

The Impact of Belief in the Unseen in the Light of Islam

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Abstract

Allah, the Glory be to Him, created the universe and populated it with uncountable creatures and things which some of them we can perceive through our five senses, whereas others are beyond our conception even if we enlist the help of all available media and tools, irrespective of the degree to which science has developed. This dominion which laid beyond our perception is the sign of the existing of Allah (s.w.t) the unseen. The paper is trying to address the issue of creed in Islamic religion which some unbelievers are confuse on. The paper adopted descriptive method for simplifying the issue, the unseen is something absent so far as the knowledge of man is concerned but is so close to him when he looks in to the reality, for instance, look in to the human beings, his hearing, growing, speech, intellect, heaven, earth, thunder, sun, moon, e.t.c you will find out are beyond the interpretation of common man, and not in terms of the ability of Allah (S.W.T.) Allah the Exalted created everything; nothing is beyond His knowledge. The unseen we are required to believe in is everything that laid beyond the physical reach of man and is only known through divine revelation. Muslim themselves are differed about the believe in the unseen, due to that confusion some even claimed that they have knowledge of the unseen through divine revelation, while many verses of the Qur'an restricted the knowledge of the unseen to Allah alone.

Key words: *Unseen, Allah, Faith, Grave, Angels, Resurrection, Intercession*

Introduction

The paper intends to explain the impacts of the belief in the unseen in the light of Islam, the paper also observed that many among the Muslims are mentioning the belief of the word "*Al-Ghaib*" (unseen) without understanding the differences between unseen and knowledge of the unseen which the Qur'an made an emphases that nobody knows it but Allah alone." *Laya'lamul-ghaiba illah*" Nobody knows the unseen but Allah." The paper simplify and adopt descriptive method in order to highlight the unseen which Allah (S.W.T) state it in the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) explain it which is known to the Muslim scholars as well as the unseen which is un known to all but Allah alone knows it. Many Muslims, believe that they have knowledge about Allah (s.w.t), they have knowledge about the hell and paradise, grave, events in the Day of judgment, through the teaching of Qur'an and Tradition of the prophet Muhammad (S.A.W), that is why they are worshipping Allah, but Allah is unseen with our necked eye, can we claim that we know the unseen, Allah (s.w.t)? in another hand those that are claiming nobody knows the unseen they are referring to the saying of Allah in surat Luqman:Q:30:34 " *verily, Allah alone has the knowledge of the hour, send a rainfall, and he knows what is in the womb, nobody knows what he can do tomorrow and no one knows where he can died, surely Allah is all knower and a story giver.*

The Unseen

The term '**unseen**' in its wider application is employed to cover everything which is not directly visible or touchable. Likewise it also covers all that is not directly accessible through other human sensory faculties. In this respect we may also define the unseen as a domain which covers all forms of existence which accuse beyond the direct access of the five senses (touch, sight, hearing, smell and taste). The things which belong to this category do not remain permanently inaccessible. They are inaccessible only with reference to a given period in time.

Concept of Faith in Islam

Faith in the context of Islamic religion, is define for a person or it places the person in a belief system that develops into a way of life and provides its own unique system of logic to explain the phenomena of life around us (Parinda 196)

In the English language, faith broadly means 'trust.' So, when you have faith, you have trust in something or somebody. In Arabic, the term 'faith' takes on further shades of meaning. The Arabic word for faith, *Iman*, comes from the root word '*amn*,' which means safety.

