

***Al-Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life***  
**by Ismail Raji Al Faruqi (Pp. 237)**

**Shah Abdul Hannan**

Originally the book was written in English (1998) which is translated into Bengali (by Prof. Shahed Ali) by the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought (BIIT). The book was published by International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) (Virginia, USA) in (1982). From that time many editions of the book came into being from this Institute. In many other languages the book was translated so far. From the theological aspect the book occupied a remarkable place in the field of basic Islamic Literature.

In order to summarize the main themes for the readers, in the meanwhile, I had to go through the text of the book in Bengali and in English and I had already discussed the subject-matter of the book in some Dailies. The Dailies published the gist of the book in a nutshell for the readers of Bengali. It seemed that the demand of the book published in Bengali was not at all sufficient relative to the subject-matter of it. In terms of the importance of the subject matter of the book .Considering the significance of the book the Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought took the initiative to have it published for the Bengali readers of home and abroad (House # 4, Road # 2, Sector # 9, Uttara, Dhaka, Phone: 02-58954256, 02-58957509). I think there is no such notable book in any language based on *Tawhid*, which explains all aspects of Islam based on *Tawhid*. Writer of the book, I think, was among the ten distinguished thinkers and philosophies. in last one hundred year.

Now I want to present the summary of the book for the peoples of all ages. In the first chapter of the book it was observed that after the French Revolution a group of philosophers wanted to say that after the creation of the universe the Creator had destined some laws which were said Natural laws, heavens and earths are governed by them, so the Creator now has no functions to do, He is now idle. But the writer of the book has revoked these arguments, he told that the Creator is functioning all the time Himself or through His agents , humans, angels and natural laws mase by Him.

In the second chapter the writer told that the *Tawhid* is the gist-of of Islam. *Tawhid* means the Creator is only One, all others are His creations. Islam rejects the idea of notion of Allah's son, he said that Islam also rejects the notion of deity.

In the third chapter while discussing the fundamental principles of history the writer told that Islam has stressed on work . So the civilizations have to be created through the functionalities of human beings; and thereby make history . The Prophet (SAAS) and his Companions all the way did this. Allah (SWT) ordered through ages His Prophets to do this through their actions and to give new shapes of history for the human beings.

In the fourth chapter of the book principles of Knowledge is discussed. The Arabic letters *Alif, mim, noon* ( ا م ن ) ( which are root of the term Iman ( comes from Amnun), so it means strong conviction and not simple faith . Conviction and logic or argument is not conflicting with Wahy , they are substantive and supplementary. If it becomes conflicting to anybody, one should try repeatedly to understand is it proper reason or is it proper understanding of Wahy .This will resolve conflict.

In chapter fifth Faruqi told that there are some religions which pointed out to say that Creation was an 'accident', they thought that main objective should be determined to get relief from the Universe. In Islam the Nature is the Creation . In the Creation all have objectives, nothing is out of objectives. Allah (SWT) bestowed upon us Natural laws. What happens under these laws, happens in the same manner, do not happen haphazardly . As a result science became

possible, the scientists could find out the reasons of natural happenings. Allah is not opponent or enemy of sciences, the science became possible because He gave natural laws. Allah (SWT) is the condition of science, without Him there will be no science

The writer discussed in chapter six the basics of ethics and principles which happens because of laws of nature, there is no ethics or morality. Question of morality comes only when human acts in areas where humans have liberty. Humans are not treated as a sinner by birth. Islam is universal; there is no tribalism and superstition of country-worshipping.

In chapter seven the writer conveyed to the readers with the principles of society. Here he says that social system is the heart of Islam. He told that through the society Allah (SWT) desire is exhibited and actualized in action. Islamic society is not like that of the tribal society of the Jews. Secularism secludes the society from morality. There is no moral value in secularism. Its main objective is to keep one away of religion which is negative in terms of value feeling. Faruqi told that will of Almighty is societal and it is eccentric towards the society. Islam advises that one should be accountable to the Creator.

