



UNDERSTANDING
I S L A M
A BRIEF OVERVIEW



ABOUT THE GUIDE

'One of the best books about Islam'

'Concise, holistic and brilliant'

*'The brochure has been amazing in bringing
about a good understanding of Islam'*

'Just Brilliant.'



AUDIO

Understanding Islam – A Brief Overview

Understanding Islam - A Brief Overview
First Edition 2025

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BEFORE YOU TURN THE PAGE...

Pause for a moment and consider a few simple points. Every human being eventually asks the same questions.

Why am I here?

Did the universe appear by chance?

Is there a Creator who made us for a purpose?

What happens after death?

Throughout history people have searched for answers to these questions. Philosophers, scientists and religious thinkers have all attempted to explain the purpose of life. Islam offers a clear and powerful explanation.

It teaches that human beings were not created without purpose. And it teaches that the Creator did not leave humanity without guidance.

More than 2 billion people around the world believe that God revealed His final message to humanity through the Qur'an, and that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the final messenger sent to guide mankind.

But Islam is often misunderstood.

Many people have never had the opportunity to learn about it directly. This short guide has been written to help you explore the true message of Islam. Inside, you will discover:

Muslim beliefs, the teachings of the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), Prophet Eesa (peace be upon him) in Islam, and why millions of people around the world continue to embrace Islam today.

Whether you are simply curious, searching for answers, or exploring different beliefs, we invite you to read with an open mind.



UNDERSTANDING ISLAM

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

"Understanding Islam" is an insightful and accessible booklet that offers readers a brief overview of the Islamic faith. Compiled by a team of teachers with expertise in Islamic studies, this brochure delves into the core beliefs, practices and frequently asked questions. It provides a balanced and nuanced portrayal of one of the world's major religions, catering to both newcomers seeking an introduction to Islam and those looking to deepen their understanding.

Readers will embark on a journey through the foundational tenets of Islam, exploring topics such as the Five Pillars of Islam, the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and other Prophets (peace be upon them),

the Holy Qur'an, Islamic law, spirituality, and the diverse traditions within the Muslim world. Drawing upon historical context and contemporary perspectives, the brochure also addresses common misconceptions and stereotypes associated with Islam.

Whether you are interested in religious studies, interfaith dialogue, or simply gaining a better understanding of the Muslim community, "Understanding Islam" provides a concise, informative, and respectful exploration of this rich and diverse faith. It serves as a valuable resource for fostering cross-cultural understanding and promoting dialogue among people of different beliefs and backgrounds.

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A DESIGN INDICATES A DESIGNER

INTRODUCTION



SIMPLE ISLAMIC APPROACH

Islam offers a simple and rational explanation of life and existence.

It teaches that:

- The universe has a Creator.
- Human beings were created with a purpose.
- God sent guidance through prophets.
- Life is a test before the Day of Judgement.

Islam also answers the most fundamental questions:

Where did we come from? Why are we here?
What happens after death?

The message of Islam is clear:

There is one Creator, He alone deserves to be worshipped, and we will be questioned about our actions in this world.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EXIST?

Philosophers, theologians and even scientists have debated this question for millennia and have come up with a variety of responses. They say, all of us try to give meaning to our lives and to look for happiness, peace and tranquility.

The only differences are in the manner by which we try to achieve this.

Are we no more than a collection of molecules, obeying our biological makeup, no different from a shoal of fish or a herd of sheep? Are not the struggles of a few politicians to achieve peace in the world or the endeavours of molecular biologists to help find a cure for cancer meaningless if the end is all the same?

In Islam, to exist means to be created with a purpose: to recognise, worship and submit to one Creator, Allah. Muslims believe in key principles when discussing the Creator, God (Allah), and creation.

Everything That Begins Must Have a Cause. Everything we observe in the universe depends on something else for its existence. A building depends on a builder, a painting depends on a painter, and a book depends on an author.

The universe itself also had a beginning. Anything that begins to exist must have a cause.

The cause of the universe must be:

- Outside the universe
- Powerful
- Independent
- Uncreated

This points to the existence of a Creator. The Qur'an invites people to reflect on this:

"Or were they created by nothing, or were they themselves the creators?" Qur'an (52:35)

Considering the nature of our existence may aid us in addressing these questions. Muslims believe in key principles.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE

Nothing Cannot Create Something

Given that it itself does not exist, a nonentity is not able to create or bring anything into existence. If we examine things that come to life on a daily basis and contemplate all that occurs, the wind blowing, the rainfall, and the alternation of night and day. If we examine periodic events such as the orderly orbital travel of the planets, it is irrational to conclude that all of this is the work of nothing.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE

1. The Creation Reveals Characteristics Of Its Maker

Everything inherently portrays the ability and attributes of its creator. It is impossible to find within a created object something beyond the realm of the creator or his ability to design.

For example, if you see a wooden door, you know that its creator possessed wood, that he had the ability to assemble the material in an orderly manner and sand the wood smooth and that he had the experience in making doors. It is the same with any material item: it reveals the knowledge and ability of its maker. Indeed, within the heavens and the earth are signs for the believers.

And in the creation of yourselves and what He disperses of moving creatures are signs for people who are certain [in faith].

"And (in) the alternation of night and day and [in] what Allah sends down from the sky of provision and gives life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness and [in His] directing of the winds are signs for a people who reason. Qur'an (45:3-6)

"Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?" Qur'an (67:14)

2. The Provider

In the depths of the womb the Provider sustains life through the umbilical cord. Once a baby is born and the cord is cut, He provides nourishment for the newborn through the mother's breast. He gives the baby the instinct to obtain that nourishment by sucking when it cannot yet see or understand.



THE BRAIN

THE BRAIN CANNOT BE MADE
FROM ANYTHING. IT IS MADE
UP OF 100 BILLION NEURONS.



In the Quran God describes Himself as:

He is Allah: the Creator, the Inventor, the Shaper. He 'alone' has the Most Beautiful Names. Whatever is in the heavens and the earth constantly glorifies Him . And He is the Almighty, All-Wise.

Qur'an (59:24)

Thereafter, God provides His servants with all manner of vegetation and with trees that yield fruit from water and soil, crops that are required by humans and animals. Such provision would not be available if God had not delivered fresh water, prepared fertile land and caused the right atmospheric conditions and climate to enable the yield of vegetation. Then, when food is eaten and digested, its nutrients are delivered to every part of the body: the centre of the brain, the surface of the skin and deep within the bone marrow.

Indeed the Provider has assumed the task of securing provision for all creatures. He provides the necessary nutrients for the fish in the depths of the oceans, for the insects of the earth, for the sprouts inside the seeds and for the embryos in the wombs. He delivers the provision for sprouts to the inside of seeds.

"And there is no creature on earth but that upon Allah is its provision, and He knows its place of dwelling and place of storage. All is in a clear register" Qur'an (11: 6).

3. The Guide

If you examine your eyelashes, you will notice that the upper ones turn upwards and the lower ones extend downwards. If the matter was the opposite, it would have impaired one's vision. Who is it that directs every eyelash of every human being and animal other than God?

4. The One And Only

The whole of existence bears witness that everything is the work of the one and only true God. We will see that our food requires the work of our stomach and intestines, the intestines require the function of blood, the role of blood is dependent on air and respiration, the air dependent on the plants, the plants on the sun and the sun on the stars. The function of each thing is dependent on another, all the way back to the initial supreme cause.

"The Qur'an declares: 'Allah has not taken any son, nor has there ever been with Him any deity. [If there had been], then each deity would have taken what it created, and some of them would have sought to overcome others. Exalted is Allah above what they describe (concerning Him)' Qur'an (23:91)

"If there were other gods besides God, there would be competition between them to command creation. This would result in chaos throughout the heavens and earth. As the Qur'an says: Had there been within the heavens and earth gods besides Allah, they both would have been ruined. So exalted is Allah, Lord of the Throne, above what they describe" Qur'an (21:22)

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE

1. One Who Lacks Something Cannot Provide It

Knowledge cannot come from that which lacks it. Those who believe that nature created them contradict the intellect and reject the truth because the entire system of the universe bears witness that its Creator is all-Wise, all-Knowing, all-Aware, all-Guiding, all-Providing, all-Protecting, all-Merciful and that He is One.

2. Who Is The One Characterised By These Attributes?

When we reflect upon the universe and the creatures around us, we conclude that everything testifies that a Creator made them all and just as the existence of the universe bears witness to this, a Muslim bears witness to it along with the rest of creation and repeats this declaration with knowledge and certainty.

Thus he proclaims, 'I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but God.' In order to understand and perform actions in the right manner, we believe in the Prophets and follow them.

3. Belief In The Prophets

God sent His Messenger to guide and invite people to worship Him alone and to disbelieve in all other deities that people worship.

In the Holy Qur'an, He says "And We certainly sent into every nation a Messenger, (saying), 'Worship Allah and avoid taghut (false gods).' And among them were those whom Allah guided, and among them were those upon whom error was (deservedly) decreed. So proceed through the earth and observe how was the end of the deniers" Qur'an (16:36)

"And We sent not before you any Messenger except that We revealed to him that, 'There is no deity except Me, so worship Me'" Qur'an (21:25)

The light bulb reveals the characteristics & knowledge of its maker.



All the Messengers were human beings and did not have any of the qualities of God. This fact is stressed in the Holy Qur'an: *"The Messiah, son of Mary, was not but a Messenger; [other] Messengers have passed on before him. And his mother was a supporter of truth. They both used to eat food. Look how We make clear to them the signs; then look how they are deluded"* Qur'an (5:75)

4. Why Did God Send Messengers?

"He has ordained for you of religion what He enjoined upon Noah and that which We have revealed to you, (O Muhammad), and what We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Prophet Eesa (Jesus) - to establish the religion and not be divided therein. Difficult for those who associate others with Allah is that to which you invite them. Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns back (to Him)" Qur'an (42:13)

God sent prophets to give the believers glad tidings of everlasting contentment and pleasure in Paradise as reward for their obedience to Him. They were also to warn the disbelievers of the consequence of their disbelief and to inform them that disbelief will not be excused and that they (the messengers) will be witnesses against them on the Day of Judgement. God said:

"(We sent) Messengers as bringers of good tidings and warners so that mankind will have no argument against Allah after the Messengers. And ever is Allah Exalted in Might and Wise." Qur'an (4:165).

God sent them to be the perfect example of high morality and to show people the correct way to worship. He sent them to prescribe the fundamentals that guide to the way of truth and save the believers from differing over them.

He says, 'And We have not revealed to you the Book, [O Muhammad], except for you to make clear to them that wherein they have differed and as guidance and mercy for a people who believe. Qur'an (16:64)

Messengers were also sent to demonstrate the good deeds that purify human souls and to instil righteousness in people's hearts.

HOW CAN WE KNOW THEY WERE TRUE PROPHETS?

Each prophet produced miracles that were witnessed by his nation. Indeed, Muhammad, the last of all prophets, was given a universal message whereas all previous scriptures revealed to prophets before him were limited to their own times and nations.

Unlike the other scriptures, the Qur'an which is God's last word and testament to humanity, remains in its original language and has never been altered. In addition, the Qur'an presents accurate scientific information in its verses which has only recently been discovered by modern science although it was revealed more than 1,400 years ago, like the common origin of the universe, *"Have those who disbelieved not considered that the heavens and the earth were a joined entity, and We separated them and made from water every living thing? Then will they not believe?" Qur'an (21:30)*

The Qur'an contains information of a miraculous nature. We believe it to be divine and below are some examples found in the Holy Qur'an.





