

# DISCOVER ISLAM

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## Greetings:

As *Salam Alaykum* (Peace be upon you). The following are several pieces of information we, at The Islamic Education and Services Institute, have put together to help you better understand Islam and Muslims.

In the translation of the Noble Quran, God Reveals in the First Chapter:

**All praise be to God, Lord of the Universe; the Compassionate, the Merciful. Sovereign of the Day**

**of Judgment! You alone we worship; and to You alone we turn for help. Guide us to the straight path; the path of those whom You have favored; not of those who have incurred Your wrath, nor of those who have gone astray. Amen.**



## What is Islam?

⌋ Based on its linguistic origin, the Arabic word “Islam” means “submission to God and commitment to His guidance.” It also comes from the root *salam*, which means peace.

⌋ Islam is not a new religion, but the final culmination and fulfillment of the same basic truth that God revealed through all of his prophets.

⌋ For more than one fifth of the world's population, Islam is not just a personal religion, but a complete way of living.

⌋ Islam guides mankind to proper behavior and good morals and values.

⌋ It shows us how to be humble, modest, truthful, patient, and kind.

⌋ It teaches us self respect, self control, and how to keep our promises.

⌋ Islam is not a specific group religion, Islam is universal, Muslims come from every nation, color, and country.



## What Do Muslims believe in?

1. One unique, undivided, incomparable, eternal, single God.

2. The Angels, who were created by God from light, and who do not disobey his orders.

3. The Revealed Books, including the Bible, Torah and the Quran.

4. The Prophets Of God, including Adam, Noah, Joseph, Luke, Moses, Abraham, & Jesus.

5. The Day of Judgment, the resurrection of mankind, the after-life, the free will, and God's omniscience.

## What are the Pillars Of Islam?

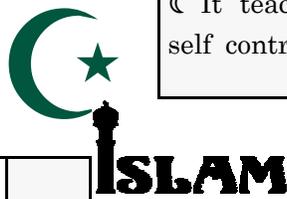
1. *Al-Shahada*: the declaration that “there is no God but One, and Mohammad is His messenger.”

2. *Salat* (Daily Prayer): to perform five obligatory prayers everyday.

3. *Zakat* (obligatory Charity): the payment of an Obligatory charity to the poor (Tax).

4. *Sawm*: Fasting the lunar month of Ramadan from dawn to sunset everyday..

5. *Hajj*: Pilgrimage to Mecca once in a person's lifetime if affordable, safe, and health permits .



## Muslims In America: Facts & History:

- There is evidence of Pre-Columbian Islamic civilization in the New World.
- Since the 1800's, Muslims have migrated to the US from all over the world seeking to live the American dream.
- Approximately 8 million Muslims live in the USA today, and there are over 2000 Islamic centers in the USA.
- Over 45% of Muslims have at least a Bachelor's Degree.
- American Muslims come from different backgrounds: 42% are American and only 12% are of Arabic origin.



## God In Islam

★ Muslims believe in one unique, incomparable, superior, undivided God.

★ Muslims believe that there is only one God, and that he has no children or wives. He has never been born and will never die.

★ The word *Allah* is the Arabic translation for "Lord" or "God". It is the same word used by Arab Christians and Jews. Allah is not a "separate God" or "different God", but the same God worshiped by all believers.

★ A verse from the holy Quran reads: "*Say: He is God, the One and Only; God, the Eternal, Absolute; He begets not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him.*" (Quran Translation: 112).



## The Sources Of Revelation:

Muslims have two sources of revelation as their main reference:

1. **The Quran:** The exact words of God, revealed to mankind through his prophet, Muhammad (pbuh). The Quran amazingly contains information from 1400 years ago that scientist are currently discovering.
2. **The Sunnah/Hadith:** This is the life, sayings, and actions of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) that help explain many issues mankind faces in their daily lives.



## Does Islam Oppress Women?

- ◆ Women are recognized by Islam as full and equal partners of men. They are equal to men in bearing personal and common responsibilities and in receiving rewards for their deeds.
- ◆ They are equal to men in the pursuit of education and knowledge.
- ◆ They are entitled to freedom of expression just as men are.
- ◆ Women enjoy certain privileges which men are deprived of.
- ◆ Women are not blamed for the sinfulness of mankind because Eve ate from the "forbidden tree," nor is their suffering in pregnancy and delivery is considered a punishment for that act.

## The Question Of Hijab:

▣ Both men and women are expected to dress in a way that is simple, modest, and dignified.

▣ Specific traditions of female dress found in some Muslim countries are often the ex-

pression of local customs rather than religious principle.

▣ Hijab forces people to value the inside of a woman, it also promotes respect, and helps protect the sacredness of relationships between men & women.



