

(Note: Wherever the word “you” or “your” is singular and refers to one human being, it is printed with an italic y, as in: you. Wherever such a word refers to God, the letter y is printed in capital, as in: You.)

For Fast 22 – September 2

Topic: (P) Prophets

Prophets raised among all nations:

- “Mankind is a single nation (*umma*). So Allah raised prophets as bearers of good news and as warners, and He revealed with them the Book with truth, that it might judge between people in that in which they differed.” — 2:213

As all people are a single nation (*umma*), God, too, has been revealing Himself to all. Prophets were raised among all nations, to every one of whom a revealed Book was given to show them the right way.

- “Surely We have sent you (Prophet Muhammad) with the Truth as a bearer of good news and a warner. And there is not a people but a warner has gone among them.” — 35:24

This broad doctrine that a prophet was raised among every nation is taught repeatedly in the Quran. This great truth, which had remained hidden for thousands of years from the wisest men of the world, had shone upon the mind of an Arabian who could neither read nor write, who did not even know what nations then existed and what scriptures they possessed. Only he who had the breadth of mind to recognize truth in all could unite all mankind.

- “And certainly We raised in every nation a messenger, saying: Serve Allah and shun the devil.” — 16:36

Not all prophets are mentioned by name in the Quran:

- “Surely We have revealed to you (Prophet Muhammad) as We revealed to Noah and the prophets after him, and We revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and We gave to David a scripture. And (We sent) messengers We have mentioned to you before and *messengers We have not mentioned* to you. And to Moses Allah addressed His word, speaking (to him) —messengers, bearers of good news and warners, so that the people may have no plea against Allah after the (coming of) messengers. And Allah is ever Mighty, Wise.” — 4:163-165

The good news which these messengers brought relates as much to the peace and happiness which is granted to the righteous as to the advent of the Prophet Muhammad who, coming at the end, would unite the qualifications of all the prophets in his own person, and accordingly make the nations of the earth as one nation.

Muslims must believe in all the prophets equally:

- “Say: We believe in Allah and (in) what has been revealed to us, and (in) what was revealed to Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) what was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) what was given to the prophets from their Lord, we make no distinction between any of them and to Him we submit.” — 2:136

This shows the cosmopolitan nature of a Muslim’s belief. Not only is belief in the great prophets of Israel an article of faith with a Muslim, but the words *what was given to the prophets from their Lord* make the Muslim conception of belief in prophets as wide as the world. Note that Muslims are required to believe in prophets even of those nations who are hostile to them.

- “The Messenger (Prophet Muhammad) believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers. They all believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His messengers. We make no distinction between any of His messengers.” — 2:285

All prophets taught that God is One:

- “And We sent no messenger before you but We revealed to him that there is no God but Me, so serve Me.” — 21:25
- “And the same did Abraham command his sons, and (so did) Jacob: My sons, surely Allah has chosen for you (this) religion, so do not die except as submitting ones. Or were you witnesses when death visited Jacob, when he said to his sons: What will you serve after me? They said: We shall serve your God and the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, one God only, and to Him do we submit.” — 2:132-133

No prophet asked people to worship him:

- “It is not for a mortal that Allah should give him the Book and the judgment and the prophethood, then he should tell people: Be my servants besides Allah’s; but (he would say): Be worshippers of the Lord because you teach the Book and because you study (it); nor would he command you to take the angels and the prophets for lords. Would he command you to disbelieve after you submit?”

Thus according to the Quran no prophet — Jesus included — ever taught his followers to take him as God. Even the current Gospels do not attribute any such teaching to Jesus. The angels are mentioned because the pagan Arabs worshipped the angels.

All prophets were mortal with ordinary human needs:

- “And We did not send before you any messengers but they surely ate food and went about in the markets.” — 25:20
- “Nor did We give them (the prophets) bodies not eating food, nor did they live forever.” — 21:8

Thus every prophet had a mortal body needing food for its support, and every one of them tasted of death. Therefore Jesus also must have had a body which stood in need of food and must have tasted of death. The idea that he is alive is clearly opposed to this verse.

The following verse illustrates the mission of the prophets:

- “Their messengers said (each to his nation): Is there doubt about Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth? *He invites you to forgive you your faults* and to give you respite till an appointed term. They said: You are nothing but mortals like us; you wish to turn us away from what our fathers used to worship, so bring us clear authority. Their messengers said to them: *We are nothing but mortals like yourselves, but Allah bestows (His) favours on whom He pleases of His servants.* And it is not for us to bring you an authority, except by Allah’s permission. And on Allah let the believers rely. And why should we not rely on Allah and He has indeed guided us in our ways? And we would certainly bear with patience your persecution of us. And on Allah should the reliant rely.” — 14:10-12

Position of Prophet Muhammad:

- “Say: O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. There is no god but He; He gives life and causes death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the *Ummī* Prophet who believes in Allah and His words, and follow him so that you may be guided aright.” — 7:158

1. As contrasted with the other prophets, every one of whom was sent to *his people*, the Prophet Muhammad is here spoken of as having been sent to *all people*, to the whole of mankind. Thus the appearance of the Prophet Muhammad was a turning point in the history of humanity. The day of the national prophet was over and a new era had dawned in which the whole of humanity was ultimately to be united under one spiritual head. The idea of *nationality* had to give place to the broader idea of *one humanity*, and the basis of it was laid by the Quran.

2. *Ummī* means *one who neither writes nor reads a writing.*