THE EXAMPLE OF EMBRYOLOGY

Long before the microscope was invented, the Qur'an refers to the different stages of embryonic development. God says:

"And certainly, did We create man from an extract of clay. Then We placed him as a sperm-drop in a firm lodging. Then We made the sperm-drop into a clinging clot, and We made the clot into a lump (of flesh), and We made (from) the lump, bones, and We covered the bones with flesh; then We developed him into another creation. So blessed is Allah, the best of creators" Qur'an (23:12-14)

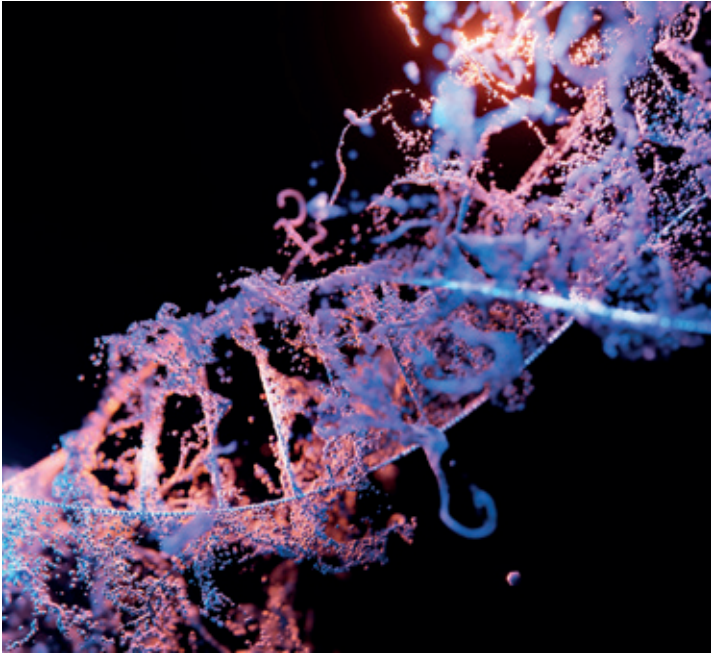
These verses state that after the creation of Adam from elements of the earth, God made human beings reproduce from a drop containing sperm (nutfah) placed within the womb. It then develops into a substance that attaches itself and clings to the womb in the manner of a leech ('alaqah). After that it takes the shape of a chewed morsel (mudghah) which becomes a fetus having bones covered with flesh.

Dr. Keith Moore, one of the world's leading experts in the field of anatomy and embryology, wrote one of the most widely used embryology texts in universities around the world. He said: "It is clear to me that these statements must have come to Muhammad (peace be upon him) from God because almost all of this knowledge was not discovered until many centuries later. This proves to me that Muhammad (peace be upon him) must have been a Messenger of God."

THE PRESERVATION OF PHARAOH'S BODY

Dr. Maurice Bucaille is an eminent French surgeon, scientist, scholar and author of 'The Bible, the Qur'an and Science' which contains the result of his research into the Judeo-Christian scriptures and the Holy Qur'an. It is a unique contribution in the fields of religion and science.

Being an outstanding scientist, he was selected to treat the mummy of the Pharaoh Merneptah,



which he did. During a visit to Saudi Arabia, he was shown verses of the Qur'an in which God says that the dead body of the Pharaoh will be preserved as a sign for posterity: *"Today We will preserve your corpse so that you may become an example 1 for those who come after you. And surely most people are heedless of Our examples!"*

Dr. Bucaille, being a Christian as well as impartial scientist, was conversant with the Biblical version of the story of Pharaoh being drowned in pursuit of Prophet Moses. He was surprised to learn that although unknown to the world before the late 20th century, the Qur'an had made definite mention of the preservation of the body of the same Pharaoh of Moses' time.

This led Dr. Bucaille to study the Qur'an thoroughly after learning the Arabic language and he accepted Islam as the true religion of God.

AFTER READING THIS, ONE COMES TO THE QUESTION: SO WHY DID GOD CREATE US?

Everyone would acknowledge that our body parts, such as our eyes, ears, brains and hearts, have a purpose. Wouldn't it then make sense that the individual, as a whole, also has a purpose?

God, the All Wise, did not create us to simply wander aimlessly or to only fulfil our basic instincts and desires.

Rather, God describes this life as a test. Every person is being tested as to who will choose to acknowledge God and follow His guidance. God says:

"Indeed, We created man from a sperm-drop mixture 1 that We may try him; and We made him hearing and seeing. We already showed them the Way, whether they 'choose to' be grateful or ungrateful". Qur'an (76:2-3)

For many, the underlying issue is not really about believing in God, but about the implications of believing in Him. It would mean being held to account and judged for one's actions, which may be inconvenient for the lives they want to lead.

Therefore, the test in this life involves following and humbling ourselves before God in preference to our own desires, pride and ego.

"WHY DOES GOD NEED TO TEST US?"

God is not in need of anything. He does not need to create anything and does not need to test anyone.

He does not benefit from our belief and is not affected by our disbelief. Rather, it is part of His infinite wisdom that He created us and gave us the opportunity to know Him. God knows the future. It is for us, to live through, experience our lives and make our own choices.

"DO WE REALLY HAVE A CHOICE?"

The fact that God knows our choices does not make it any less voluntary. Although God wants people to believe in Him, He does not force anyone. If God willed, He could guide all of humankind as He has power over everything.

But in His Wisdom, He has created us with the ability to choose and has made us accountable for our choices. God is not necessarily pleased with everything that He allows to occur.

"WHY DOESN'T GOD JUST REVEAL HIMSELF?"

In God's wisdom, He has to make himself known through His signs. This is part of the test of this

life. He has made it our responsibility to use the abilities He has given us to acknowledge Him. This means that only those who are sincere, humble and reflect deeply will recognise and believe in Him.

"WHAT IF I DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD"

It is mentioned in the Qur'an, "Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood...". Qur'an (2:256).

"Those who hide the clear proofs and guidance that We have revealed after We made it clear for humanity in the Book will be condemned by Allah and all' those who condemn". Qur'an (2:159).

As for those who repent, mend their ways, and let the truth be known, they are the ones to whom I will turn 'in forgiveness', for I am the Acceptor of Repentance, Most Merciful. Qur'an (2:160)

Whoever seeks a way other than Islam, it will never be accepted from them, and in the Hereafter they will be among the losers. Qur'an (3:85)

'O Prophet!' Do not grieve for those who race to disbelieve—surely they will not harm Allah in the least. It is Allah's Will to disallow them a share in the Hereafter, and they will suffer a tremendous punishment. Qur'an (3:176)

SO WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Time is of the essence and life is short. It is a fact that death will touch every living being, and once our soul departs this world, there will be no coming back. We need to be aware of our surroundings and understand what Allah wants from us, and for that one can do the following:

1. Be sincere and ask God (Allah) for guidance
2. Begin learning about Islam and 'Purpose of Life'
3. Speak with a local Imam or a knowledgeable Muslim who can answer your questions.



ISLAM A UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

INTRODUCTION



ONENESS OF GOD IN ISLAM

"Islam" is an Arabic word and it is a universal religion. It means submission and surrender to the will of One True God, Allah. It emphasizes that everything in the universe, from celestial bodies to human life, operates according to unalterable laws and everything operates according to laws established by God. This highlights the concept of submission to a higher power and the idea that everything is governed by divine order. There are five pillars of Islam and six articles of faith (Iman) in Islam.

PILLARS

1. Shahadah (Faith)

The "Declaration of Faith" is the statement, "Ash hadu alla ilaha illa Allah wa ash hadu anna Muhammad Rasulullah", meaning "I bear witness there is no deity worthy of worship except God (Allah), and I bear witness Muhammad is the Messenger (Prophet) of God". The Declaration of Faith is more than just a statement; it must be shown with one's actions. A person has to wilfully believe in one Creator and accept Islamic principles.

2. Salah (Prayer)

Muslims are required to offer prayers at five different times during the day. Prayer times are at dawn, midday, late afternoon, sunset and in the evening. Prayer is a method by which a Muslim connects to God and gathers spiritual strength, peace of mind and takes it as a reminder to stay focused on the purpose of life i.e. to worship 'the Creator, Allah' by upholding His guidance.

3. Zakah (Purification / Charity)

Zakah in Arabic means growth, blessing and purification. Its a type of charity that can be understood as 'social responsibility'. Zakah is both a spiritual duty and a vital part of the Islamic social welfare system. In Islam, it is the duty of the wealthy to help the poor and needy. It requires Muslims to give 2.5% of their qualifying wealth each year to help Muslims who need it across a range of eight categories (Qur'an 9:60) stipulated in the Qur'an.

It is obligatory on a person if the net assets (excluding personal items) exceed the value of 87.48 grams of gold or 612.36 grams of silver.

Muslims recognize that all wealth is a blessing from God, and certain responsibilities are required in return.

4. Sawm (Fasting)

Sawm is the Arabic term used to describe the act of fasting. Muslims are required to fast during the month of Ramadan from 'Dawn' to 'Dusk'. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The month has either twenty-nine or thirty days depending on the year's lunar cycle. It is determined by the sighting of the new moon from one month to the next. There are twelve months in the 'Islamic Calendar'.

The period is an opportunity of intense spiritual devotion. During the fast, Muslims abstain from food, drink and marital relations from dawn till sunset.

During this month, Muslims practice self-control and focus on prayers and devotion and learn to sympathize with those in the world who have little to eat.

Haji (Pilgrimage to Makkah)

A Muslim strives to make once-in-a-lifetime pilgrimage to the sacred sites in Makkah, in present day Saudi Arabia. It is the most intense spiritual experience for a Muslim.

In Makkah, Muslims perform certain religious rituals and circumambulate the Ka'aba. The cube-like structure was built by prophets on Allah's command. It is the centre point for all the Muslims. It is the central point of unity for Muslims, and they face it while offering their five daily prayers.

After the five pillars, Muslims share a common set of fundamental beliefs that are described as "Articles of Faith". These articles of faith form the foundation of the Islamic belief system.



BELIEF IN ONE GOD

The most important teaching of Islam is that only God is to be served and worshipped.

BELIEF IN ANGELS

God created unseen beings called angels who work tirelessly to administer His kingdom in full obedience. The angels surround us at all times, each has a duty; some record our words and deeds.

BELIEF IN PROPHETHOOD

Muslims believe that God communicates His guidance through human prophets sent to every nation. These prophets start with Adam and include Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, John the Baptist, Moses, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and Muhammad, (peace be upon them all). The main message of all the prophets has always been that there is only One true God and He alone is worthy of being supplicated to and worshipped.

BELIEF IN REVEALED BOOKS OF GOD

Muslims believe that God revealed His guidance and wisdom through 'books' to some of the prophets like the Psalms, Torah, and the Gospel. Over time, however, the original teachings of these books were distorted or lost. Muslims believe the QUR'AN is God's final revelation revealed to Prophet Muhammad and is preserved.

BELIEF IN DAY OF JUDGMENT

The life of this world and all that is in it will come to an end on an appointed day. Everyone will be raised from the dead and God (Allah) will judge each person individually, according to their faith and deeds.

BELIEF IN DESTINY AND DIVINE DECREE

Muslims believe that God (Allah) is the Sustainer of all life, nothing happens except by His Will and with His full knowledge. This belief does not contradict the idea of free will. God does not force us; our choices are known to God beforehand because His knowledge is complete. This recognition helps the believer through difficulties and hardships.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH

These primary acts of worship urge individuals to become more conscious of God and to serve the practical needs of society. However, worship is not limited to simply completing these acts. Islam promotes a holistic approach to worship that encompasses spreading justice and compassion in the world through one's daily interactions with people.

