic numbering of Ash-Shamila)

﴿إِذْ أُوحِيَتْ﴾ **“the supporters or the pure”** ﴿إِلَى الْوَحَارِيِّينَ﴾ **“to the disciples”** ﴿بِي وَبِرَسُولِي قَالُوا﴾ **“to believe”** that is, they should believe, ﴿أَنْ آمِنُوا﴾ **“in Me and My Messenger, they said, “We believe”** That is, witness that we are **sincere and submitting.**]

Second: The technical use of the word Islam (the Shariah truth):

1- As we mentioned above, the Shariah texts used the word Islam in its technical sense, meaning the name of the Deen that was revealed to Muhammad, (saw) and we present two examples for that:

a- His (swt) saying: ﴿الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ﴾ **“This day those who disbelieve have despaired of [defeating] your religion; so fear them not, but fear Me. This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion”** [Al-Ma’ida: 3]. The following is mentioned in the tafseer of Ibn Katheer regarding this verse:

[Tafseer of Ibn Katheer (3/26)

His (swt) saying: ﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾ **“This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion”** [Al-Ma’ida: 3]. **This is the greatest blessing of Allah, Azza Wa Jal , upon this Ummah, as Allah (swt) has perfected their Deen for them, so they do not need a religion other than it, nor a prophet other than theirs, may Allah’s prayers and peace be upon him. That is why Allah made him the Seal of the Prophets, and sent him to mankind and the jinn, so there is no Halal except what He permitted, and there is no Haram except what He made forbidden, and there is no religion except what He legislated, and everything He told about is true and truthful, with no falsehood or**

absurdity, as the Most High says: ﴿وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ صِدْقًا وَعَدْلًا﴾ **“And the word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice.”** [Al-An’am: 115]. That is: truthfulness in the news, and justice in commands and prohibitions, so when the Deen was completed for them, the blessing was completed upon them; that is why Allah (swt) says: ﴿الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ﴾ **“This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as religion”** [Al-Ma’ida: 3]. That is: So be content with it for yourselves, **for it is the Deen that Allah is pleased with and loved and sent with it the best of His honourable Messengers, and with which He sent down His most honourable Books.** Ali bin Abi Talha said, on the authority of Ibn Abbas, his saying: “Today I have completed your religion for you” **which is Islam.** Allah told His Prophet (saw) and the believers that He has perfected belief for them, so they never need an addition, and Allah has perfected it and it is never lacking, and Allah is pleased with it, so He will never be angry with it.] **End of Quote.**

It is clear from the context of the verse that the subject is about the Deen that Allah (swt) revealed to His Prophet Muhammad, so He perfected it, completed it, and pleased it for the Muslims.

b- Al-Bukhari narrated in his Sahih on the authority of Ibn Omar, may Allah be pleased with them, who said that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: ﴿بُئِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسِ شَهَادَةٍ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ وَالْحَجِّ وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ﴾ **“the testimony that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger, the observance of the prayer, the payment of *zakat*, the Pilgrimage, and the fast during Ramadan.”** It is clear from this honourable Hadith that the subject is about the Deen of Islam that Allah revealed to His Prophet Muhammad (saw) and that the five aforementioned are its pillars, as stated in other Hadiths:

2- What was mentioned in the book “The System of Islam” in the text quoted from above, is about Islam in the technical meaning (the Shariah truth), and it was keen to define Islam in a way that shows that the Shariah of Islam covers all aspects of life. It was presented in the definition that Islam is the Deen that was revealed to our master Muhammad (saw) to regulate man’s relationship with his Creator, with himself, and with other human beings. Thus, it did not leave a potential relationship for man without organizing it and setting rules for it.

Third: Islam and the religions of the prophets:

1- Islam in its linguistic sense is in the right of Allah (swt) i.e. submission and obedience to Allah, and being sincere to Him, is a description of the religion of all the prophets from the time of Adam to our Prophet Muhammad (saw) as all the prophets were upon Islam:

a- It is mentioned with respect to Ibrahim, peace be upon him, in the Noble Qur’an: ﴿إِذْ قَالَ﴾ **“When his Lord said to him, "Submit", he said "I have submitted [in Islam] to the Lord of the worlds.”** [Al-Baqara: 131].

b- And regarding Jacob, peace be upon him, and his sons: ﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبَ يَا بَنِيَّ﴾ **“Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous.”** [Yusuf: 101].