But in Islam is a belief in the six articles of faith as well as the five pillars of Islam in accordance with the Islamic perspectives. It was narrated that Jibril (A.S) asked the Messenger of Allah about the faith, the Messenger of Allah replied by saying: To belief in the existence of Allah, belief in His Angels, His books, His Messengers, belief in the last Day and to believe in destiny good or bad. (Bukhari: 1,251)

Faith is an inner conviction which all ways associated with a good deeds, and can be seen in our day to day activities, as a result of that, in most the verses where Qur'an called the believers you will see the task given to the believers to discharge. For instance in the Suratul Asr, Allah Says: By the time. Verily Man is in loss. Save those who believes and do the righteous deeds, advice one another to the truth and advice one another to the patience. (Qur'an: 103: 1- 3)

If we look in to these commandments:

- Belief in Allah attached with good deeds
- Advising one another to be truthful and patient

All these are command from Allah to believers, it is only *Iman* (faith) will warrant them to do the same as they are commanded. Due to that some scholars define it as a creed in mind, verbal speech and manifestation in reality in accordance with Teaching of Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w). Then, *Iman* (faith) will not be completed by verbal speech only unless it appear in our day to day activities but the issue of creed it will be judge by Allah only.

The bedrock of Islamic faith sets on the *Kalimatush-shahadah* (Word of testimony) which is, there is no one to be worshipped except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. This is called a believer when he pronounce and working with, it is in possible to see Allah but belief will encourage a Muslim to worship Allah based on the teaching of his Messenger. Muslim must understand that *Kalimatush-shahadah* divided into two categories, which are: a part teaching on the knowledge about Allah and the part teaching about the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), then, you would find a good Muslim.

Importance of the Belief in Islam

Believe in Allah, enables humans to be thankful for the blessings they enjoy, and to be patient in times of difficulty, for they believe that nothing can happen without His will. Faith in the Divine Being also prompts people to be more in tune with their souls and to maintain a constant connection through prayer, supplication, and reflection. Ultimately, faith enables them to develop a deeper vision, one which goes beyond the sight of their eyes and the signals of their minds.

According to Hamza explains that faith is, hence, directly linked to feeling protection and that faith is an attaching element in the human experience. Without faith we fall into a state of hopelessness; faith gives believers hope which makes them feel safe in this unpredictable world. In Islam, belief in Allah is the first step in securing this safety. This does not necessarily imply that it will keep people away from any harm or loss in their lives. Rather, it is referring to the spiritual safety net we fall back on during times of hardship – the knowledge that we are not alone and Allah’s wisdom is so much greater than our understanding. In the Quran, Allah says:

“Allah is the Protector of those who have faith: from the depths of darkness He will lead them forth into light.” (2:257)

Belief in the Unseen in Islam

In order to become a Muslim, a person must testify, “I bear witness that there is no one to be worship but Allah, and Muhammad is a Messenger of Allah.” A Muslim must believe this without ever having seen Allah or Muhammad (S.A.W). Faith in Islam, then, is an essential character of a Muslim. In addition, Muslims also recognize all the prophets of Allah, sent to guide humanity. Muslims believe in the revealed books as well, such as the Taurah, the Injil, and the Qur'an. The Quran the Glorious book of Allah, is the last revelation of Allah and it has remained preserved in its exact and original form for more than 1,400 years.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) once said, "Faith is to affirm the existence of Allah, His angels, His Books, His Messengers and the Last Day, and to believe in the Divine Destiny whether it be good or bad." Aptly, these are called the "six articles of faith." Each one is asking us to believe in something we have never seen or experienced. Allah Says in Qur'an:2:2 "This book there is no doubt in it, is a guidance to the pious. Those who believe in the unseen, establishing the prayer and they are spending out of what we provide for them."

The verse emphasized to the believers on the unseen and made them pious in the sight of Allah, Islam did not stop on six articles only as unseen but demons and so many things which human cannot interpret by the power of his knowledge, Allah says "Is with him the keys of the unseen and no one knows it but him".

The Angels of Allah

The second article of faith that a Muslim must embrace is the belief in the Angels. The Angels are part of the unseen world which we cannot comprehend and cannot prove scientifically. One cannot see the Angels unless Allah allows for, or enables their vision. Muslims believe in Angels because they are mentioned numerous times throughout the Glorious Quran, and in the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W); a body of work which Muslims call Hadith.

"The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and (so have) the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His Angels and His Books and His Messengers..." (Qur'an: 2:285)

The Angels have certain specialties and capacities that humans do not possess. Allah refers to the Angels as honored servants.

