



Being Like the Teacher

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Gathering from the title, one might be wondering what teacher I'm referring to. The title of this article comes from Luke 6:40. Jesus (ﷺ) explicitly said that in order for anyone to be like him, they would have to be "perfect" as he was. Insha'Allah (ﷻ), we will examine the word "perfect" in this verse more in depth.

First, we must understand that all prophets lived according to a certain way of life which was total submission to God's Will. This means that whatever Laws, Rules, Regulations, etc., God sent to them, they abided by in 100% totality. Their message was very clear and in harmony with one another. This is also confirmed in the Qur'an:

Say ye: "We believe in Allah, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Isma'il, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to (all) prophets from their Lord: We make no difference between one and another of them: And we bow to Allah (in Islam)." (Qur'an 2:136)

The words "*we make no difference between one and another of them*" should be taken into special consideration. All those who have obeyed Allah's (ﷻ) revelation at any time were considered a "Muslim" which literally means "One who submits" to God's Will as Allah (ﷻ) instructed the Prophet (ﷺ) to say:

I have been commanded to be of **those who submit** to Allah's will (in Islam).
(Qur'an 10:72)

The word “*muslimeen*” (al-muslimeen) is plural for “one who submits”. This word derives from the root word “*slm*” (*Silm*). The word “Islam” also derives from the same root. The root word contains a number of meanings some of which are:

- Submission, Surrendering, or Delivering Oneself (to God’s Will)
- Peace
- Reconciliation
- Self-Resignation
- Saved
- Security
- Complete, Whole
- Restored
- Purity
 - Physically
 - Mentally
 - Morally
 - Spiritually
- Al-Islam (Islama), Submission to God

The Aramaic equivalent is “*shlam*”. This word also contains many meanings such as:

- Come to an end
- Concluded
- Finished
- Completed
- Fulfilled
 - As a tale
 - Number
 - Measure
 - Time
 - Prophecy
- Obey
- To Follow
- To Yield
- Surrender
- Whole
- Entire
- Give up
- Deliver
- To become a Moslem

The Muslim tries his/her best to imitate these beloved prophets as we all should. Therefore, we are trying to be like them, as Jesus (ﷺ) states in Luke 6:40.

The word Muslim is not a new word found only in the Qur'an. This is only the Arabic rendering. This word also exists in Aramaic and Hebrew as well, which we will look at later. Due to the very nature of its meaning "One who submits"; we find that this action has always been exemplified to the utmost in every prophet's character. Since this article is based on Luke 6:40, we will primarily focus on Jesus (ﷺ). You will find a very important example of Jesus (ﷺ) demonstrating total submission to his Creator is during his last moments:

And Jesus cried out with a loud voice saying, 'my Father, in your hands I commend **my soul**', after he said this, it was **ended**. (Luke: 23:46)

هَمَّا نَعْمَد حَمَلًا وُّمَّا هَمَّا. اِح.
حَابِبِ هَمَّامِ اِنَّا وُهَس. هَوَا اُحَد.
هَمَلَم

Note that in the above reference, you will read in versions such as the KJV and the like the following:

Luke 23:46 "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend **my spirit**: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

To use the words "spirit" and "ghost" is attempting to tie it into the Trinity. The word "רוּחַ" (*rooh*) in Aramaic has many meanings such as spirit, soul, wind, etc., but it mainly refers to the soul as in the above verse. However, there is no mention of 'ghost' in the last part of the verse.

Another fine example of his submission is:

When vinegar was given to Jesus, he said, 'It is **finished**': and he bowed his head, and **surrendered** his soul. (John 19:30)

قَبُّ وُجْهِ عَمَلًا هَوَا سَلَّا نَعْمَد: هَا
مَمَلَم. هَاوَجَّ وُهَم. هَا مَلَم وُهَس

Again, I would like to comment on this verse because we get a different meaning from the KJV.

John 19:30 "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

To say that he ‘gave up the ghost’ is very misleading. I would like to point out a grammatical analysis on this verse. The last part of the verse states “**وَأَتَمَّتْ**” (*wa shlem rooheh*). Again, the word “**وَأَتَمَّتْ**” means “soul”, however, in this case, it is “**وَأَتَمَّتْ**” (*rooheh*). If you notice, there is a “**ت**” (*h*) at the end signifying “his”. Therefore, the correct translation of “**وَأَتَمَّتْ**” is “his soul”. Many English Bibles, such as the KJV attempt to mislead once again by removing the possessive pronoun which is clearly present in the original language.

To continue, in regards to his mission, he demonstrates that he has completed his work as commanded by Allah (ﷻ) leaving nothing undone which also shows that he was a true Muslim (one who submits), a characteristic which only fits the character of a prophet.