Smiling at someone, visiting the sick, and defending an innocent person who is being oppressed are all considered acts of worship. These forms of worship exemplify the importance of good manners in Islam. Muhammad (peace be upon him) once said, "The best among you are those who have the best character." (Reported by Al-Bukhari)

Islam provides practical guidance that strengthens a person's relationship with God and promotes compassion, justice and responsibility within society. Islam offers guidance on all matters of life, including one's diet, manners and social relationships. God tells Muslims to eat everything "good and pure" while adhering to simple dietary restrictions such as avoidance of pork, alcohol and anything slaughtered in the name of other than God.

When it comes to dressing and behaviour, modesty and humility are ordained for both

men and women. Muhammad (peace be upon him) has stated, "Every religion has an essential character and the essential character of Islam is modesty."

Parental obedience and dutifulness is integral to Islam. Men and women are to sanctify their relations in a marital contract, taking their spousal roles and family units seriously.

ISLAM AND MUSLIMS

The term Islam derives from the three-letter Arabic root, which generates words with the interrelated Arabic root letters **س م ل** (s l m). The literal and lexical meaning of Islam means submission / surrender. It has the same root

letters as the word peace. The word implies that one finds peace through willing submission to God and lives according to His divinely revealed law. The most important truth God revealed to mankind is that there is nothing divine or worthy of being worshiped except for Almighty God, thus all human beings should submit to Him.

The word "Muslim" means one who submits to the will of God, regardless of their race, nationality or ethnic background. Being a Muslim entails wilful submission and active obedience to God, and living in accordance with His message. However, anyone who submits completely to God and worships Him alone is a Muslim.

CONTINUITY OF THE MESSAGE

Islam is not a new religion; it is the same eternal message revealed through the ages to all of God's Prophets and Messengers. Muslims believe that all of God's Prophets, which include Abraham, Noah, Moses, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and Muhammad (peace Be Upon Them), brought the same message of Pure Monotheism.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was not the founder of a new religion; rather, he was the final Prophet of Islam. By revealing His final message to Muhammad, God sent an eternal and universal message for all of mankind. and universal message for all of Mankind.

Enough is it to say that the way of Islam is the same as the way of the Prophet Abraham, to because both the Bible and the Qur'an portray Abraham as a towering example of someone who submitted himself completely to God and worshipped Him without intermediaries. Once this is realized, it should be clear that Islam has the most continuous and universal message of any religion, because all Prophets and Messengers were "Muslims", i.e. those who submitted to God's will, and they preached "Islam", i.e. submission to the will of Almighty God.

ISLAMIC CONCEPT OF GOD (ALLAH)

The Creator is known as Allah in Islam. It is the personal name of the One True God.

The name "Allah" is the combination of two Arabic words, "Al" and "ilah". "Al" means "The", and "ilah" means "God". These two words come together and refer to "The God", which implies "The Only God", or "The Only True God". Nothing else can be called Allah. The term has no plural or gender. This shows its uniqueness when compared with the word "God" which can be made plural (i.e. gods) or feminine (i.e. goddess). In short, in the Islamic concept of God, which is completely based on Divine Revelation, there is no ambiguity in divinity, God is God and man is man.

Since God is the only Creator and continual Sustainer of the Universe, He is transcendent above His creation. The Creator and the creature never mix. Islam teaches that God has a unique nature and that He is free from gender, human weaknesses and beyond anything which human beings can imagine.



The Qur'an teaches that the signs and proofs of God's wisdom, power and existence are evident in the world around us. As such, God calls on man to ponder over the creation in order to build a better understanding of his Creator. Muslims believe that God is Loving, Compassionate, Just and Merciful, and that He is concerned with the daily affairs of human beings. In this, Islam strikes a unique balance between false religious and philosophical extremes. Some religions and philosophies portray God as just an impersonal "Higher Power" who is uninterested, or unaware, of the life of each individual human. Other religions tend to give God human qualities and teach that He is present in His creation, by being incarnate in someone, something or even everything.

In Islam, however, Almighty God has clarified the truth by informing mankind that He is Compassionate, Merciful, Loving, and the Answerer of prayers.

But He has also emphasized strongly that "there is nothing like unto Him", and that He is high above time, space and His creation.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the God whom Muslims worship is the same God worshipped by Jews and Christians, because there is only one God. The word "Allah" is simply the Arabic name for Almighty God. It is the same word for God which is used by Arabic speaking Jews and Christians. However, although Muslims, Jews, and Christians worship the same God, their concepts of Him differ in some respects, mainly because the Islamic understanding is based completely on divine revelation from God. For example, Muslims reject the Christian belief that God is a Trinity, not only because the Qur'an (Holy book) rejects it, but also because if this was God's true nature, He would have clearly revealed it to Abraham, Noah, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and all of the other prophets.

THE QUR'AN

The Arabic word "Al-Qur'an" literally means "the recitation". When used with regard to Islam, the word Qur'an means God's final message to mankind, which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Qur'an is the literal word of God - as it clearly says time and time again. Unlike other sacred scriptures, the Qur'an has been perfectly preserved in both its words and meaning in a living language. The Qur'an is a living miracle in the Arabic language and is known to be inimitable in its style, form and spiritual impact. God's final revelation to mankind, the Qur'an, was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) over a period of 23 years. The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Arabic; however, translations are available in many languages.

Muslims believe that the Holy Qur'an, in contrast to many other religious books, is the literal word of God, i.e. it wasn't something decreed by a religious council many years after being written. Also, the Qur'an was recited publicly in front of both the Muslim and non-Muslim communities during the life of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him. The entire Qur'an was also completely written down in the lifetime of the Prophet.

Numerous companions of the Prophet memorized the entire Qur'an word-for-word as it was revealed. So, unlike other scriptures, the Qur'an was always in the hands of the common believers; it was always thought to be God's word and, due to widespread memorization, it was perfectly preserved.

Regarding the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, it is a universal scripture addressed to all of mankind, and not addressed only to a particular tribe or "chosen people". The message that it brings is nothing new, the same message as all of the prophets, namely: submit to Almighty God and worship Him alone. As such, God's revelation in the Qur'an focuses on teaching human beings the importance of believing in the Oneness of God and framing their lives around the guidance which He has sent. Additionally, the Qur'an contains the stories of previous prophets such as Adam, Abraham, Noah, Jacob, John the Baptist, Moses and Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and many more (peace Be Upon Them); as well as many commands and prohibitions from God. The Holy Qur'anic teachings offer solutions to the emptiness of our lives and the turmoil that is gripping the world today. In short, the Qur'an is the book of guidance par excellence.





THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (peace be upon him)

Unlike the founders of many religions, the final Prophet of Islam is a real, documented historical figure, and the details of his life are well known. He lived in the full light of history, and the minutest details of his life are known. Not only do Muslims have the complete text of God's words that were revealed to Muhammad (peace be upon him), but they have also preserved his sayings and teachings in what is called "hadith" literature.

This having been said, Muslims believe that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was only a man chosen by God, and that he is not divine in any way. In order to avoid the misguided wish to deify him, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught Muslims to refer to him as "God's Messenger and His Slave". The mission of the last and final Prophet was simple: to call people to worship Almighty God alone and to serve as a living example of God's revelation. In simple terms, God sent the revelation to Muhammad (peace be upon him), who in turn taught it, preached it, lived it and put it into practice.

He was a man who lived a humble life in the service of God, and established an all encompassing religion and way of life by showing what it means to be an ideal friend, husband, teacher, ruler, warrior and judge.

For this reason, Muslims follow him not for his own sake, but in obedience to God, because Muhammad (peace be upon him) not only showed us how to deal with our fellow human beings, but more importantly, showed us how to relate to and worship God; worship Him in the only way pleasing to Him.

The true balance of an Islamic life is established by having a healthy fear of God as well as a sincere belief in His infinite mercy. A life without fear of God leads to sin and disobedience, while believing that one has sinned so much that God will not forgive him leads only to despair. In light of this, Islam teaches that only the misguided despair of the mercy of their Lord.

Enough is it to say that Islam teaches that life is a test, and that all human beings will be accountable before God. A sincere belief in the life of the hereafter is the key to leading a well-balanced and moral life. Otherwise, life is treated as an end in itself, which can lead human beings towards selfish and immoral behaviour.

Additionally, the Qur'an, which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), contains a great deal of teachings about the life in the hereafter and the Day of Judgment.



ONE CREATOR

ONLY ONE GOD



ONENESS OF GOD IN ISLAM

The teaching of God's complete Oneness is the essence of Islam. All other laws, beliefs and commands of Islam are built on this foundation. Take it away, and there is nothing left of the religion.

MUSLIMS BELIEVE THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD

"There is no god except Allah. And your god is One God. There is no god but He" Qur'an (2:163)

- The Oneness of God in Islam is a comprehensive teaching and can be further understood through the following attributes of Allah:
- Allah has no partners, no equals and no rivals.
- Allah has no father, mother, sons, daughters or wives.
- Allah is worshipped directly without anyone or anything acting as an intermediary.
- Allah is not in need of anyone's worship.
- Allah is not answerable to anyone.
- Allah is not dependent on any person or thing, but all persons and things are dependant on Him.

- Allah created everything without any assistance.
- There is nothing above or comparable to Allah.
- There is nothing that exists except that it is completely subservient to Him.
- No one can withhold what Allah provides and no one can provide what Allah withholds.
- Allah alone can benefit or harm.

"Allah" is the proper and personal name applied to The One True God. Nothing else can be called Allah. The term has no plural or gender unlike the English word "God" which can be made both plural and feminine (i.e. gods/goddess).

The unique usage of the word "Allah" is a reflection of Islam's emphasis on the purity of the belief in one God. Allah is the personal name of the One True God. The name "Allah" is the combination of two Arabic words, "Al" and "ilah". "Al" means "The", and "ilah" means "God". These two words come together and refer to "The God", which implies "The Only God", or "The Only True God". Nothing else can be called Allah. The term has no plural or gender. This shows its uniqueness when compared with the word "God" which can be made plural (i.e. gods) or feminine (i.e. goddess).

ALLAH HAS NO EQUALS

"Are many lords differing among themselves better, or Allah, the One, the Supreme?" Qur'an (12:39)

Muslims believe that the existence of the One True, Unique, Supreme, Almighty God, is the only logical concept of God. There cannot be, for example, two Absolutely Powerful Creators, and a moment's thought shows that this is not feasible.

If there were more than one God it would surely lead to confusion, disorder, chaos and destruction in the universe. The universe however, is in complete harmony. The Qur'an summarises this in the following verse:

"No son (or offspring) did Allah beget, nor is there any god along with Him. (If there had been many gods) then each god would have taken away what he had created, and some would have tried to overcome others! Glorified be Allah above all that they attribute to Him". Qur'an (23:91)

ALLAH ALONE IS WORTHY OF WORSHIP

"And worship Allah and associate none with Him." Qur'an (4:36)

From the Islamic standpoint, believing in the Oneness of God means to realise that all prayer and acts of worship should be exclusively to God.

None have the right to be invoked, supplicated, sworn upon or prayed to but God alone. Nothing else is worthy of worship: not statues, crosses, tombs, the sun, the moon, stars, temples, animals, Prophets, Messengers, saints, priests or religious scholars.

All of these things are created and limited, hence imperfect - they are not worthy of worship in Islam, whereas Allah is perfect. The Qur'an reminds us of the falsity of all alleged gods as follows:

"Surely those you call upon besides Allah, are only slaves like yourselves." Qur'an (7:194)

"The creation does not share in Allah's Perfect attributes and there is nothing like Him" Qur'an (112:4)

Islam teaches that no part of Allah is present in anyone or anything (although His knowledge encompasses everything).

