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Publisher's Forward

To begin and execute a research is like walking in the path of development and evolvement. When the seeds of the “questions” are planted, in the soil of the mind of the researcher, this phase initiates, and its end is culminated when the result and the outcome of knowledge and wisdom is gained.

Evidently, this end is a new chapter in itself, for growth, and announces beforehand this good news to humans. For the result of all those mental efforts will not only bring the blooming and flowering of talent and all kinds of Blessings to humans, but it also makes the mind of the researcher to ponder and shape new, more questions.

This will produce a great collection of growing plants and flowers for the seeking mind... Those “questions” are in fact, the seeds, which according to the necessities of Time and the strength of the researchers will grow and bloom by themselves. They will make Culture and Civilization to move forward.

In like manner, the increasing rate of transferring oneself from one place to another place and the decrease of the distances will make those seeds travel miles and miles, to faraway places, in order to install them inside the curious mind of other seekers. This will bring an amazing diversity and a novelty for another civilization...

It is true then, that the presence of knowledge and a good, capable management will help this project to develop itself and one has to admit indeed, that it has always played an important role...

Al-Mustafa International Publication and Translation Center, because of its global mission, and its special position among the Religious Schools and the colorful human diversity that it has developed inside itself, sees it as a moral duty to procure all the appropriate conditions for any research works, and takes its role in this matter, most seriously. To procure all kinds of necessary grounds, with an excellent management of all the existing possibilities and talents, and to care and protect all its researchers in religious fields; these are the most crucial responsibilities of the Department of Research in this International center.

We dearly hope that by being attentive to all these autonomous scientific movements, and by fortifying all the existing motives, we shall be able to witness the blooming of the Religious Culture in every part of this wide world!

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Introduction

Today, there is no proper knowledge and understanding of divine religions among most of the world's people, because on the one hand, there have been many distortions in divine religions throughout the history of these religions and on the other hand, the wrong actions and behavior of many followers of those religion have caused an unacceptable and irrational image of divine religions.

Superpowers and colonialist countries, in order to protect their illegitimate interests, have not allowed a true and correct image of divine religions, especially the last divine Abrahamic religion, Islam, to be presented to the people of the world.

In order to understand any religion and to be rational in accepting or rejecting it, first of all it is necessary to have a general understanding of the features and characteristics of that religion. In order to know about Islam, many books have been written .Due to their voluminous literature which include a lot of pages and the fact that each of them refers to a special aspect

of Islam, and also due to the fact that many of them have not been translated into the foreign languages, it is not possible or it is very difficult for the ordinary people to read them.

The present small and compact book, benefitting from the short sentences with simple and fluent language, only seeks to present a general picture of Islam in its various dimensions and does not elaborate on Islam's detailed rules. Also this book does not seek to prove the authenticity and superiority of Islam over other religions and the final judgment should be exercised by the readers who can believe in it after studying and doing research.

All the contents of this book are based on authentic Islamic sources; however, in order to be brief and not to confuse the mind of the readers, we have refrained from mentioning the sources of each of its clauses and sentences. It is obvious that the respected reader who, by reading this book, begins to like Islam with the mentioned characteristics and becomes interested in it, in order to do research and study the details of this religion more, must read the Holy Quran and authentic traditions and Hadith discussed in detail in the books of Islamic scholars.

Chapter One

Religion

1. The universe, the world and everything exists in it, including the living things, plants, animals, Jinn, angels and human, are all the creation of the Almighty God.
2. The universe was not created in vain and it is surely purposeful.
3. The first human of the current human species is Adam who was created by God from dust and then created his wife from him, and then the other men and women are from Adam and Eve generation.
4. Due to the lack of enough knowledge and awareness of all the rules and traditions governing over the universe, man needs guidance from his creator, which is known as "the man's need for religion".
5. Religion is a set of beliefs and principles and it is a set of *must and mustn't* that God the Almighty has established. It includes human happiness and prosperity in the life in this world and in the hereafter.
6. God Almighty has sent prophets for the man to guide mankind towards salvation and happiness. Some of these prophets were the owners of the *Sharia* (new religions) such

as the prophets of Abrahamic religions, and some were only preachers of the religions of the prophets who introduced the new religion and did not introduce an independent religion themselves.

7. The great prophets and the owners of New religions include: The prophet Noah (pbuh), The prophet Abraham (pbuh), The prophet Moses (pbuh), The prophet Jesus Christ (pbuh) And The prophet Muhammad (pbuh).
8. With the sending of every prophet on prophetic mission who introduced a new religion, the religion and *Sharia* of the previous Prophet was abolished and the religion of the new Prophet is the standard of action. It is obvious that the general principles of all divine religions, i.e. monotheism, prophet hood and resurrection are constant principles and their difference is only in religious regulations and laws, which were changed according to the requirements of time and the growth and maturity of human societies.
9. The followers of each divine prophet and also the followers of the last great prophets were obliged to follow the religion when a new prophet with the new religion was sent for people.
10. Islam is the last and the most complete divine law whose coming was promised as a good tiding by the prophet who owned the previous *Sharia* , Jesus Christ (pbuh) and in his heavenly book, the Bible.
11. The Prophet of Islam, the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the holy book of Islam is called the Qur'an.

12. The scope and territory of the mission of some prophets was limited to certain people and lands, and some prophets' mission were comprehensive including all people on the planet. The Prophet of Islam (pbuh) is one of those prophets whose scope of invitation and his mission include the whole planet and all the people of his age and the next ages after him until the end of world.