I have glorified You on the earth: and the work that you have given me to do, I have **finished** it. (John 17:4)

أَنَا مَعْمَدُ كَارِخَا. حَبْرَا هَهُ وَمِيحَا
 كَدُّ وَأَحْب. مَلْمَلَا.

Finally, before Jesus (ﷺ) departs from this Earth, he leaves behind something which can only be understood if read in his native tongue, Aramaic. In John 14:27, we read:

Peace I leave with you, my (way of) **peace** I give unto you.

مَلْمَلَا عَحْمَ إِنَا لَحْم. مَلْمَلَا وَمَا
 مَعَدَّ إِنَا لَحْم.

Shlama shabaq ana lakoon, Shlama deelee yaheb ana lakoon

Jesus (ﷺ) seems to have established a way of life here, basically to surrender oneself to God. He tells his people that he gives them “ ” (*shlama*), but *his own* way of “ ”. What does this exactly mean? If you read further into the verse, he continues and says, “*not as the world gives it to you, but only as I give it to you*”. What was the real need to say this? He’s trying to reinforce the religion he came with, the Christ-Like religion where total submission to God’s Will exists, not what we see today where most of the teachings are derived from Paul.

There are two commentaries of the word “**مَلْمَلَا**” in this verse which I came across that I would like to present. One of the comments comes from an Assyrian Bible scholar

whose native language was Aramaic, and the other is from a Bishop from the Church of the East. They say:

“*Tranquility, that Peace which is under and in accordance to God’s Will.*” (Enlightenment From Aramaic, Selected Passages From The Khaboris Manuscript, by Sadook De Mar Shimun, *Archdeacon*)

“...*the Peace which caused them to surrender themselves to God...*” (New Testament Light, George M. Lamsa, Copyright © 1968 by Nina Shabaz, page 141)

Having said this, I would like to compare this to what Allah (ﷻ) says in the Qur’an. He says in Qur’an 5:3:

This day I have completed for you your religion, and have perfected my favour upon you, and have chosen for you **Al-Islam** for your religion.

اليوم أكملت لكم دينكم و
أتممت عليكم نعمتي و
رضيت لكم **الاسلام** ديناً

What we get from this is that God Himself has chosen Islam as the religion for mankind. What I mean by “religion” in this case is “Way of Life”, Islam is a natural way of life. The adherents of Islam were not the ones who decided on this name. When we think of Islam, we see that the very nature of its meaning, surrendering or submitting to God’s Will, has always existed since the creation of the universe.

Something else to strongly think about is the fact that Islam does not trace back to a particular individual such as in Christianity (traces back to Jesus), Judaism (traces back to Judah), Buddhism (traces back to Buddha), etc. Islam is unique in this way. It does not trace back to any individual yet it applies to all of creation. You will not find a similar verse like this in any existing religious text other than the Qur’an.

Let’s perform a grammatical analysis on these two words: “ ” (*shlama*) and “ ” (*Al-Islama*). In Aramaic grammar, in order to make something definite, you would place the letter “ʾ” (Alef) at the end of the word, whereas in Arabic, you would place “ ” (Alif and Lam, pronounced *Al*) at the beginning of the word. In both cases, these words are in their definite state. Both are derived from the same root words “ ” & “ ”, both bear the same meaning, and both render the same message in the output of these verses: “Peace and Submission to God’s Will”. This is why individuals like George Lamsa and Archdeacon Sadook De Mar Shimun, have offered such strong comments on this word. The difference here is the fact that they made no comparison to the meaning of the word “Islam”.

God has mentioned this religion by name in other areas of the Qur'an to which again, verses like this are only found in the Qur'an. See the following references:

Qur'an 3:19 Verily, the religion with Allah is **Al-Islam**

إِنَّ الْكَلِمَةَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ **لِلْإِسْلَامِ**

Qu'an 6:125 Whoever Allah wishes to guide, He opens his breast to **Al-Islam**

مَنْ يَرِدْهُ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَهْدِيَهُ
يَشْرَحْ لَهُ صَدْرَهُ **لِلْإِسْلَامِ**

Since the adherents of Islam are called “ ” (*Muslim*); coming from the same root word “ ”, we already know that this word means “One who surrenders” to God’s Will. We also know that every prophet was regarded as “Muslim” because they have totally surrendered themselves to God. Remember what George Lamsa said in regards to John 14:27:

“...*the Peace which caused them to surrender themselves to God...*” (New Testament Light, George M. Lamsa, Copyright © 1968 by Nina Shabaz, page 141)

Now that we have developed a strong foundation of understanding of what the word “ ” (*shlama*) means, let’s look at Luke 6:40 more in depth and understand what Jesus (ﷺ) meant when he said we have to be “Perfect” in order to be like him. He says:

The disciple is not above his teacher: but every one that is **perfect** shall be as his teacher.