The idea of any created object or being possessing any of Allah's perfect attributes is completely rejected in Islam. To give a created thing attributes or powers only befitting the Creator is to elevate the creation to a level of partnership with the Creator.

For example, the belief that good-luck charms, amulets and superstitions, such as rabbits' feet, horse shoes and the number 13, have the ability to bring benefit or harm is effectively making partners with Allah. This is because He alone is All-Powerful, and therefore He alone is able to harm or benefit:

"And do not call besides Allah on that which can neither benefit you nor harm you, for if you do then surely you will be amongst the wrong-doers" Qur'an (10:106)

Other examples include fortune telling and astrology. Whoever claims to know the future is attributing to himself / herself one of the attributes of Allah, i.e. the only Knower of the unseen and hidden things.

"He alone has the keys of the Unseen, none knows them but He" Qur'an (6:59)

"There is no god except Allah. And your god is One God. There is no god but He" Qur'an (2:163)

ALLAH IS NOT LIKE HIS CREATION

Similar to how Islam forbids attributing Allah's divine attributes to His creation, Islam also rejects the notion of attributing human qualities and limitations to Allah.

An example of this is how some religions claim that,

"God rested on the 7th day" after He created everything. Allah does not need rest and to believe so is to attribute imperfection to Allah: "We created the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six days, and no weariness touched Us" Qur'an (50:38)

Islam makes a clear distinction between the imperfection of creation and the perfection of Allah. He is far above any imperfections that His creation has described Him with. Some religions however, believe that Allah fashioned Himself into a human body and was both fully God and fully man at the same time.

We should consider that God has attributes of perfection such as being All-Knowing, All-Powerful and Immortal. Man however, has imperfect attributes. Man has limited knowledge, limited power and is mortal. Muslims are saved from having to ponder over this illogical concept (that God became man or any aspect of His creation) due to the pure and comprehensive Islamic concept of God.

ALLAH IS WORSHIPPED DIRECTLY

There is nothing to prevent a person from calling directly upon Allah and asking for His help and forgiveness. Allah hears all who praise and call upon Him. There is no "middle man" in Islam; everyone has uninterrupted and direct access to God. Muslims are required to maintain a direct relationship with God.

Worshipping Allah indirectly (e.g. through an idol, statue or other intermediaries) is viewed as compromising Allah's Oneness

and contaminating the purity of worship that Allah surely deserves.

CONCLUSION

Surely pure religion (Worship and obedience) is for Allah only. And those who take protectors besides Him (say): *"We worship them only that they may bring us closer to Allah, Truly Allah guides not him who is a liar and a disbeliever"* Qur'an (39:3)

"And certainly We raised in every nation a Messenger (saying): Serve Allah and avoid false gods" Qur'an (16:36)

Muslims believe in all the Prophets that Allah sent to every nation. They all came with the same message. The belief in the Oneness of God. Below we see some examples:

Noah (peace be upon him) said, *"O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other gods besides Him"* Qur'an (7:59)

Abraham (peace be upon him) said, *"Do you worship besides Allah, things that can neither be of any good to you nor do you harm?"* Qur'an (21:66)

Moses (peace be upon him) said, *"What! Shall I seek for you a god other than Allah while He has made you excel (all) created things?"* Qur'an (7:140)

Jesus (peace be upon him) said, *"For Allah, He is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. This is the straight way."*

Muhammad (peace be upon him) was commanded to say, *"I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is One God. So whoever expects to meet his Lord then let him do good deeds and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord"* Qur'an (18:110)

The foundation of the Islamic faith is belief in the Oneness and Uniqueness of Almighty God, and as we have seen, Islam discards any concept which leads to the denial of Allah's Oneness. There is One God, and none has the right to be worshipped but He.



THE QUR'AN

THE WORD OF GOD

Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the literal word of God Almighty, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the angel Gabriel.

"The revelation of the Qur'an is from Allah, the Exalted in Might, the Wise." Qur'an (39:1)

1. GUIDANCE FOR MANKIND

(The Qur'an) a guidance to mankind, and supreme evidences of the guidance and the all distinctive Criterion.....' Qur'an (2:185)

It provides direction to help mankind live their lives and distinguish between right and wrong without which man would surely be in loss.

2. THE FINAL REVELATION

The Qur'an is the final scripture revealed by Almighty God, confirming the truth that remains in parts of previous scriptures and

correcting fabrications and additions that have crept into present day versions of them. The message of the Qur'an is the same essential message brought by the previous scriptures: to worship God alone and not to associate partners with Him.

"O you who were given the Scripture, believe in what We have sent down [to Muhammad], confirming that which is with you..." Qur'an (4:47)

3. HOW WAS IT REVEALED?

The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad (peace be upon him) in Arabic; however, translations are available in many languages. The Qur'an was not sent down as a complete book in one revelation; rather, the revelation spanned over a period of 23 years. For this reason, it is essential to know in what context the verses were revealed, in order to have a proper understanding of the Qur'an; otherwise, its teachings could be misunderstood.



IS IT REALLY FROM GOD?

1. PRESERVATION

The Qur'an is the only religious sacred text that has been in circulation for a lengthy period and yet remains as pure as the day it was revealed. Nothing has been added, removed or modified from it, since its revelation over 1400 years ago.

"Indeed, it is We who sent down the Qur'an and indeed, We will be its guardian." Qur'an (15:9)

Not only has the Qur'an been preserved in written form, but also in the hearts of men, children and women. Today, millions of people have memorised the Qur'an from cover to cover.

2. SCIENTIFIC MIRACLES

Science does not contradict the Qur'an but affirms the information mentioned in it. One of the most remarkable aspects about the Qur'an is that it contains many verses which accurately describe natural phenomena in various fields such as embryology, meteorology, astronomy, geology and oceanography. Scientists have found these descriptions remarkably accurate for a book dating back to the 7th century. God reminds us of His saying in the Qur'an;

"We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth....." Qur'an (41:53)

In fact, many of the scientific miracles mentioned in the Qur'an have been discovered only recently, through the modern advancement of technological equipment. Consider some of the following:

- **Embryology:** The Qur'an gives a detailed description of the development of the human embryo. These details were unknown to the scientific community until recent times.
- **Cosmology:** The Qur'an states that the astronomical objects (stars, planets, moons etc) were all formed from clouds of dust. Previously unknown, this fact has now become an undisputed principle of modern cosmology.
- **Physiology:** The Qur'an accurately describes milk production as a process arising from the combination of what flows between blood and digested food, a fact discovered only through modern biology.
- **Geology:** The Qur'an compares mountains to "pegs" or "stakes" that stabilize the earth, an image that reflects the stabilizing role of mountains in modern geological theory.
- **Oceanography:** Modern science has discovered the existence of barriers that allow two seas to meet yet maintain their own temperature, density and salinity. These signs of God were clearly stated in the Qur'an more than 1400 years ago.





3. UNIQUENESS IN LITERARY AND LINGUISTIC BRILLIANCE

Ever since its revelation, no person has been able to produce a single chapter like that of the Qur'an in its beauty, eloquence, splendour, wisdom, prophecies, and other perfect attributes.

"And if you are in doubt about what We have sent down upon Our Servant [Muhammad], then produce a surah (a chapter) the like thereof and call upon your witnesses other than Allah, if you should be truthful" Qur'an (2:23)

The people who rejected the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) failed this challenge even though they were extremely eloquent in the language of the Holy Qur'an. This challenge remains unanswered to this very day.

4. NO CONTRADICTIONS

When people write, they are bound to make mistakes such as spelling and grammar, contradictory statements, incorrect facts, omission of information, and other various

errors. Allah says, *"Then do they not reflect upon the Qur'an? If it had been from [any] other than Allah, they would have found within it much contradiction" Qur'an (4:82)*

The Qur'an has no contradictions whatsoever be it in scientific explanations of the water cycle, embryology, geology and cosmology; historical facts and events; or prophecies.

5. DID PROPHET MUHAMMAD (peace be upon him) AUTHOR IT?

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was known in history to be illiterate; he could not read nor write. He was not educated in any field that could account for neither the scientific and historical accuracy, nor the literary beauty of this magnificent Book.

The precision of historical accounts of previous peoples and civilisations mentioned in the Qur'an is also too great to be authored by any man and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

"And it was not [possible] for this Qur'an to be produced by other than Allah" Qur'an (10: 37)

TO BELIEVE IN ONE TRUE GOD

"And your god is one God. There is no deity [worthy of worship] except Him, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful" Qur'an (2:163)

The most important topic mentioned throughout the Qur'an is the belief in the One, True God. God informs us that He has no partner, no son and no equal, and that none has the right to be worshipped except Him alone. Nothing is comparable to God and none of His creation resembles Him. The Qur'an also rejects the notion of attributing human qualities and limitations to God. "Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him...." Qur'an (4:36).

Since Allah alone is the only One worthy of worship, false deities and false gods must be rejected. The Qur'an also rejects the notion of attributing divine qualities to anyone or anything other than Allah.

STORIES FROM THE PAST

The Qur'an contains many narratives with beneficial lessons, including the true stories of previous Prophets such as, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and Moses. Of these stories, Allah says, *"There was certainly in their stories a lesson for those of understanding....."* Qur'an (12:111)

DAY OF JUDGMENT

This Noble Book reminds us that everyone will taste death and will be held accountable for all their actions and sayings:

"And We place the scales of justice for the Day of Resurrection, so no soul will be treated unjustly at all..." Qur'an (21:47)

PURPOSE OF LIFE

Importantly, the Qur'an teaches that the purpose of life is to worship God alone, and live one's life according to the way of life prescribed by Him. In Islam, worship is a





comprehensive term that includes all actions and sayings (whether private or public) that Allah loves and is pleased with. Therefore, by doing what Allah commands a Muslim is worshipping God and fulfilling his purpose in life.

The following are examples of worship from the Holy Qur'an: To pray: "O you who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good - that you may succeed." Qur'an (22:77)

To give charity: "...and spend [in the way of Allah]; it is better for yourselves. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful" Qur'an (64:16)

To be honest: "And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it]." Qur'an (2:42)

To be modest: "Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is acquainted with what they do. And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment...." Qur'an (24:30-31)

To be thankful: "And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect that perhaps you would be grateful" Qur'an (16:78)

To be just: "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses for Allah, even if it be against yourselves or parents and relatives. Whether one is rich or poor,...." Qur'an (4:135)

CONCLUSION

In summary, the Qur'an teaches mankind how to worship the one true God, hence fulfilling their true purpose in life and attaining success in both this world and the next. Muslims take it as the first point of reference in their daily lives.

"Indeed, We sent down to you the Book for the people in truth. So whoever is guided - it is for [the benefit of] his soul; and whoever goes astray only goes astray to its detriment. And you are not a manager over them." Qur'an (39:41)

"And it was not (possible) for this Qur'an to be produced by other than Allah" Qur'an (10: 37)



PROPHET MUHAMMAD

PEACE BE UPON HIM

TO BELIEVE IN ONE TRUE GOD

"There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often.." Qur'an (33:21)

Muslims believe that Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the final Prophet in a long chain of Prophets sent to call people to the obedience and worship of God alone ('Allah' in Arabic). Some of these Prophets include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon and Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon them all).

Just as Moses (peace be upon him) was sent with the Torah, the original unaltered revelation sent to Moses (peace be upon him) - and Prophet Eesa (Jesus) with the Gospel, the original unaltered revelation (not the present-day versions), Muslims believe that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was sent with the 'Qur'an', as a living example to demonstrate how its teachings should be applied.