﴿وَوَصَّىٰ بِهَا إِبْرَاهِيمَ بَنِيهِ وَيَعْقُوبَ يَا بَنِيَّ﴾ **“Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous.”** [Yusuf: 101].

﴿إِنَّ اللَّهَ اصْطَفَىٰ لَكُمْ الدِّينَ فَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ * **“Or were you witnesses when death approached Jacob, when he said to his sons, "What will you worship after me?" They said, "We will worship your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac - one God. And we are Muslims [in submission] to Him.”** [Al-Baqara: 132-133].

c- And regarding Yusuf, peace be upon him: ﴿يُؤْتِنِي مُسْلِمًا وَالْحَقِّنِي بِالصَّالِحِينَ﴾ **“Cause me to die a Muslim and join me with the righteous.”** [Yusuf: 101].

d- Regarding Musa, peace be upon him, and his followers, and regarding the magicians who believed in him: ﴿وَقَالَ مُوسَىٰ يَا قَوْمِ إِن كُنتُمْ آمَنْتُمْ بِاللَّهِ فَعَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلُوا إِن كُنتُمْ مُسْلِمِينَ﴾ “And Moses said, “O my people, if you have believed in Allah, then rely upon Him, if you should be Muslims.” [Yunus: 84] ﴿وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَاءَتْنا رَبِّنَا أفرغ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾ “And you do not resent us except because we believed in the signs of our Lord when they came to us. Our Lord, pour upon us patience and let us die as Muslims [in submission to You].” [Al-A’raf: 126]

e- Regarding Suleiman, peace be upon him: ﴿فَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ قِيلَ أَهَكَذَا عَرْشُكَ قَالَتْ كَأَنَّهُ هُوَ وَأُوتِينَا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِهَا وَكُنَّا مُسْلِمِينَ﴾ “So when she arrived, it was said [to her], “Is your throne like this?” She said, “[It is] as though it was it.” [Solomon said], “And we were given knowledge before her, and we have been Muslims [in submission to Allah]” [An-Naml: 42].

f- Regarding Isa, peace be upon him, and his supporters: ﴿فَلَمَّا أَحَسَّ عِيسَىٰ مِنْهُمُ الْكُفْرَ قَالَ مَنْ أَنْصَارِي إِلَى اللَّهِ قَالَ الْحَوَارِيُّونَ نَحْنُ أَنْصَارُ اللَّهِ آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَاشْهَدْ بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾ “But when Jesus felt [persistence in] disbelief from them, he said, “Who are my supporters for [the cause of] Allah?” The disciples said, “We are supporters for Allah. We have believed in Allah and testify that we are Muslims [submitting to Him]” [Aal-i-Imran: 52].

g- Regarding the people of the Book: ﴿الَّذِينَ آتَيْنَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ هُمْ بِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ * وَإِذَا يُتْلَىٰ عَلَيْهِمْ قَالُوا إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلِهِ مُسْلِمِينَ﴾ “Those to whom We gave the Scripture before it - they are believers in it * And when it is recited to them, they say, “We have believed in it; indeed, it is the truth from our Lord. Indeed we were, [even] before it, Muslims [submitting to Allah].” [Al-Qasas: 52-53].

Thus, Islam, in the sense of surrender and obedience to Allah (swt) and sincerity to Him, is a description of the religion of all the prophets.

As for the technical terminology, it is as stated in “The System of Islam”:

[Islam is the Deen that Allah revealed to our master Muhammad, peace be upon him, to regulate man's relationship with his Creator, with himself, and with other human beings. The relationship of man with his creator includes the creeds and worship, and his relationship with himself includes ethics, food and clothes, and his relationship with other human beings includes transactions and punishments.] End of quote. The evidences for this are many and conclusive, and we have explained some of them above.

I hope that this answer is sufficient, and Allah is All-Knowing and Most Wise.

Your Brother,

Ata Bin Khalil Abu Al-Rashtah

8 Jumada Al-Akhar 1444 AH

1/1/2023 CE

The link to the answer from the Ameer’s Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/HT.AtaabuAlrashtah/posts/721545422866163>