אִין תְּלָמִיד נִעְלָה עַל רַבּוֹ; שִׁכֵּן כָּל
אָדָם שֶׁמִּשְׁלָם יִהְיֶה כְּרַבּוֹ.

Ein talmeed na’aleh ‘al rabbo; sheken kal adam she’**Mushlam** yihyeh k’rabbo

The words “כָּל אָדָם” (kal adam) means “all people; all of mankind, every human being”. Therefore, this is a direct teaching telling his people that in order to be like him, you have to be “Mushlam” like he was. The word “Mushlam” is also derived from the same root word as Muslim, Islam, Salaam, Shalom, etc.. Let’s go further into the meaning of this word by looking at 3 different sources:

Oraham’s Dictionary of the Stabilized and Enriched Assyrian Language and English, by Alexander Joseph Oraham, 1941

(Mashloome) = Convert; to change or turn from one belief or creed to another; to accept, or be converted to Moslemism.

(Mishlmana) = Moslem; a Mussulman; an Orthodox Mohammedan.

Syriac-English / Syriac-Arabic Dictionary, by Louis Costaz, 1986 Beirut

(Mishalmana) = Perfect; complete

ספר מלים

Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud, Midrashic Lit

משלם (Mishlam): Completion; End

So from three different sources, we get similar meanings. Of course, these are just words – depending on how you use them in sentences may generate a different meaning. One example of this is during the Holocaust, any Jew who was facing the end of his or her physical and psychological resources and was willing to die due to the unbearable torture was considered a “Musulman” even though they were a Jew and not a Muslim in the religious sense of the word, simply because he/she “Gave Up” or “Surrendered”.

It doesn't stop here; there are certain characteristics of a Muslim. Some of the main characteristics for example are: they worship only Allah (ﷻ) and prostrate to Him. As for worshipping Allah (ﷻ), we read in the Bible, in the first book, the first chapter, the first verse, Genesis 1:1:

In the beginning, Allah created the heavens and the earth.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Brasheet bara Allaha eet shmaya wa eet ar'a

This is Aramaic, not Arabic, and we see that Allah (ﷻ) was the originator of creation. He was mentioned since the very beginning of scripture. Allah (ﷻ) has also declared himself in Isaiah 46:9 that he is Allah (ﷻ) and there's no one else.

Remember the former things of old: for I am Allah, and there is no other god; and there is none like me

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Etdhikru qadmayta d'min 'alma d'ana na Allaha, wa layt toob ilah, wa layt akwatee

This can be compared to what Allah (ﷻ) says in the Qur'an:

There is none like unto Him (Qur'an 112:4)

We can go further into the religion of Jesus (ﷺ) and closely examine his teachings because they very much coincide with Islam. A Muslim will never argue against these beautiful lessons and as a Muslim myself, I have no trouble admitting that I follow these teachings from the New Testament. Jesus (ﷺ) says in Mark 12:29:

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord Allah, The Lord is One.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ
وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ
وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ

Amar leh Yashu', madmay min kullhoon puqdane, shma' Israyel, Marya Allahan, Marya Had hu

In fact, Jesus (ﷺ) was such that he even rejected the idea of himself being called "good". Therefore, he quickly corrected the individual that approached him saying:

Matthew 19:17

Why do you call me good? There's none good except Allah The One

مَنْ قَالَ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْ هَذَا
أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْ هَذَا
أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْ هَذَا

Mana qara anta lee Taba? Layt Taba illa en Had **Allaha**

He continues to instruct the individual on how to gain Paradise. This teaching does not include accepting Jesus (ﷺ) as some sort of personal savior. Instead, the rules are simple and straight forward and refer back to the teachings of Moses (ﷺ).

Matthew 19:18

But if thou wilt enter into (eternal) life (i.e. Paradise), keep the commandments.' He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said,

لَا تَقْتُلْ

(la taqtool) Do not kill

وَلَا تَجْرُوا

(wa la tajoor) and do not commit adultery

وَلَا تَنْسَبُوا

(wa la tajnoob) and do not steal

وَلَا تَشْهَدُوا عَلَىٰ نَفْسِكُمْ كَمَا كُنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ

(wa la tashad sahadoot shooqra) and do not bear false witness

I want to focus on the word “ ” (sahadoot). This is plural for “ ” (sahada) and means to bear (true) witness. The Arabic equivalent is “ ” (Shahaada). Therefore, part of the teachings of Jesus (ﷺ) for attaining Paradise was to not bear false witness. In Islam, to bear proper witness is the very first pillar. In fact, his disciples made a supplication testifying of this in Qur’an 3:53:

Our Lord! we believe in what Thou hast revealed, and we follow the Messenger. then write us down among **those who bear witness**.