The Prophet's (peace be upon him) wife, Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her), was once asked to describe the Prophet (peace be upon him), and she replied that he was 'the walking Qur'an', meaning he meticulously implemented the noble teachings of the Qur'an into his daily life.

He was born on 12th of Rabi ul Awal, 570 AD. He was born in the city of Makkah. Most of his early life was spent as a shepherd & a merchant. At the age of 40, he began to receive revelation from Allah. These revelations became the verses of the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the holy book of the Muslims. By 630 AD, most of Arabia had embraced belief in one God.

MISSION OF MERCY

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) called people to believe in One God. The teaching of God's complete oneness is the essence of Islam.

As well as calling people to pray, fast and give charity, the Prophet (peace be upon him) taught that one's faith in God should also affect one's treatment of others.

He said: *"The best of you are those who have the best character".* (Reported by Al-Tabarani)

The final Messenger (peace be upon him) taught humans to show mercy and to respect each other. He said, *"He who does not show mercy to others, will not be shown mercy."* (Reported by Al-Bukhari).

In another narration, some people requested the Prophet (peace be upon him) to invoke God to punish the disbelievers but he replied, *"Verily, I was not sent to invoke curses, but rather I was only sent as mercy."* (Muslim)

FORGIVENESS

"And let not those of virtue among you and wealth swear not to give [aid] to their relatives and the needy and the emigrants for the cause of Allah, and let them pardon and overlook. Would you not like that Allah should forgive you? And Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." Qur'an (24:22)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was the most forgiving of all people and the kindest. If someone abused him, he would forgive him, and the harsher a person was, the more patient he would become. He was extremely lenient and forgiving, especially when he had the upper hand and the power to retaliate.

Muhammad (peace be upon him) was all for forgiveness and no amount of crime or aggression against him was too great to be forgiven by him. He was the best example of

forgiveness and kindness, as mentioned in the following verse of the Qur'an: *"Take what is given freely, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant."* Qur'an (7:199)

EQUALITY

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted." Qur'an (49:13)

In the following sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), he taught that all humans are equal in the sight of God: "All humanity is from Adam and Adam is from clay. There is no superiority for an Arab over a non-Arab, nor for a black over a white; except through piety." (Ahmad)

The Messenger of Allah, Peace be upon him, said, "Verily, Allah does not look at your appearance or wealth, but rather he looks at your hearts and actions." (Muslim)

It is related that once a companion (Abu Dharr R.A) of the Prophet (peace be upon him) called another companion Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) in an offensive way, "Son of a black woman!".

The Prophet (peace be upon him), became angry and replied, "Do you condemn him because of the blackness of his mother? You still have within you traces of ignorance from the pre-Islamic period." (Bukhari)

TOLERANCE

"And not equal are the good deed and the bad. Repel [evil] by that [deed] which is better; and thereupon the one whom between you and him is enmity [will become] as though he was a devoted friend" Qur'an (41:34)

"You should not do evil to those who do evil to you, but you should deal with them with forgiveness and kindness." (Reported by Al-Bukhari)

This is how the final Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) reacted to personal attacks and abuse. Islamic sources include a number of instances where the Prophet (peace be upon him) had the opportunity to take revenge upon those who wronged him, but refrained from doing so.

He taught people to exercise patience in the face of adversity: The strong is not the one who overcomes people by his strength, but the strong is the one who controls himself while in anger.

Practising patience and tolerance does not mean that a Muslim should be a passivist and not defend himself in case of attack.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated that, "Do not wish to meet the enemy, but when you meet the enemy, be patient (i.e. stand firm when facing the enemy)," (Reported by Al-Bukhari)

GENTLENESS

"So by mercy from Allah, [O Muhammad], you were lenient with them. And if you had been rude [in speech] and harsh in heart, they would have disbanded from about you....." Qur'an (3:159)

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him), a companion who served the Prophet for ten years said that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was always gentle in his dealings with him. *"When I did something, he never questioned my manner of doing it; and when I did not do something, he never questioned my failure to do it. He was the friendliest of all men."*

On one occasion, the wife of the Prophet (peace be upon him) reacted angrily after being insulted by a person. The Prophet (peace be upon him) advised her: *"O Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her), Allah is kind and He loves kindness in all matters."* (Reported by Al-Bukhari)

He also said: *"Show gentleness! For if gentleness is found in something, it beautifies it, and*

when it is taken out from anything, it makes it deficient.”(Muslim)

“And the servants of The Most Gracious (God) are those who walk on the earth in humbleness, and when the ignorant address them, they say: ‘Peace’ ” Qur’an (25:63)

The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to prevent people from standing up for him out of respect. He used to sit wherever there was a place available in an assembly and never sought a prominent or elevated place. He never wore anything to distinguish himself from his companions or appear in higher rank than them.

He used to mix with the poor and the needy; he used to sit with the elderly and support the widows. People who did not know him could not tell him apart from the rest of the crowd.

Addressing his companions, he said: “Allah has revealed to me that you must be humble. No one should boast over one another, and no one should oppress another.” (Bukhaari)

Such was his humbleness that he was fearful of being worshipped, a privilege only befitting God: “Do not exceed bounds in praising me as the Christians do in praising Prophet Eesa (Jesus), the Son of Mary. I am only the Lord’s servant; then call me the servant of Allah and His Messenger.”

“Indeed you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character” Qur’an (68:4)

THE IDEAL HUSBAND

The Prophet’s beloved wife, Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her), said of her noble husband: “He always helped with the housework and would at times mend his clothes, repair his shoes and sweep the floor. He would milk, protect and feed his animals and do household chores.” (Ahmad)

Not only was he a devoted husband, he also encouraged his companions to follow his example: “The most perfect of the believers in faith are the best of them in morals. And the best among them are those who are best to their wives.” (Reported by Tirmidhi)

What has preceded is only a glimpse of how Muhammad (peace be upon him) lived his life. The examples of kindness and mercy mentioned may come as a surprise to some people given the portrayal of Islam in the media and its constant misrepresentation.

It is important when trying to understand Islam, that one goes directly to its sources: The Qur’an and the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). One should not judge all Muslims by the actions of a few individuals.

COMMENT FROM NON-MUSLIMS

Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) Considered the greatest British historian of his time.

“His (i.e., Muhammad’s) memory was capacious and retentive, his wit easy and social, his imagination sublime, his judgment clear, rapid and decisive. He possessed the courage of both thought and action.”

(History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, London, 1838, vol.5, p.335)
Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869)

French poet and statesman.

“Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?”

Translated from (Histoire De La Turquie, Paris, 1854, vol. II, pp. 276-277)

Jules Masserman: American psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, and former President of the American Psychiatric Association (1905-1994) (Masserman, J. Who were history's greatest leaders? Time magazine, July 15, 1974)

"Leaders must fulfil three functions – provide for the well-being of the led, provide a social organization in which people feel relatively secure, and provide them with one set of beliefs. People like Pasteur and Salk are leaders in the first sense. People like Gandhi and Confucius, on one hand, and Alexander, Caesar and Hitler on the other, are leaders in the second and perhaps the third sense. Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and Buddha belong to the third category alone. Perhaps the greatest leader of all times was Muhammad, who combined all three functions."

William Montgomery Watt: Scottish orientalist, historian, and Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Edinburgh (1909-2006) (Watt, W. M., 1953. Muhammad At Makkah, Oxford, p. 52)

"His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement – all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history are so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad."



K.S. Ramakrishna Rao: Indian philosopher, lecturer, and psychologist (1932-2021) (Ramakrishna Rao, K. S. (1989). Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam. India: Madhur Sandesh Sangam.)

"The personality of Muhammad, it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes! There is Muhammad the Prophet, there is Muhammad the warrior, Muhammad the businessman, Muhammad the statesman, Muhammad the orator, Muhammad the reformer, Muhammad the refuge of orphans, Muhammad the protector of slaves, Muhammad the emancipator of women, Muhammad the judge, Muhammad the saint. All in all, these magnificent roles, in all these departments of human activities, he is like a hero."

Michael H. Hart: American astrophysicist, author, and researcher (1932-) (Hart, M. H., 1978. The 100: A Ranking Of The Most Influential Persons In History, New York, 1978, p.33)

"My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular level. It is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be the most influential single figure in human history."





WHO WAS JESUS IN ISLAM?

PEACE BE UPON HIM

ISLAMIC VIEWPOINT

For many people in the West, the most important question about Islam is its view of Jesus. Prophet Jesus is known as Prophet Eesa in Islam. He is a figure who is loved and revered by billions of people around the world, yet there is much confusion surrounding the status of this colossal personality.

Islam is the religion of pure monotheism, worshipping The one and only true God known as "Allah" in Arabic. Islam is also a religion of many great Prophets and Messengers, one of whom is Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him), a man whose name is known in almost every household. A man highly respected by two major faiths: Islam and Christianity.

What does this man, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him), have to do with Islam?

A PROPHET

In Judaism, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) is denied as the Messiah. This is in stark contrast to Christianity, where he is worshipped as a deity, or the son of God. In Islam Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) is considered to be an honourable Prophet and Messenger of God, born from the virgin Mary, and will return to earth as the Messiah. He is neither God nor is he part of a Trinity.

"[Prophet Eesa (Jesus)] said, 'Indeed, I am the slave of Allah. He has given me the Scripture and made me a Prophet'" Qur'an (19:30)

Muslims view Prophet Eesa (Jesus) in the same way as they view all Prophets of God highly respected and loved. To disbelieve in him or any other Prophet or Messenger within Islam, such as Moses, Abraham or Muhammad (peace Be Upon Them), takes one out of the fold of Islam. Prophets are not worshiped, they are followed as they have been chosen by God to convey His message.

PROPHET EESA (JESUS) AS GOD

The concept of Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) being God or the begotten son of God is inconsistent with the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Qur'an. As numerous Qur'anic verses clearly indicate otherwise. Claiming that God has a son would mean to attribute human qualities and limitations to the All-Mighty, and God is far removed from such imperfection.

"Surely, they have disbelieved who say: 'Allah is the Messiah, son of Mary.' But the Messiah [i.e. Prophet Eesa (Jesus)] said: 'O Children of Israel! Worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.'" Qur'an (5:72)

"It is not befitting for Allah to take a son; exalted is He! When he decrees an affair, He only says to it, 'Be' and it is." Qur'an (19:35)

A Christian must ask him/herself, does the idea of God who was once a weak helpless child, one who could not survive without food, drink or sleep, be the same Omnipotent, All Mighty God described in the Old Testament? Surely not!

As for those who continue in their blasphemy, God says; *"And do not say, 'Three [God is part of a trinity]'; Cease - it is better for you. Indeed, Allah is but one God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs what is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And sufficient is Allah as Disposer of Affairs." Qur'an (4:171)*

"And if they do not desist from what they are saying, there will surely afflict the disbelievers among them a painful punishment." Qur'an (5:73)

It is also mentioned in the Bible that Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) said, *"I can do nothing on my own authority: as I hear, I judge, and my judgement is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of Him who sent me" John (5:30)*

Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) also said, *"... my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."*

Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, *"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."* (Matthew 26:39)

Maryam (peace be upon her) Mary, the noble virgin, holds a great status within Islam and an entire chapter within the Qur'an is named after her. Allah says: *"And remember when the Angels said: 'Oh Mary, indeed Allah has chosen you, purified you, and chosen you from amongst all the women.'" Qur'an (3:42)*

Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) also recalls her high status with his statement: *"The best of the world's women was Mary (at her lifetime)."*

The Angel Gabriel was sent to Mary in the form of a man, with glad tidings of a child who was to be born miraculously without a father.