"...Rather, they are (but) honored servants" (Quran 21:26)

In Arabic, Angels are called *Mala'ika* which means 'to assist and help.' Angels are Holy and exist in a constant state of worship and praise to Allah in day and night and do not disobey Him. They worship Allah constantly, without growing bored or tired.

"They exalt (Him) night and day [and] do not slacken" (Qur'an 21:20)

Angels (*Mala'ika*) have different status, rank, and categories. Some Angels are of a higher level than others. Islam does not teach the concept of fallen or evil angels. Nor does Islam teach the idea that humans transform into angels after death. Islam also does not teach Angels are the children of the Almighty.

The Angels (*Mala'ika*) are servants and messengers of Allah, who serves His kingdom in full obedience and complete submission. Some angels are assigned the duty of executing Allah's law in the physical world. Angels surround humanity at all times, but mankind does not see them. There is a group of Angels that continuously record mankind's deeds; known as *Raqib* and *Atid* (the honorable scribes.) Each person is assigned to two Angels, which record every single good and evil deed by that individual, not a single word or deed is left unrecorded.

The Angels are not to be worshipped, prayed to, or supplicated to, or to be taken as objects of praise or veneration as they are not divine or semi-divine. The Angels (*Mala'ika*) are merely in submission to Allah (s.w.t) and carry out His commands at any time. A Muslim recognizes that Angels are but a creatures of Allah. Indeed, Allah is in no need of the Angels' assistance

and does not need to be worshipped or revered by the Angels or humans, as he is a free and independent Deity who gains nothing from the worship of others.

“To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and earth. Indeed, Allah is the Free of need, the Praiseworthy” (Quran 31:26)

The Day of Resurrection

In Islam, the Day of Resurrection, also known as the Day of Judgment or the Last Day, is a significant event that marks the end of the world and the beginning of the Hereafter. It is believed that on this day, all humans will be resurrected, judged according to their deeds, and rewarded or punished accordingly.

The Qur'an describes the Day of Resurrection in great detail, highlighting its importance and warning the humanity about its consequences. According to Islamic belief, the Day of Resurrection will be preceded by a series of signs that will signal its approach. These signs include the appearance of the Antichrist, the descent of Prophet Isa (peace be upon him), the rising of the sun from the west, and other significant events. On the Day of Resurrection, all humans, from the first to the last, will be resurrected from their graves and brought before Allah for judgment. They will be held accountable for their actions in this world, and their good and bad deeds will be weighed on the scales of justice. The Qur'an: 102:8 says:

“Then, on that Day, you will be questioned about the delights (you indulged in).” [Quran 102:8]

Those who did good deeds will be rewarded with Paradise, while those who committed evil will be punished in Hellfire. Allah says in the Qur'an: 18:107-108

“Verily, those who believe and do righteous good deeds shall have the Gardens of Al-Firdaus (the Paradise) for their entertainment. Wherein they abide eternally. They will not desire from it any transfer.”

“Then, as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be heavy, he will live a pleasant life (in Paradise). But as for him whose balance (of good deeds) will be light, he will have his home in a bottomless pit.” (in Hellfire) (Quran 101:6–9)

The Day of Resurrection is also characterized by intense suffering and chaos. The Qur'an describes it as a day of great terror and upheaval, when the mountains will be uprooted, the seas will boil, and the sky will split open. The Qur'an says:

“And when the sky is rent asunder and becomes red like [burning] oil. So which of the favors of your Lord would you deny?” (Quran:55:37–38)

The Day of Resurrection is a significant event in Islam that marks the end of the world and the beginning of the Hereafter. It is a day of judgment, where all humans will be held accountable for their actions in this world and rewarded or punished accordingly. The Qur'an warns humanity about the consequences of their actions and emphasizes the importance of doing good deeds to attain Paradise.