When they said “and we follow the Messenger”, they were referring to Jesus (ﷺ), however, take notice that they asked to be written as “ ” (shaahideen) which is plural for “ ” (shahaada). Again, going back to what Jesus (ﷺ) instructed: “وَلَا تَشْهَدُوا عَلَىٰ نَفْسِكُمْ كَمَا كُنتُمْ تَشْهَدُونَ” – “Do not bear false witness”.

In any case, we can see that since the time of Abraham (ﷺ), even before Christianity and Judaism, Allah (ﷻ) has been worshipped and prostrated. A common practice observed only in Islam.

Genesis 20:17

And Abraham prayed to Allah

وَنَحْنُ إِذْ هُمْ مِنْكُمْ

Wa salee Abraham qadam Allaha

The second pillar of Islam is “ ” (Salaah) which is the same word used in the Aramaic verse “ ” (salee). Here, the word means “(he) prayed”.

Worshipping God has always been the most basic and fundamental teaching of all the prophets. It was strictly forbidden to worship any other being, object, entity, etc., accept for Allah (ﷻ). This was made very clear in many places throughout the Bible as well as the Qur'an. Jesus (ﷺ) for example states in Matthew 4:10:

For it is written, worship the Lord Allah,
and to him only service is due

كَلِمَاتٍ نَسِيئًا. وَخُضُّنَا أَلُوهُرَ لَأَهْلِيهِمْ.
هَذِهِ حَسْبُهُمْ هَهُوَ أَلُوهُرُكُمْ ❖

Kateeb geir dal'Marya Allahak tasjood, wa leh balhoodawhee tiflooh

In John 4:24, he continues to express the attributes of Allah (ﷻ) in terms of worshipping him. In other words, images of any kind representing God were forbidden. This teaching is found in first of the Ten Commandments. This fundamental teaching is in complete harmony with Islam.

For Allah is a Spirit: and they that
worship him, must worship him in spirit
and in truth

وَهُسَا يَهُ نَسِيئًا كَلِمَاتٍ. هَالِكُمْ وَهَيْلِيهِمْ
كَلِمَاتٍ: حَسْبُهُمْ هَهُوَ هَعْبُؤُ هَالِكُمْ وَهَيْلِيهِمْ

Rooha haw geir Allaha, waylein d'sajdeen leh, brooha wa bashrara wa le d'nesjoodon

In these verses, Jesus (ﷺ) cannot be anymore clear than this. He not only talks about the high importance of worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth, but also talks about prostrating to Him. In Matthew 4:10 he uses “لَأَهْلِيهِمْ” (tasjood), and in John 4:24 he uses “نَسِيئًا” (sajdeen) and “هَيْلِيهِمْ” (nesjoodon). All of these are derived from the Aramaic root “سَجَدَ”. The meaning is:

سَجَدَ = (Sejed): To prostrate oneself; bow down; adore; worship.

The Arabic equivalent is:

سَجَدَ = (Sajada): Prostrated himself; to be submissive; obeisance; to adore.

Prostrating was the common practice of worship for these prophets and those who followed them. Prostration is in fact the highest form of submission to Allah (ﷻ) and is

known to be the most favorable position to Allah; this is confirmed in the following references.

Genesis 17:3 “And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying...”

Joshua 5:14 “...And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship...”

1 Samuel 20:41 “...(David) fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times...”

Numbers 14:5 “...Moses and Aaron fell on their faces...”

1 Kings 18:39 “...they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.”

Matthew 26:39 “And he (Jesus) went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed...”

In conclusion, there is much to be said about the true definition of a Muslim. In this article, I only touched on a few of them. One needs to study Islam and the life of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in depth in order to fully understand Islam and what a Muslim truly is.

We see that in the character of Jesus (ﷺ) and the life he lead was that of a true, believing Muslim (Mushlam in his language). He completely trusted, obeyed, and prayed prostrating to his Creator, Allah (ﷻ) as he himself testifies in Qur’an 3:51 which can also be compared to Matthew 4:10:

It is Allah Who is my Lord and your Lord; then worship Him. This is a Way that is straight.

My advice to everyone who reads this article is to make the effort to re-analyze the scriptures with much caution and accuracy and try not to depend so much on English translations. In my research, I found that much of the truth has unfortunately been lost during the translation process. Along with that truth, the knowledge, understanding and wisdom contained in the verses was also lost. We can regain this by searching deep within the text.

Our Lord! Let not our hearts deviate now after Thou hast guided us, but grant us mercy from Thine own Presence; for Thou art the Grantor of bounties without measure. (Qur’an 3:8)