Ali bin Abi Talib said, *"I heard the Messenger of Allah say (The best woman (in her time) was Maryam, daughter of 'Imran, and the best woman (of the Prophet's time) is Khadijah (his wife), daughter of Khuwaylid.)' (Reported by Tirmidhi)*

Another narration mentions Ibn Abbas (may Allah be pleased with him) reported: The Messenger of Allah, (peace be upon him), said, *"The best of women among the people of Paradise are Khadija bint Khuwaylid, Fatimah bint Muhammad, Maryam (Mary) bint 'Imran, and 'Asiyah bint Muzahim, the wife of Pharaoh."* (Ahmad)

MIRACULOUS BIRTH

The miraculous birth of Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) is mentioned in the holy Qur'an.

"And make mention of Mary in the Scripture, when she had withdrawn from her people to a chamber looking east, and had chosen seclusion

from them. Then We sent unto her Our Spirit and it assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man." Qur'an (19:16)

"She said, "Indeed, I seek refuge in the Most Merciful from you, [so leave me], if you should be fearing of Allah". Qur'an (19:17)

He said, "I am only the Messenger of your Lord to give you (news of) a pure boy (i.e., son)." Qur'an (19:18-19)

"She said, "How can I have a boy while no man has touched me and I have not been unchaste?"

He said, "Thus [it will be]; your Lord says, 'It is easy for Me, and We will make him a sign to the people and a mercy from Us. And it is a matter [already] decreed.'" Qur'an (19:20-21)

"God says, "The likeness of Prophet Eesa (Jesus) before Allah is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: 'Be', and he was. This is the truth from your Lord, so be not of the disputers." Qur'an (3:59-60)

HIS MESSAGE

Surely, if Prophet Eesa (Jesus) is worshipped due to having no father, Adam is more deserving of worship since he was created without either parent. Prophet Eesa (Jesus) was sent to the Children of Israel to confirm the message of the past Prophets to believe in the One True God (Allah). He was also taught by Allah the Books of old (i.e. the previous revelations), as God says:

"And He (Allah) will teach him the Book and the wisdom and the Torah and the Injeel (Gospel)" Qur'an (3:48)

"And when Prophet Eesa (Jesus) came with (Our) clear Proofs, he said: 'I have come to you with the wisdom, and in order to make clear to you some of the points in which you differ, therefore fear Allah and obey me. Verily, Allah! He is my Lord and your Lord. So worship Him alone. This is the only straight Path'" Qur'an (43:63-64)

As an honourable obedient Messenger of God, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) submitted willingly to God's commands. As such, he was a "Muslim", one who submits to the will and commandments of God.

MIRACLES

Prophet Eesa (Jesus) performed great miracles by the will and permission of God. One of his greatest miracles was that he was conceived with no father. He also spoke as a baby in the cradle to defend his mother against the children of Israel who accused her of fornication.

"He (Prophet Eesa (Jesus)) will speak to the people in the cradle and in manhood, and he will be one of the righteous." Qur'an (3:46)

Prophet Eesa (Jesus) also gave life to the dead, cured the leper and the blind, all by the will of God *"Indeed, I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I design for you out of clay like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with God's permission; and I heal the blind and the leper, and bring the dead to life with God's permission and I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses; most surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers" Qur'an (3:49)*

The fact that Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) performed miracles does not mean that he was anything more than a humble slave of God (Allah) and His Messenger. In fact many Messengers performed miracles, including Noah, Moses and Muhammad (peace be upon them all) and these miracles only took place by the permission of Allah, so as to prove the authenticity of the Messenger.

CRUCIFIXION

The Islamic perspective is that Prophet Eesa (Jesus) was not crucified but rather raised up to the heavens. This point is further clarified in the following verses of the Qur'an; *"[The Jews] killed him not, nor crucified him, but the resemblance of Prophet Eesa (Jesus) was put over another man (and they killed that man),*

and those who differ therein are full of doubts. They have no (certain) knowledge, they follow nothing but conjecture. For surely they killed him not: but Allah raised him (Prophet Eesa (Jesus)) up (with his body and soul) unto Himself. And Allah is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise" Qur'an (4:157-158)

MUSLIM BELIEFS

Muslims believe that Allah will send Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon him) back to earth. God says: *"And he (Prophet Eesa (Jesus) peace be upon him, i.e. his descent to earth) shall be a known sign for the coming of the Hour (Day of Judgement)" Qur'an (43:61)*

He will descend as a Muslim (one who submits to God's laws) and call others to Islam, rejecting those who took him as other than a slave and Messenger of the One True God. Prophet Eesa (Jesus) was born, will return and die, as a Muslim.

CONCLUSION

Muslims view Prophet Eesa (Jesus) in the same way they view all Prophets of God. They respect and love him dearly, however, they do not worship him, as worship is for God alone who created him and everything that exists.

Prophet Eesa (Jesus) is not God, nor is he the son of God and nor is he three entities in one. God tells the Muslims to come to common terms and understanding between them and the People of the Scriptures (Jews and Christians). He says:

"Say: 'O People of the Scripture! Come to a word that is equitable between us and you: that we will not worship anything except Allah and not associate anything with Him and not take one another as lords instead of Allah.'" But if they turn away, then say, 'Bear witness that we are Muslims [submitting to God]" Qur'an (3:64)



WOMEN IN ISLAM

R I G H T S I N I S L A M

WOMEN IN ISLAM

Women in Islam are thought to be subjugated, degraded, oppressed but are they really? Are millions of Muslims simply that oppressive or are these misconceptions fabricated by a biased media?

Over fourteen hundred years ago, Islam gave women rights that women in the West have only recently begun to enjoy.

In the 1930s, Annie Besant observed: "It is only in the last twenty years that Christian England has recognised the right of woman to property, while Islam has allowed this right from all times. It is a slander to say that Islam preaches that women have no souls." (The Life and Teachings of Muhammad, 1932).

Men and women all descended from a single person - the Prophet Adam (peace be upon him). Islam does not accept for either of them anything but justice and kind treatment.

EQUAL REWARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Men and women worship Allah in the same way, meaning they worship the same God (Allah), perform the same acts of worship, follow the same scripture, and hold the same beliefs. Allah (the Arabic word for the One true God of all creation), judges all human beings fairly and equally. Allah emphasises the just treatment and reward due to both men and women in many verses of the Qur'an:

"Allah has promised to the believers, men and women, gardens under which rivers flow, to dwell therein, and beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss." Qur'an (9:72)

"Never will I allow the loss of the work of any worker amongst you, male or female; you are of one another." Qur'an (3:195).

These verses show that reward is dependent upon one's actions and not one's gender. Gender does not play any part in how a person is rewarded and judged. If we compare Islam to other religions, we see that it offers justice between the sexes.

For example, Islam dismisses the idea that Eve is more to blame than Adam for eating from the forbidden tree. According to Islam, Adam and Eve both sinned, they both repented and God forgave them both.

EQUAL RIGHTS TO KNOWLEDGE

Both men and women are equally encouraged to seek knowledge. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, *"The seeking of knowledge is compulsory for every Muslim"*, (Reported by Tirmidhi)

Also, great female Muslim Scholars existed at and around the time of the Prophet (peace be upon him). Some were from his family and others were his companions or their daughters. Prominent amongst them was Aishah, the wife of the Prophet (peace be upon him) through whom a quarter of the Islamic law has been transmitted. Other females were great scholars of jurisprudence and had famous male scholars as their students.

"And for women are rights over men, similar to those of men over women." Qur'an (2:228)

EQUAL RIGHTS TO CHOOSE SPOUSE

Islam has honoured women by giving them the right to choose a spouse and keep their original family name once married. Additionally, many have the impression that parents force their daughters into marriage. This is a cultural practice, and has no basis in Islam. In fact, it is prohibited.

"A girl came to her and said: 'My father married me to his brother's son so that he might raise his own status thereby, and I was

unwilling.' She said: 'Sit here until the Prophet comes.' Then the Messenger of Allah came, and I told him (what she had said). He sent word to her father, calling him, and he left the matter up to her. She said: 'O Messenger of Allah, I accept what my father did, but I wanted to know whether women have any say in the matter.'" (An-Nasai).

EQUAL YET DIFFERENT

While men and women have equal rights as a general principle, the specific rights and responsibilities granted to them are not identical. Men and women have complementary rights and responsibilities.

Aside from external and internal anatomical differences, scientists know there are many other subtle differences in the way the brains of men and women process language, information and emotion, just to mention a few.

A socio-biology expert, Edward O. Wilson of Harvard University, said that females tend to be higher than males in verbal skills, empathy and social skills, among other things, while men tend to be higher in independence, dominance, spatial and mathematical skills, rank-related aggression, and other characteristics.

It would be foolish to treat both genders the same and to ignore their differences. Islam teaches that men and women have complementary, yet different, roles because it is best suited to their nature. God says: *"And the male is not like the female."* Qur'an (3:36)

"Does not the One who created, know? And He is the Most Kind, the All Aware." Qur'an (67:14)

THE FAMILY UNIT

God created men and women to be different, with unique roles, skills and responsibilities. These differences are not viewed as

evidence of superiority or inferiority, but of specialisation. In Islam, the family is of central importance.

The man is responsible for the financial wellbeing of the family while the woman contributes to the family's physical, educational and emotional wellbeing.

This encourages cooperation rather than competition. By fulfilling their mutual responsibilities, strong families are created and hence strong societies. Of course, it's perfectly fine for the woman to work and earn.

Also, emotionally, neither men nor women live a happy life without one another. Allah describes this beautifully by saying: *"They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them."* Qur'an (2:187)

Clothing provides comfort, warmth and security as well as making one look good. This is how the relationship between the husband and wife is defined in Islam.

AS A WIFE

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also encouraged men to treat their spouses in the best way, he said, *"The best of you are those who are best (in treatment) to their wives"*. (Reported by Tirmidhi)

Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) was once asked how the Prophet's conduct was in his home. She said, *"He was like one of you at home, yet he was most lenient and most generous. He was ready to give a helping hand to his wives in the ordinary work of the house, [he] sewed his own clothes and mended his own shoes."*

In general, he helped in whatever work his wives did.

"And among His signs is that He created for you wives amongst yourselves that you may dwell in tranquillity with them; and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts). Surely in this are Signs for people who reflect." Qur'an (30:21).

MOTHERS & DAUGHTERS

A mother has the greatest influence on a child especially in the earlier years through her affection, care and love. Undoubtedly, the success of a society is due to mothers. Therefore, it is only right for Islam to honour and raise their status. Allah says in the

Qur'an: "And we have enjoined on man to be dutiful and kind to his Parents, His mother bears him with hardship and she brings him forth with hardship." Qur'an (46:15).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) was once asked, "O Messenger of Allah, who among people is most deserving of my good treatment?"

He said, "Your mother." The man asked twice more, "Then who?" and was given the same response. Only until the fourth time did the Prophet respond, "Then your father."

Reward is not only given to the good and kind treatment towards mothers. In fact, Islam has designated a special reward for raising daughters that is not granted for raising sons.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Whoever Allah has given two

daughters and is kind towards them, they will be a reason for him entering Paradise." "They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them." Qur'an (2:187).

CONCLUSION

Before Islam, in the Arab world, women were considered shameful, female children were buried alive, prostitution was rampant, divorce was only in the hands of the husband, inheritance was only for the strong, and oppression was widespread.

Islam came and abolished these practices. Even now, in "developed countries", women are not granted respect, dignity and honour, let alone equal pay for equal work. Islam, however, regards women as precious and valuable, not to be disrespected or disgraced. The mistreatment of women in some countries or families is due to cultural factors that some wrongly follow, not because of Islam. Women around the world would not accept Islam if it was an oppressive religion.