In chapter eight the writer narrated the principles of the universal society or the *Muslim ummah*. In modern sense *ummah* is not a group or a tribe. It is universal. *Muslim ummah* is like an entity of a physique where any torment is felt like in the whole body of a human being. The *ummah* has prospect of its own, it is always dynamic but in course of time the Muslim rulers and the *Fakhis* made it stagnant and static which must change

In chapter nine Faruqi describes the principles of family in Islam. The communists wanted to eliminate the family system from society but they failed. In the west the family systems too become weak due to many reasons, The anthropologists made weak the concept of family system by their wrong doctrines. They Thought that human beings are animals like other animals of the planet. According to their opinions human s need no family like animals. In Islam there may be unilateral (parents and their children) and extended forms of families too where grandparents and grand children and some other relatives may also live in a family.

Allah (SWT) has created man and women equal in their religious, ethical and civil rights, duties and responsibilities.

On the religious level Allah (SWT) established their equality in the verses 3: 195, 9: 71-72 and in 16: 97. In the verses 60: 12, 5: 38, 24: 2, 4: 32 the ethical and civil equality of man and women is evident and pertinent. There is a claim of inequality in man and women in verse 4: 34, but the matter does not stand any scrutiny.

Islam regards men and women as created for differing but mutually complementary functions. The functions of motherhood, of home-care and children's upbringing and those of fatherhood, home protection, livelihood-earning and overall responsibility call for different physical, psychic and emotional constitutions in men and women. The author here exasperated that majority of women remain engaged in the hardest job of motherhood and maternity as well as in home-making, still there should be facilities for women open for participating in outside works and imparting education for themselves. Family responsibilities become diminished after the middle age of women. In such cases there should remain spaces open for women as they can do jobs outside their families and can make them engaged in social works.

In chapter ten Faruqi describes the principles of political systems; He expressed that the *ummah* might have many states.. Islamic *Khilafat* or principles of state system is that rulers should be elected, there should be a consultative administration (parliaments of modern ages), Judiciary of the state should be independent and citizens of states will have civil rights. Duty of a Muslim government should be to fulfill the worldly demands and demands of education of its citizens.

In chapter eleven the writer discussed the principles of financial system of Islam. He told that Islam has priority on both the life of this world and the life of hereafter. Moreover, Islam believes in action.

There is no militancy and terrorism in Islam. Islamic welfare is for all not for any particular tribe or a nation. In this system nobody exploits anybody, there is no exploitation in this system, no country of the globe should exploit any country, here no body will deceive anybody. Hazrat Omar (RA) withdrew the local taxes, any commodity or capital could move from place to place, the state became a single common market which led to development of all areas.. In the production system no harmful things could be produced. Here production should be welfare oriented rather than profit oriented. In consumption there should be no extravagance, no monopoly and no stockpiling of any commodity. In Islamic financial system *zakat* should be implemented.

In chapter twelve he discussed the International systems in Islamic perspectives. After immigration to Medina the Prophet (SAAS) proclaimed the historic Charter of Medina, it was the first constitution of the world and which was the most ethically sound constitution. In that constitution all ethnical groups were ensured with equal rights. He eradicated tribal system and declared all Muslims a single *ummah*. The Jews were declared another *ummah* and the Prophet (SAAS) later declared the Nazran Christians, Later rulers treated the Hindus and the Buddhists as separate *ummahs*.

In chapter thirteen the writer discussed the principles of arts and aesthetics. He did not discuss the topics of songs and instrumental music. This can be seen in the book of Dr. Yusuf-al-karzawi's 'Principles of Halal and Harams in Islam' The readers better go through this book.

Dr Razi says that, the West, imitating the Greeks thinks making statues is considered as the main aesthetic art. But culture of statue was not accepted in Islam. Muslim artists made art of flowers, leaves, geometric lines and forms, repeating them in all directions in hundreds of ways. They called it stylization. They used these in architecture like mosques, walls, ceilings or pages and covers of books.

The Quran itself is an art in its universality of eloquence. There is no Muslim whom the Quranic recitation does not shake a person to the very depth of his being. The Muslim artistes transformed the art of writing Arabic into an aesthetic calligraphy.

The gist of the book in the form I have put above will help those readers who are unable to afford time to go through the said valuable book. Please read the main book published by Iiit (International Institute of Islamic Thought, USA).

– Shah Abdul Hannan  
Ex-Secretary of the Gov. of Bangladesh