The effects of the belief in the last Day

There is difference in the style of life, attitude and moral understanding between those who genuinely believe in the last Day and those who do not

1. The people that do not believe in the last Day in most of cases are capitalist in their moral behaviors due to that anything that is not materially is not worth consider to such people.
2. Whatever such people lost in life they are shocked so much due to that they can commit suicide.
3. Such kind of people are so proud, overestimate and arrogant when they succeed any kind of benefit in life. Allah says in Suratul Tattif: 11-12: *"Those that deny the last Day. And none deny it but the transgressor beyond bound, the sinner.*

The sources of most of the corruption here in Nigeria is lack of the belief in the last Day, that is why some people are doing their own wishes with public treasury.

Intercession

Muslims should be understand that there would be various stages where the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) will be making intercession and other righteous servant of Allah all by the permission of Allah

The first of these, known as *Shafaat Al-kubra* (major intercession) will be on the plains of resurrection.

The second intercession will be for ease at the reckoning and questioning.

The third intercession will be on behalf of those sinners upon whom the order for punishment had been decreed so that they may be forgiven and not thrown into Hell.

The fourth intercession will be for those who have already been thrown in to Hell and it will be for their removal.

The fifth intercession will be for the raising of the stages of some of the believers. (Aqaaidul Islam p.122-p.123)

It is the belief of the *Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamat* that on the Day of Judgement the good people will intercede by the permission of Allah (S.W.A) on behalf of the evil ones. Allah will grant permission to the Prophets, Qur'an, **Scholars, Martyrs** and angels to make representations on behalf of the Muslims. The first permission in this respect will be given to the Prophet of Allah, Muhammad SAW who will be asked to intercede by the entire population of the world.

Uthmaan (R.A) narrates that the Prophet Muhammad SAW has said "On the Day of Judgement, the blessed prophets will be the first to intercede on behalf of the sinners, then the scholars and then the martyrs". (Sunan Ibn Majah: p: 1442)

Abu Dardah (R.A) narrates that the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) has said, "Intercession made by a *shahid* (martyr) will be accepted in favor of seventy (70) people of his family". (Sunan Abi Dawud)

The Prophet of Allah Muhammad (S.A.W) has said "Whoever reads the Glorious Qur'an and memorizes it, while he regards what it makes lawful as lawful and its unlawful as forbidden,

Allah will admit him into Jannah and will accept his intercession on behalf of ten such persons of his family who were doomed to the Fire of Hell". (Sunan Tirmizi 136)

From the aforementioned discussion we can understand that a person who is destined to be in Hell, a person like a scholar, hafiz or martyr can intercede for him. Similarly, a person who is in a low level paradise can go or visit a high level paradise.

The Concept of Torture and Comfort in the Grave

Grave or Barzakh is a dominion kept by the Lord of the Universe between this world of ours and the forthcoming Hereafter and is among the belief in the unseen in Islam, in such a way that both might maintain their individual limits. Barzakh is a state between these worldly and otherworldly affairs.

After entering the world of Barzakh one does not experience physical pains like headache, toothache and such other troubles. Such suffering forms is a part of the essentials of the material world. But there, in Barzakh, it is the realm of abstracts or of incorporeal beings. Of course, it can also not be called the Hereafter, which may mean that there will be only darkness for the sinners and only light for the obedient ones.

Some people asked the Imam Ali (A.S.) about the duration of Barzakh. He replied, "It is from the moment of death up to the time when all will rise from their graves regaining life.¹

The Qur'an:23:100, says:

...and before them is a barrier until the day they are raised.

Torture

Allah, the Exalted, said in the Qur'an, verse 46 of Surat Ghâfir:

"Hellfire will be exposed to them early in the morning and late in the afternoon, and on the Day of Judgment, Allah will make the followers of Fir'awn (Pharaoh) enter the severest torture."

Also Allah said in the Qur'an, verse 124 of Surat Taha:

"And Whoever turns away from the correct belief in Allah and his Messenger, shall face a harsh distressing situation."