We end with the words of our Lord and your Lord, the Creator and Sustainer of all men and women: "Surely 'for' Muslim men and women, believing men and women, devout men and women, truthful men and women, patient men and women, humble men and women, charitable men and women, fasting men and women, men and women who guard their chastity, and men and women who remember Allah often—for 'all of' them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward." Qur'an (33:35)





WHAT IS A HIJAB?

A SIGN OF MODESTY

WHAT IS HIJAB?

A SIGN OF MODESTY

The word Hijab comes from the Arabic root word 'hajaba' which means to conceal or cover. In an Islamic context, Hijab refers to the dress code required for Muslim females who have reached puberty.

Hijab is the requirement of covering or veiling the entire body with the exception of the face and hands. Some also choose to cover their face and hands and this is referred to as Burqa or Niqab. The hijab is not required in situations where there are only females and certain male relatives present.

However, hijab is not just about outer appearances; it is also about noble speech, modesty, and dignified conduct. These righteous manners are also required of men. Muslim males are also required to dress modestly and act in a dignified manner.

HIJAB IS OBEDIENCE

Although there are many benefits of hijab, it is first and foremost a commandment from God. Therefore, wearing it is an act of faith and obedience to the Creator, as mentioned in the Qur'an: "Tell the believing women to draw their outer garments around them (when they go out or are among men)". Qur'an (33:59)

God, the All-Wise, knows what is best for His creation, and has therefore provided guidance in order to benefit humankind. The wearing of hijab, just like any other act of obedience to the Creator, brings one closer to one's Lord and helps bring a sense of satisfaction and contentment to the person wearing it. The hijab in no way suggests that women are inferior to men.

THE HIJAB IS MODESTY

Islam promotes modesty and decency and seeks to minimise immorality within society.

The hijab, amongst other things, helps attain this goal. *"Tell the believing men to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Indeed, Allah is Acquainted with what they do."* Qur'an (24:30)

And tell the believing women to reduce [some] of their vision and guard their private parts and not expose their adornment except that which [necessarily] appears thereof and to wrap [a portion of] their head covers. Qur'an (24:31).

Note that in the above verses, it is men who are addressed first in regards to lowering their gaze and guarding their modesty.

This counters the claim that all responsibility for such modesty is shouldered by women. While Islam discourages public displays of immodest dress and sexual behaviour, being a practical religion, Islam encourages love, affection, and intimacy between married couples in private.

THE HIJAB IS PROTECTION

The wisdom behind the hijab is to minimise sexual enticement and moral degradation in society as much as possible for both men and women. The hijab helps protect men, women and society by creating stability in both families and communities in a number of ways.

THE HIJAB IS DIGNITY

- Shields from unwanted advances.
- Shields women from perverted looks and superficial scrutiny.
- May help reduce the likelihood of sexual assaults against women.
- Shields from sexual exploitation of women based on appearance.
- Shields from temptations and harmful desires.

The hijab promotes a woman's femininity rather than suppressing it, and grants women dignity and self-respect for who they are, as opposed to being judged by superficial standards, such as appearance. This grants women the power to shape their own dignity via more meaningful standards, such as righteousness, knowledge and societal contribution, rather than having a consumer society dictate their worth through material means, such as how they look or how much money they earn.

Nobel Peace Prize winner, Tawakkul Karman,

'The mother of Yemen's revolution,' when asked about her hijab by journalists and how it is not appropriate with her level of intellect and education, replied: "Man in early times was almost naked, and as his intellect evolved he started wearing clothes. What I am today and what I'm wearing represents the highest level of thought and civilization that man has achieved, and is not regressive. It's the removal of clothes again that is a regression back to the ancient times."

In the eyes of God men and women do not need to compete with each other, but need to complement each other.

THE HIJAB IS RESPECT

In a number of societies today, many women are taught from early childhood that their worth is proportional to their attractiveness. They are compelled to follow unrealistic and demeaning standards of beauty in order to satisfy unreasonable peer pressure and community expectations. In such a superficial environment, where so much emphasis is placed on external beauty, the internal beauty of the individual counts for very little.

Islam however, teaches that a woman is to be respected according to her virtuous character and actions rather than by her

looks or physical features, of which she has little or no control. She does not have to use her body and charms to gain recognition or acceptance in society, as the hijab directs self worth away from appearance and onto qualities such as piety, virtue, modesty and intellect attributes which are more equally accessible to all.

Every woman who wears a hijab or burqa is a unique individual, and it is unfair and inaccurate to make a sweeping judgement about all such women based on one item of clothing they have in common.

THE HIJAB IN THE BIBLE

The hijab is not something new. Muslim women follow the example of righteous women in the past such as Mary, the mother of Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon her). Some of the evidence from the Bible includes the following two verses.

"And every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head".

"I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God." (1 Timothy (2:9-10))

THE HIJAB IS CONFIDENCE

Hijab enables women to have confidence in themselves as human beings. It increases the self esteem of women by allowing them to focus on what really matters in life. The obsession with physical appearance can have dangerous and unhealthy consequences as some women go to harmful lengths in order to feel accepted by an increasingly demanding society. The hijab helps prevent such mental and physical harms associated with a lack of confidence, by limiting self-consciousness based on appearance.

THE HIJAB IS NOT...

- It does NOT hinder contribution to society.
- It is NOT a symbol of oppression.
- It is NOT required in places where there are only females and close male relatives.
- It is NOT a sign of female inferiority to men.
- It is NOT a means to restrict a woman's freedom to express her views and opinions.
- It is NOT a means to restrict women from pursuing an education or a suitable career.
- It is NOT a portable prison.
- It is NOT an act of defiance, confrontation or protest against non-Muslims.
- It is NOT something new, it has been practiced by many righteous women historically.
- It is NOT against community values. Community values necessitate that people should not be judged by what they wear, nor discriminated against or mistreated, based on their choice of clothing or appearance.

The important thing to understand is that it is in fact extremely empowering for millions of Muslim women. The hijab empowers them with the power of modesty and helps many feel stronger with pride and love for their religion. Being modest means forcing people to judge you based on your mind and your heart, and less so on your face or body. This gives courage and self-esteem to many who choose to wear the hijab.

Wearing the hijab is to have the freedom to choose how to self-express. Because a woman is using self-expression and not being forced to dress a certain way by societal pressures, many feel empowered because they are forcing people to judge them on their capabilities and not on how sexualized their bodies can be.

The hijab is:

- An act of obedience to the Creator
- An act of honour and dignity
- An act of modesty
- An act of purity
- An act of bashfulness
- An act of righteousness
- An act of belief & faith
- A shield
- A protection
- A symbol of freedom





EXTREMISM

ISLAM DENOUNCES IT

"Whosoever kills an innocent human being, it shall be as if he has killed all mankind, and whosoever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind" Qur'an (5:32)

IS ISLAM AN EXTREME RELIGION?

"Islamic terrorists, Muslim fundamentalists, Extremists, Radical Islam, Muslim Terrorists"

These are just some labels that have been wrongly applied to Muslims and certain Muslim groups in recent years. The media's portrayal of Islam often misleads those whose knowledge of the religion is limited, thus creating negative assumptions about this peaceful and very tolerant way of life.

Peter Manning, a journalist of over 30 years states in his book, "Us and Them":

"Experience tells me there's a vast gulf between the realities of the daily lives of Arab and Muslims and how they are represented in our media. In most cases (from the coverage of 2 major newspapers), the words 'violent', 'death', 'attack', 'kill', 'suicide' or 'gunmen' were in close proximity to the words 'Arab', 'Palestinian', 'Muslim' or 'Islam'."

Is it then any wonder that most people associate terrorism with Islam? The problem of ignorance is highlighted by various surveys which reveal that many people do not know anything about Islam and its followers.

Dr Dunn said when he began his study commissioned by the Australia-Indonesian Institute.

"Those with the least knowledge and personal contact with Muslims were the most likely to feel threatened by Islam".

The prevalence of media bias and ignorance regarding Islam can be countered by

understanding Islam through its proper teachings. That means referring to the Qur'an (which Muslims believe to be the word of God) and the authentic sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

Through the proper understanding of these teachings, one will discover Islam to be completely against any form of extremism. When reading through the Qur'an or the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh), one must understand the context in which the wording applies.

HOW CAN THE QUR'AN BE MISUNDERSTOOD?

The following verse of the Qur'an is a favourite amongst those seeking to mislead people about Islam:

"And kill them wherever you find them, and expel them from where they expelled you, as persecuting people to sway them from God's Religion is worse than killing. But do not fight them at the Sacred Mosque, unless they fight you there. But if they do fight you, then slay them; This is the recompense of the disbelievers." Qur'an (2:191)

On occasion, the above verse has been dangerously trimmed down to the following: *"And kill them wherever you find them..."* The obvious question is, *"Kill who?"* To answer this question, one should read the verses which come before and after the above verse. *"And fight in the way of Allah those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits, surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits." Qur'an (2:190).*

The above verse mentions fighting as a means of self defence (i.e. with those who fight you). The verse after 2:191 is: *"But if they cease, Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." Qur'an (2:192).*

These verses were revealed at a time when the Muslims had been expelled from their homes on account of their faith. They endured more than ten years of persecution and eventually had to flee to a safe land.

The above verses were referring to the Arab pagans of Makkah during the Prophet's time, who oppressed the Muslims and planned to attack them where they had sought refuge. Hence, the above verse can only be applied in such circumstances. This example demonstrates that verses in the Qur'an should be understood in their proper context since the verses of Qur'an were revealed in stages in relation to particular situations, over a period of 23 years. It is also important to note that the Qur'an was revealed in Arabic. Therefore, translations into different languages may be misleading and/or inaccurate.

ISLAM, A WAY OF LIFE

There can be no doubt that Muslims (like anybody else) have a legitimate right to fight against aggression or when oppressed.

Islam teaches that warfare is permitted in order to preserve the wellbeing of the community or to prevent oppression from spreading - this may be in the context of defensive or pre-emptive warfare depending on the particular situation.

Muslims just like any community have the right to defend themselves just like any other community when war is declared against them.

In the Holy Qur'an, we read: *"To those against whom war is made, permission is given to fight, because they are wronged."* Qur'an (22:39)

However, when the enemy ceases its hostility, Muslims are commanded to cease fighting. Below are some narrations from Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

It is narrated by Ibn 'Umar that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) forbade the killing of women and children. (Muslim) Ibn Abbas narrates that the Prophet (peace be

upon him) said to an outgoing army, *"Leave in the name of God, and upon the way of his Messenger. Do not kill any old person"*. (Al-Bayhaqi)

Ibn Abbas narrates from the Prophet (may peace be upon him) said *"Do not ever kill the people living in towers (i.e. monks)"*. (Nayl al-Awtar)

Rabah ibn Rabee (may Allah be pleased with him) says he left in an expedition with the Prophet (peace be upon him), who went up to Khalid ibn Walid (his general) (may Allah be pleased with him) and said *"Do not kill the workers / wage earners i.e. those workers not fighting you"* (Ahmad)

"Fight in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah... do not break your pledge, and do not mutilate (the dead) bodies, do not kill the children." Muslim

"And if they incline to peace, then incline to it and trust in God; surely He is the All-Hearer, the All-Knower." Qur'an (8:61)

Abu Bakr (may God be pleased with him), Prophet Muhammad's closest friend and first successor, spoke of the Islamic approach to war by highlighting the following when no such rules of engagement existed for his soldiers. In the battlefield, one should not:

- Commit treachery
- Mutilate the dead
- Deviate from the right path
- Kill a woman, child or aged man
- Harm or burn trees, especially the fruitful
- Slay the enemy's flock, except for food
- Harm those who devote their life to worship

Qur'an was revealed in Arabic, therefore translations into different languages may be misleading and/or inaccurate.

