

The concept of truth in the Holy Quran

by Zahid Aziz¹

Truth is something which everyone tries to find out. To make decisions in our daily lives, we want true information. To form an opinion we want to know the truth about the subject. Scientists carry out deep studies and extensive research to find the truth. Enforcers of the law want to find the truth about what certain people have done or want to do.

False information is, at best, useless to us, and at worst it can mislead us into a damaging course of action. Everyone wants to know the truth and only the truth. Yet when it comes to letting others know the truth, people are often “economical” with it.

Truth being so vital and such a basic requirement of existence, it is referred to in the Quran in a very large number of places.

‘Truth’ is a name of Allah

Truth or *Haqq* is a name of God in the Quran:

“Supremely exalted then is Allah, the King, the Truth.” — 20 : 114

“That is because Allah, He is the Truth,” — 22 : 6

“Allah, He is the Evident Truth.” — 24 : 25

Hence Abdul Haqq is a name of men among Muslims which means the servant of Truth, by *Truth* being meant Allah.

God is truthful

Truth being a name of Allah, the Quran says that God is the most truthful:

“Allah speaks the truth” — 3 : 95

“And Allah speaks the truth and He shows the way.” — 33 : 4

“He (Allah) said: The Truth is, and the truth I speak...” — 38 : 84

The following statement is repeated more than ten times in the Quran:

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“...surely Allah’s promise is true” — 10:55

It also says:

“It is Allah’s promise, in truth. And who is more truthful in word than Allah?”
— 4:122

God created the world with truth

It is stated some ten times in the Quran that Allah created the heavens and the earth *with truth*:

“Allah created the heavens and the earth with truth.” —29:44

“And He it is Who created the heavens and the earth with truth. And when He says, Be, it is. His word is the truth.” — 6:73

This indicates that a study of the world around us will lead us to discover truth.

God sent truth with which to guide people

It is the truth, therefore, which God sent to guide mankind with, as stated in the following verses:

“O mankind, the Messenger has indeed come to you with truth from your Lord,” — 4:170

“And We have revealed to you (O Prophet) the Book with the truth,” — 5:48

“And with truth have We revealed it, and with truth did it come.” — 17:105

“Surely you (O Prophet) are on the plain truth.” — 27:79

“He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of Truth” — 9:33

“Such then is Allah, your true Lord. And what is there after the truth but error?” — 10:32

“Say: Allah guides to the Truth.” — 10:35

God judges with truth

It is with truth that God judges people, not on the basis of prejudice, favouritism, emotion or people’s false claims about themselves:

“Say: Our Lord will gather us together, then He will judge between us with truth.” — 34 : 26

“...so when Allah’s command comes, judgment is given with truth,” — 40 : 78

“This is Our record that speaks against you with truth.” — 45 : 29

“Our Lord, decide between us and our people with truth, and You are the Best of Deciders.” — 7 : 89

In the last verse above, the believers among a people are taught to pray to God to judge between themselves and the rest of their people with truth, and not on the basis that God unduly favours one side over the other.

Truth will triumph over falsehood

Falsehood has nothing to stand on, and is exposed when confronted by the truth.

The Quran says:

“The Truth has come and falsehood vanished. Surely falsehood is ever bound to vanish.” — 17 : 81

“Nay, We hurl the Truth against falsehood, so it knocks out its brains, and lo! it vanishes.” — 21 : 18

Similarly, baseless conjecture cannot stand against truth:

“Surely conjecture will not avail at all against the Truth.” — 10 : 36

This teaches us to base our views on facts, as far as they can be gathered. For example, people have always conjectured to explain the working of various phenomena in the world around us, but when these phenomena are properly studied the truth is discovered and the conjectures then appear ridiculous and laughable in the light of facts.

Truth cannot follow people’s desires

The Quran says:

“And if the Truth follow their desires, the heavens and the earth and all those who are therein would perish.” — 23 : 71

We want everything in this world to follow our desires, whether it is the weather, events around us, life, death, etc.; we wish things happened as we want. But God says here that the whole system of the universe would collapse if it ran according to

anyone's desires. That system runs according to certain laws. The weather cannot remain sunny all the time; it must also rain. We cannot remain in a state of pleasure and satisfaction all the time; difficulties must come in our way. Since the beginning of human history, absolute rulers, autocrats and despots have tried to run their countries according to their desires. Not only did they largely fail in their ambitions to make those things happen that they wanted, but even in those matters in which they succeeded in enforcing their desires it brought disaster for them and their country.

Man must also follow truth

As God is truthful and has laid so much emphasis on it, so is man required to follow the truth and be truthful. Those people are commended who adhere to the truth, even if they belong to other religions:

“And of Moses' people is a party who guide with truth, and with it they do justice.” — 7:159

In a short, well-known chapter, the Quran says that the passage of time provides testimony that:

“... man is surely in loss, except those who believe and do good, and exhort one another to Truth, and exhort one another to patience.” — ch. 103

This tells us that time proves that those who adhere to the truth and truthful ways are successful. They have to be patient and wait for long to see success by adhering to the truth. During that time they must be steadfast on remaining on the right course. A quick success and an immediate way out of a difficult situation can usually be achieved by employing some false means and by knowingly going against true principles, but the passage of time will show that such short-term successes add up to a total failure in the long run.

Take the example of the declaration of our *Jama'at* in Pakistan in 1974 as non-Muslim. The government passed that measure, knowing it to be wrong, just in order to resolve the problem it faced of pressure from the fundamentalist Islamic parties. This led to other kinds of demands from the same quarters, which also had to be conceded, until after the passage of many years the fundamentalist parties gained a hold over the country. If, instead, the government had in 1974 adhered to the true principle, of which it was perfectly aware, namely, that all those who profess the *kalima* are Muslim and no such people can be declared as outside Islam, and had shown determination in upholding this principle, then in the long run religious

extremism and sectarian divisiveness in the country would have been curtailed rather than exacerbated.

No doubt, the above chapter is also a guide to our own *Jama'at*, in the important need to adhere to truth and patience.

Closing comments

Truth is reality, and reality is what God has brought about. So to misrepresent reality deliberately by lying is really to deny and belie what God has done.

People resort to telling untruths in order to gain something to which they are not entitled by justice, or to deprive others of what they legitimately possess and of their rights.

Considering the importance attached to truth in the Quran, one would think that Muslims would be famed in this world for their truth telling. Yet the case is unfortunately the opposite. May Allah help us all to abide by truth.

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