These two verses refer to the torture of the grave for the blasphemers. As for the sinful Muslims who committed enormous sins and died before repenting, some of them will be forgiven by Allah and thus they will not be tortured in their graves while others will be tortured in their grave then the torture will stop and the rest of the punishment they deserve will be delayed for them to the Hereafter.

Imam Abu Hanifah, said in al-Fiqhu l-'Akbar: "The pressure of the tomb and its torture are a truth. This is something that will take place for the disbeliever and some disobedient Muslims."

As for the Hadiths of the Prophet, (S.W.A) concerning the torture of the grave, they are numerous, to a point that *al-Hafidh as-suyuti* said: "The news of the torture of the grave is narrated by *at-tawâtur* from the Prophet Muhammad (S.W.A)" This means that a large number

of companions narrated the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad SAW concerning the torture of the grave.

Also the whole Sunni scholars agreed by consensus that the torture of the grave will take place for some people.

Abdul-Qahir Abu Mansur at-tamimiyy said in his book 'Al-Farqu Baynal-Firaq: "When the non-believer dies, he would encounter the severe torture of Allâh. The hardest situation a non-believer might encounter in this life would be nothing compared to the severe torture he receives after he dies."

Al-Bukhariyy and Muslim reported from Anas that the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) said: "When the man is laid in his grave, and his companions leave him, he hears the sound of their soles and when they have withdrawn, two angels come to him, make him sit and say to him: "What did you say about this man Muhammad?" So the (complete) believer will say, "I testify that he is the slave of Allah and His messenger", so we will say to him: "Look at the place in hell, Allah has exchanged it for you against a place in paradise "and he will see them both. As for the disbeliever or the hypocrite (who hides his disbelief and calls himself a Muslim), he will say, "I do not know, I was saying what people said about him. "Then he will be told: "You did not know anything and you did not say anything", then he will be struck between the two ears with a mass of iron and he will shout with a shout that will be heard by all those who are surrounding except men and jinn."

In these Hadiths there is confirmation of the return of the soul to the body and sensory perception in the grave.

Comfort

The above mentioned Hadiths are proof that the pressure of the tomb will not take place for all people as some ignorant claim, indeed the pious Muslims, the saints and the prophets will not suffer the pressure of the tomb but on the contrary the grave widens for them 70 cubits out of 70 or more.

The Prophet Muhammad SAW, said about the pious believer: "This world is a prison for the pious believer and a place of enjoyment for the blasphemer." This is so because after dying, the pious believer will have great enjoyment while the blasphemer will encounter continuous torture.

Al-Bukhariyy, narrated from Abdullah Ibn Abbas that the Prophet SAW once passed by two graves and said: They are being tortured for committing enormous sins; One of them used to contaminate himself with urine, and the other used to practice tale-bearing." Then the Prophet SAW asked for a green branch of a palm tree and he split it into two, then he stuck one in the first grave and the other in the second and said: "May this lessen their torture."

Also it was narrated from the route of Abdullah Ibn Amr that the Prophet Muhammad SAW mentioned the two angels who test the people in the grave. Upon hearing this, Umar Ibn al-Khattab said, "O Messenger of Allah, do we get our minds back?" The Prophet said: which means: "Yes, just as you are today." When Umar heard that, he fell silent out of shock.

Conclusions

Belief in the unseen is different from knowledge of the unseen and other sciences. It is wider and more encompassing, going beyond information and tangible proof. Belief includes an acceptance with the heart, which also has love, adoration, awe, and connection – all qualities that cannot be measured or seen. Life cannot only be based on faith in tangible sciences for these cannot be accepted unconditionally. They cannot provide peace and satisfaction as they are constantly evolving and changing. To put faith in them is to put oneself up for disappointment. What is accepted today could be rejected tomorrow depending on new discoveries being made.

This assignment reminds us that an essential part of faith is to believe in the unseen. It is not foolish and delusionary. It is to accept that human senses are limited and there is much that cannot be experienced with them. Recite the verses of the Quran to strengthen your belief in the unseen. It is a necessary quality of the pious ones.

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