**PROPHETS**

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**What is the role of prophets in Islam?**

Muslims believe that God has provided guidance to humanity over the ages through the institution of prophethood. In the Islamic context, prophets are not persons who prophesy (foretell the future); rather they are seen as righteous and truthful messengers selected by God to fulfill the most important mission-calling on people to worship God alone, and teaching them to live righteously, in accordance with God’s commandments. Muslims believe prophets, and the scriptures given to some of them, are the only sure sources of God’s guidance, and that God has chosen, throughout history, thousands of prophets from among all peoples of the earth, culminating with the last prophet, Muhammad.

“Say: We believe in Allah and that which is revealed to us, and in what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmail, Isaac, Jacob, and the tribes, to Moses and Jesus and the other prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Allah we have surrendered ourselves.” (Baqara 2: 136)

Thus, in Islam, the prophets are seen as spiritual brothers one to another. Some commonly known figures who are considered prophets in Islam include Noah, Jonah, Abraham, Ishmail, Isaac, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, and Jesus. The chain of prophethood ended with Muhammad (570-632 C.E.), who lived 600 years after his predecessor Jesus.

Essentially, prophets give warnings as well as glad tidings to fellow human beings: warnings of punishment in this world and the next for unjust, immoral people who have turned away from God and His natural order, and glad tidings of reward in this world and the next for those who are conscious of God and follow His guidance as revealed to the prophets.

The Qur’an mentions twenty-five prophets by name, and tradition indicates that many thousands of prophets were chosen by God throughout human history between the time of Adam and that of Muhammad.

 Why did Allah send prophets and messengers to every nation at different times?

 Throughout the history, human have gone astray and begun torturing one another. They distorted the truth that would guide them. Eventually, both themselves and others have suffered much from this distortion. So, it was necessary to send prophets at different times to bring forgetful human beings back to the Right-Path (Sirât al-Mustakîm).

**Why do we need guidance (Prophethood) from Allah?**

 Since the beginning of the Creation, Allah has sent His guidance for mankind through His selected people. These chosen people are called prophets or messengers. We human beings are weak and frail. We have no knowledge of the future and the knowledge we have is limited. Also we are not perfect. This is the reason why Allah has blessed us with guidance through prophets and messengers.