

that is based on sincerity towards Him in terms of love, fear, hope, turning to Him, beseeching Him and following His Messenger in all of that. This is the religion of all the Messengers; anyone who follows them is on their path. The People of the Book only differed after their Books had come to them, urging them to unite in following the religion of Allah, but they only differed out of enmity, envy and rivalry amongst themselves. Otherwise there had come to them the greatest reason that should have motivated them to follow the truth and give up dissent. This was the result of their disbelief, hence Allah (ﷻ) said: ﴿Those who were given the scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them, out of mutual envy and rivalry. But if any disbelieve in the revelations of Allah, then Allah is swift in reckoning﴾. Allah will requite each person for his deeds, especially those who abandon the truth after having come to know it. Such a one deserves the stern warning and the painful punishment.

Then Allah (ﷻ) commanded His Messenger (ﷺ), when debating with the Christians and others who preferred a religion other than Islam, to say to them: ﴿I have submitted my whole self to Allah and so have those who follow me﴾ that is, I and those who followed me have affirmed and testified and submitted our own selves to our Lord; we have forsaken any religion other than the religion of Islam and we are certain that they (other religions) are false. This is aimed at making them lose hope of winning you over to their religion and reinforcing your beliefs when you come across specious arguments. It also offers proof to the one who is confused, because, as stated above, Allah referred to the testimony of the people of knowledge among His slaves to His oneness, so that they may provide evidence against others. The leader of the people of knowledge, the best of them and the most knowledgeable is our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), then after him come his followers of different levels. They are possessed of sound knowledge and mature thinking that is unmatched by anyone else; no one else even comes close to it. Once the oneness of Allah and