

Messengers 13 – Is Islam something for the Arabs?

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

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

QUESTION: Continuing the topic of special privileges given to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) – was his Message universal to all peoples or specific to the Arabs alone?

ANSWER:

This is a topic which we have touched on before (please see the article **Belief in Prophets**) – the false idea that the message of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was only sent to the Arabs.

It is an idea which has been propagated by orientalist (non Muslims who study Islam) but which has no basis in fact.

However it is an idea that has - bizarrely - crept into the minds of certain Muslims as well. One hears statements from Muslims such as, “There are many roads that lead to God” and “All the spokes of the wheel lead to the centre” – meaning that all religions are acceptable providing that they worship God.

The Qur’aan states very clearly that it is binding upon all people, including the Jews and Christians, the Arabs and the non Arabs, that they must accept Islam:¹

O you who have been given the Scripture (Jews and Christians)! Believe in what We have revealed to Muhammad, confirming that which is with you.

[Soorah an Nisaa (the 4th chapter) verse 47]

Say (O Muhammad): “O mankind! Indeed I am sent to you all as the Messenger of Allaah (from Him) to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth..

[Soorah al A’raaf (the 7th chapter) verse 158]

And there are many other verses which carry the same meaning.

¹ Refer to al irshaad ilaa saheeh il i’tiqaad of Shaykh Saalih al Fawzaan p206 for more information

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Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) stated:

I have been given virtue over the (other) prophets in five aspects.... (and he mentioned that one of them is).. Each Prophet (before me) used to be sent specifically to his own people, and I was sent to all of mankind.

And he also said:

‘By the One in whose Hand is my soul, there is none from this nation (of mankind), be they Jew or Christian, who hears of me then he does not believe in me except that he will enter the Hellfire.’

Looking at the life history of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), we see that he constantly called the Jews and Christians, and peoples of other faiths to Islam. He sent envoys to amongst other places, Persia, Abyssinia, Egypt and Rome, to explain Islam to them. Why would he do this if he were just a messenger to the Arabs only or if his call was but one of many religions that would take a person to Paradise?

Although Islam allows some other religions to be practised in an Islamic state in a restricted manner, this is completely different from agreeing with those religions. Islam makes clear that after the coming of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) there is no other path to achieving success in the Hereafter apart from following his call.