## Family and Parents in Islam

- Family is the foundation of the society in Islam.
- The peace and security offered by a stable family unit is greatly valued and seen as essential for the spiritual growth of its members. A harmonious social order is created by the existence of extended families; children are treasured and rarely leave home until they are married.
- A Muslim marriage is both a sacred act and a legal agreement, in which either partner is free to include legitimate conditions. As a result, divorce is permitted only as a last resort, and is very uncommon.
- Marriage customs vary widely from country to country.
- Parents are greatly respected in the Islamic tradition.
- Mothers are particularly honored. The Quran teaches that, since mothers suffer during pregnancy, childbirth, and child rearing, they deserve a special consideration, love, care, and kindness.
- In Islam, serving one's parents is a duty second only to worshipping God, and it is the parents' right to expect such service especially when they grow old.



*"Heaven is under the feet of mothers."  
Prophet Muhammad*

### Does Islam Tolerate other beliefs?

- Yes. The Quran states unequivocally: "There is no compulsion in religion." (Quran Translation 2:256).
- The original, unchanged revelations given to Abraham and other prophets came from God.
- This common origin explains the similarities between religions, and is why Islam tolerates all other religions.
- Protection of the rights of non-Muslims to worship is an intrinsic part of Islamic law. It is also stated in the Quran.
- Historically, Christians & Jews have always lived peacefully under the Islamic state.



'Behold (O Mary!)' The Angel said, 'God has chosen you, and purified you, and chosen you above the women of all nations. O Mary, God gives you good news of a word from Him, whose name shall be the Anointed (Masih or Messiah), Jesus son of Mary, honored in this world and in the hereafter, and one of those brought near to God. He shall speak to the people from his cradle and in maturity, and shall be of the righteous.' "She said: 'O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man has touched me?' He said: 'Even so; God creates what He wills. When He decrees a thing, He says to it, "Be!" and it is.'" (Quran Translation 3:42-7)

### Jesus In The Quran

### Jihad Explained

- *Jihad* literally means "struggle and strive" not "holy war." Its often used in reference to struggling in one's life or struggling to improve one's self.
- As in Christianity & Judaism, Islam permits fighting in self-defense, in defense of one's country, and in defense of the religion .
- It lays down strict rules of combat that include: prohibitions against harming civilians, and against destroying crops, trees and livestock.
- The Quran states: "Fight in the cause of God against those who fight you, but do not transgress limits. God does not love transgressors." (Quran translation 2:190).

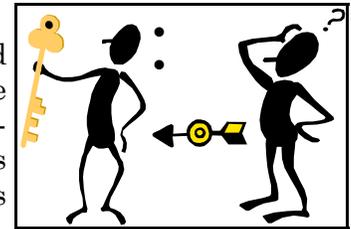
## Human & Social rights in Islam:

- Freedom of speech & religion are honored and are part of the Islamic political system.
- One's neighbors are part of a Muslim's responsibility.
- Racism and sexism are not part of Islam. The Islamic teachings are strictly against such practices.
- The life, honor, and property of all citizens in a Muslim society are considered sacred.
- Muslims have to be kind to all human beings, Muslims and non-Muslims alike.
- A Muslim has to also discharge his moral responsibility towards animals, trees, and plants as well.
- Muslims are among the first people to use the election system to choose their leaders.
- Justice for all citizens is an ultimate value in a Muslim's life.
- Freedom of conscience is laid down by the Quran itself.



## Clearing the Myths:

- ◆ Islam is not a cult.
- ◆ Allah is an Arabic word that means "God", the same God worshiped by all monotheists. The word Allah is used by Arab Christians and Jews..
- ◆ Muslims neither worship Muhammad nor pray through him. Muhammad is a Prophet of God.
- ◆ Muslims believe that God has 99 attributes, and those names do not represent different Gods.
- ◆ Arranged marriages are allowed in Islam but are not required. The marriage decision is left to the individual. "Forced" marriages are not Islamic.
- ◆ Women are not oppressed in Islam. As a matter of fact, Islam has given woman rights that woman all over the world are still striving to obtain nowadays.
- ◆ Hijab is not a sign of oppression. As a matter of fact it's a sign of their freedom to wear what they wish and their nobility.
- ◆ Muslims are not all Arabs. Arabs form less than 13% of the world's Muslim population. Islam is a universal religion. On the other hand, not all Arabs are Muslims, Arabs follow different religions.
- ◆ Islamic laws strictly prohibit discrimination based on Sex, Color, wealth and any other base.
- ◆ Muslims do not worship the moon but rather use the lunar year to track certain Islamic occasions.
- ◆ The Holy Quran was not authored by Muhammad, it is the very exact words of God revealed to his prophet through Gabriel.
- ◆ Jihad does not mean holy war, it means to strive for a better way of life. The term holy war is not Islamic, Indeed the crusades of the Romans have used it first and applied it in action.
- ◆ The Holy Quran has no flaws or contradictions. The same exact copy is found through out the world.
- ◆ Islam did not spread by the sword. History records that no Islamic army has entered Indonesia or Malaysia where 1/3 of the Muslims reside. Furthermore, America has about 8 million Muslims none of which was forced into Islam.



To Discover Islam team invites you to read about Islam and Muslims from accredited sources. Read the *Quran* and study the *Hadith*.

To Discover Islam a project by The Islamic Education and services Institute  
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