

Q: Explain the doctrine of Prophethood and its importance in human life.
Introduction:

The doctrine of Prophethood (Risalah) is one of the fundamental beliefs of Islam. It refers to the divine system through which Allah (SWT) communicates His guidance to humanity by appointing chosen individuals (Prophets and Messengers) to lead mankind towards truth and righteousness. It is an essential link between the creator and His creation. In Quran Allah says,

وما ارسلنا من قبلك من رسول الا نوحي اليه انه لا اله الا انا فاعبدون -

"And we did not send any messenger before you but We revealed to him that there is no deity except Me, so worship Me."

Meaning Of Risalat (Prophethood):

In Islamic terminology Risalat denotes the Prophethood which means the transmitting the commandments of Allah revealed on his chosen persons called prophets to His creature. The revealed message is called revelation (wahy).

In Surah An-Nahl, Allah says in Quran:
ولقد بعثنا في كل امة رسولا ان اعبدوا الله واجتنبوا الطغوت
"And we certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], 'Worship Allah and avoid Taghut.'"

Nature of Prophethood:

Prophehood is not something which can be acquired by effort. It is bestowed by Allah and His special blessing on chosen ones, the Prophets. Allah himself chooses persons for this office. However, the Prophets are exalted and distinguished human beings commissioned with divine message. They are fully human, not angels, making their lives relatable.

قل انما انا بشر مثلكم يوحى الي انما الحكم اله واحد
"Say: I am only a mortal like you; it is revealed to me that your god is one Allah." Moreover, whatever they present in the form of faith or law emanates from God and is free from personal desires. They are also divinely protected from error and sin, ensuring their conduct remains flawless

and exemplary. These qualities make Prophets the most trustworthy guides for humanity in faith and practice.

Finality of Prophethood:

The belief in the finality of Prophethood bears as much importance as other convictions of faith, because without verbal acceptance and inner conviction of this, entering the fold of Islam is invalid. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH is the last Messenger of God, who was sent to all Mankind. Therefore, the Quran is the divine message for all time to come, though it first addressed (the Arabs) had to be specific people, in a specific context of time and space.

It was announced by the Prophet PBUH that :

انا خاتم النبيين لا نبي بعدي

"I am the last prophet and there will be no Prophet after me."

In Surah Al-Ahzab, Allah says in Quran:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِنْ رِجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ -

"Muhammad is not the father of any one of your men, but the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophets."

Importance of Prophets:

1- Prophets are saviors of Humanity:

Prophets are sent by Allah (SWT) to rescue mankind from oppression, injustice and moral corruption. For example, Prophet Musa (A.S) was appointed to liberate Bani Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh, as mentioned in Quran:

"But it was our will to favor those who were oppressed in the land, making them models of faith as well as successors; and to establish them in the land; and through them show Pharaoh, Haman, and their solidiers the fulfillment

of what they feared." (Al-Qasas 28:5-6)

This verse reflects that Prophets bring divine support to the weak and oppressed, guiding them toward justice and dignity.

2- Prophets Help people connect to Allah (swt)

The central mission of every Prophet, from Adam (A.S) to Muhammad (SAW), was the call to Tawhid, the worship of Allah alone.

In Surah Al-Anbya, Allah says in Quran:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا نُوحي إِلَيْهِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا أَنَا فَاعْبُدُونِ -

We never sent a messenger before you 'O Prophet' without revealing to him: There is no god 'Worthy of worship' except Me, so worship Me 'alone'."

Thus, Prophethood revives the covenant of obedience to Allah and reconnects humanity with their Creator.

3- Prophets are the only conveyors of Divine knowledge:

Prophets are the exclusive recipients of revelation, making them the sole authentic

sources of divine knowledge. Without them, humanity would remain trapped in ignorance, idolatry, and misguidance. The Quran highlights this divine favor in Surah Aal-e-Imran (3:164):

لقد من الله على المؤمنين إذ بعث فيهم رسولا من أنفسهم يتلو عليهم آياته ويزكيهم ويعلمهم الكتاب والحكمة .
"Indeed, Allah has done the believers a great favour by raising a messenger from among them - reciting to them His revelations, purifying them, and teaching them the book and wisdom".

4. Prophets help believers to succeed in the Hereafter:

Prophets used to remind the mankind that worldly life is temporary and true success lies in the Hereafter. The Prophet (SAW) narrated from Allah (Hadith Qudsi):

"I have prepared for My pious worshippers such things as no eyes has ever seen, no ear has ever heard of, and no human heart has ever imagined".

In Quram, Surah Ad-Dhuha, Allah says,

والآخرة خير لك من الأولى

"And the Hereafter is better for you than the first ~~one~~ [Life]."

5-Prophets help people succeed in Dunya:

Prophets do not restrict their teachings to the Hereafter but also provide practical guidance for worldly success. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) established the state of Madina, which became a model society based on justice, welfare, and brotherhood. He set foundations for governance through Shura (consultation), for economy through prohibition of interest and implementation of Zakat, and for justice through equality before law. The Prophet (SAW) said, "The most beloved of people to Allah are those who are most beneficial to people." (Tabarani, Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat, 1692).

6-Prophets help believers to get rid of Evils:

Prophets play a transformative role by

cleansing humanity from shirk, dishonesty, oppression, and immorality. Before their mission, societies often fell into ignorance, indulging in idolatry and corruption. As recorded in The Sealed Nectar, the Prophet (SAW) reshaped an immoral Arab society into one based on justice, honesty, and spiritual purity. Thus, Prophets are reformers who uproot evil and establish virtue.

7- Prophets as relatable role model:

Allah in His wisdom sent human Prophets rather than angels so that people could relate to them and follow their examples. The Quran affirms: "We did not send messengers before you, O Prophet, except men inspired by Us... We did not give those messengers supernatural bodies that did not need food, nor were they immortal." (Al-Ambiya 21:7-8). By living normal life yet maintaining the highest standards of piety, Prophets provide practical models for humanity.

Conclusion:

The doctrine of Prophethood safeguards

the spiritual, moral, and social life of humanity by transmitting divine guidance. It ensures clarity in worship, justice in society, and accountability in the hereafter. With the finality of Prophethood in Muhammad (PBUH), divine guidance is perfected and preserved until the end of time. Allah says in Quran, Surah Al-Maidah,

اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم واتممت تفضلي ورضيت لكم الاسلام ديناً -

"Today I have perfected your faith for you, completed My favor ^{upon} you, and chosen Islam as your way."