As we read in Qur'anic verse 2:190, Allah commands Muslims not to go to extremes by saying, *"Do not transgress the limits."* A situation of war is no excuse to go beyond boundaries. Islam teaches the avoidance of blind retaliation.

"And let not the hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just: that is nearer to righteousness." Qur'an (5:8)

The problem with applying and understanding terrorism is that there is no agreed upon definition of what constitutes "terrorism". Also, terrorism takes many forms, as the following examples illustrate.

William Dalrymple (2001), 'Scribes of the new racism' Independent, 24 September. Similarly, "The horrific massacre of 8,000 Muslims at Srebrenica in 1995 never led to a stream of pieces about the violence and repressive tendencies of Christianity." The Independent UK

TERRORISM HAS NO RELIGION

Unfortunately religious/political fanaticism and violence can be found in all religions or those without a religion.

We have examples of violence in the name of Christianity from groups such as the KKK, IRA, LRA, Anders Breivik murdered 77 (mostly children) in Norway, Brenton Tarrant the New Zealand Christchurch Mosque terrorist who killed Muslim worshippers, Darren Osborne who tried to mow down Muslim worshippers in London, resulting in the death of Makram Ali and the maiming of many others. We have Jewish terrorist organisation such as the Haganah and the Jewish Defence League (JDL), both proscribed as terrorist organisations by the FBI.

We have Hindu terrorism from groups such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) or Abhinav Bharat, who openly and actively target Muslims and Christians in India and are responsible for the murder of many Muslims and Christians across India until this day. We have the ethnic cleansing of the minority Rohingya Muslims in Burma by the 969 movement, a hard-line Buddhist nationalist movement headed by the conversational Buddhist monk Ashin Wirathu. Last but not least we have the state sponsored ethnic cleansing of the Uighurs, an ethnic minority Chinese Muslim group, at the hands of the

communist Chinese government, including the interment of hundreds of thousands if not millions of Muslim men, women and children in the Xinjiang region, East China.

Let us take an example from Palestine - Israel situation. A resolution was passed by the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) states that Israel's conduct meets the legal definition as laid out in the UN convention on genocide.

Across a three-page resolution, the IAGS presents a litany of actions undertaken by Israel throughout the 22-month-long war that it recognises as constituting genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

There are many other examples of both Jewish and Christian terrorism, however, we must never generalise and call all Christians and Jews terrorists. Similarly, we should not put all Muslims on trial; rather, we should judge and condemn only those who commit such heinous crimes.

ISLAM DENOUNCES TERRORISM

The act of inciting terror in the hearts of defenceless civilians, the wholesale destruction of buildings and properties, the bombing and maiming of innocent men, women and children are all forbidden and detestable acts according to Islam and the Muslims.

If an individual Muslim were to commit an act of terrorism, this person would be guilty of violating the laws of the very religion they claim to follow - Islam. Would it be fair to condemn all Muslims as a result, when the religion itself is against such acts? Muslims follow a religion of submission to God, that results in peace, mercy, and forgiveness. The vast majority have nothing to do with the violent events some notably the media have associated with Muslims. Islam is not a religion of extremism. It is mentioned in the Qur'an:

"Allah does not forbid you from showing kindness and dealing justly with those who have not fought you about religion and have not driven you out of your homes. Allah loves those who are just." Qur'an (60:8)



COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

ABOUT ISLAM

RESEARCHED ISLAM FOR YOURSELF?, AS OPPOSED TO WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD FROM OTHERS AND THE MEDIA?

Have you ever wondered why a nun can be covered from head to toe and she is respected for devoting herself to God, but when a Muslim woman covers, she is viewed as "oppressed"? Or why a Jewish man can grow a beard and he's just practising his faith, and when a Muslim does that, he is an "extremist"?

People in the West seem to have many misconceptions about Muslims and Islam. Many believe that the Western world is advanced, enlightened and liberated, while Islam is just the opposite: primitive, ignorant and oppressed. One reason for this belief is that the media has time and again portrayed the Muslims in a way contrary to Islamic teachings.

The key to understanding Islam and Muslims is to resist stereotypes and examine each situation according to Islamic teachings, and NOT some Muslims' actions. For this reason, we have felt it our duty to address the most common misconceptions.

1. MUSLIMS DO NOT SHARE GOOD AND NOBLE VALUES WITH NON-MUSLIMS

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, 'The best among you are those who have the best manners and character'. (Reported by Al-Bukhari).. Muslims cherish noble and universal values, such as:

- Allowing freedom of religion.
- Being honest and just.
- Keeping one's word.
- Respecting parents, neighbours, relatives and the elderly.
- Not lying, cheating, swearing or backbiting.
- Being charitable, generous and looking after the poor and needy.

Muslims are required to contribute positively towards society and to conduct themselves with the highest morals and the best of actions.

2. HIJAB IS OPPRESSIVE

So what exactly is hijab? To observe hijab, Muslim women are required to cover their bodies with modest clothing that does not reveal their figure in front of unrelated men. Hijab is not only about outer appearance; it also includes noble speech, modest behaviour, and righteous manners, and these are required of men as well. It goes without saying that these manners are also required of men.

There is nothing in hijab that restricts a Muslim woman's freedom to express her views and opinions, to own property, to have an education and a career, or to choose a husband.

The reason Muslim women observe hijab is simply because Allah (God) made it a compulsory act of worship for them, and Allah knows what is best for His creation. The hijab gives women the freedom to be active members of society, while maintaining their modesty. Hijab is primarily for public life, and women do not have to observe it in the same way when they are at home with their immediate family.

The hijab does not symbolize suppression, oppression or silence. Rather, it is a shield guarding against degrading remarks, unwanted advances and unfair discrimination. Of all converts to Islam, 75% are women! Would you enter a religion that oppresses you? So the next time you see a Muslim woman, know that she covers her physical appearance, not her mind or intellect.

O Children of Adam! We (God) have bestowed clothing upon you to cover yourselves and as an adornment (for beauty); and the clothing of righteousness – that is best. Qur'an (7:26).

The hijab is an act of honour and dignity, an empowerment, and a guarantee that a woman will be judged according to her inner spiritual beauty rather than her outer superficial appearance. The hijab liberates and raises a woman's status, and demands that she be judged according to her intellect rather than her sexuality.

"O Prophet, tell your wives and daughters and the believing women to draw their outer garments around them (when they go out or are among men). That is better in order that they may be known (to be chaste women) and not abused..."
Qur'an (33:59).

3. MUSLIMS WORSHIP A NEW GOD CALLED ALLAH

Some non-Muslims incorrectly believe that Muslims worship a different God than Jews and Christians. This might be due to the fact that Muslims sometimes refer to God as "Allah". In actuality, Muslims worship the God of Noah, Abraham, Moses and Prophet Eesa (Jesus). The word "Allah" is simply the Arabic word for Almighty God - an Arabic word of rich meaning, denoting the one and only God.

Allah is also the same word that Arabic speaking Christians and Jews use to refer to God. If you pick up an Arabic translation of the Christian Bible, you will see the word "Allah" where "God" is used in English.

However, although Muslims, Jews, and Christians believe in the same Creator, their concepts of Him differ. Muslims reject the idea of God having any partners or being part of a trinity, and they ascribe perfection only to the Almighty. Islam is merely a continuation of the same message that was revealed to all the previous Prophets.

4. ISLAM DOES NOT PERMIT FORCED MARRIAGES

Arranged marriages are cultural practices which are predominant in certain countries throughout the world. In Islam both men and

women have the right to choose or reject their potential spouse and a marriage is considered null and void if a woman's genuine approval is not taken prior to the marriage.

Did You Know? Muslim women played a pioneering role in spreading the message of Islam and one of the greatest Muslim female scholars was the Prophet's wife Aishah (May Allah Be Pleased With Her). Her legal rulings in Islamic law are still followed today.

Muslims also believe Allah sent special people to this world to teach His message of submission, worship and peace. They are known as prophets; some of them are Adam, Noah, Jacob, Abraham, Ishmael, Jonah, John the Baptist, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) and Muhammad (peace Be Upon Them All).

5. THE HOLY BOOK OF MUSLIMS 'QURAN' IS ANOTHER HISTORY OR RELIGIOUS BOOK

Muslims believe the Qur'an is the divine, literal word of Almighty God, revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through Archangel Gabriel. It is a criterion for the truth and contains guidance for humanity.

The Qur'an cites lessons from previous generations and the history of the Prophets in order that we may learn from their experiences. It further teaches us about ourselves and our Creator as well as the purpose of our existence which is to acknowledge God and to worship him alone. Muslims believe the Qur'an contains many scientific miracles from information about embryology to the universe.

6. JIHAD IS TERRORISM

The essence of Jihad is to struggle and sacrifice for one's religion in a manner which is pleasing to God. Linguistically, it means to 'struggle' and can refer to one's striving to do good deeds, give charity or join an Islamic military action. The most commonly known form is the military Jihad which is permitted in order to

preserve the wellbeing of society, to prevent oppression from spreading and to promote justice. This can be either defensive or pre-emptive depending on the circumstances and guidance from the religious authority.

7. ALL MUSLIMS ARE ARAB

There are more than 2 billion Muslims around the world, and only around 20% of them are Arabs. Islam teaches that an individual is not superior to another because of race or colour and is strictly against any form of racism. Islam has a universal message for all mankind. Everyone can gain peace and success only by acknowledging and worshipping the One True God, Allah.

8. ISLAM FORCES PEOPLE TO BECOME MUSLIM

God mentions in the Qur'an "Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth has been made clear from error" Qur'an (2:256)

No one can be compelled or forced to accept Islam. It is an individual choice and decision. To accept Islam, a person must sincerely and voluntarily believe and obey God.

9. MUSLIMS DON'T BELIEVE IN OTHER PROPHETS

In order for an individual to call themselves a Muslim, one has to believe in all the Prophets sent by Allah (God) to this world.

Muslims believe there were 124,000 Prophets sent for guidance such as Adam, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, John the Baptist, Enoch (Idris), Lot (Lut), Moses, Aaron, Solomon, Prophet Eesa (Jesus) & Muhammad (peace be upon them all).

10. WHY DO SOME MUSLIM ATHLETES PROSTRATE AFTER SUCCESS?

We have probably seen many Muslim athletes prostrate after achieving some success. The act of prostration in Muslim prayer is called 'Sajda'. It is one of the most powerful and beautiful expressions of worship in Islam. It is simple in form, yet profound in meaning.

It is about placing the highest part of one's body (forehead) on the lowest part of the earth (ground) out of full, wilful submission and love for one's Creator.

During sajda, a Muslim places their forehead, nose, palms, knees, and toes on the ground. The highest part of the body touches the lowest surface of the earth. In that moment, status disappears. Wealth disappears. Ego disappears. What remains is a human being in complete humility before their Creator.

Muslims perform sajda as taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). He described prostration as the moment when a servant is closest to God. "It is not merely a physical movement; it is a declaration of surrender, trust, and love.



The Spiritual Beauty of Prostration

Prostration (sajda) is the ultimate symbol of submission. No position expresses humility more completely. The act silently says:

"My intellect, my pride, my power, all belong to You (Allah)."

In a world that constantly encourages self-exaltation and competition, prostration teaches the opposite: humility, gratitude, and awareness of one's dependence on God.

Many Muslims describe prostration (sajda) as the most peaceful part of prayer. It is often the moment when tears fall, worries are released, and personal supplications are whispered.

Spiritual Benefits

1. **Deepened Connection with God (Allah)**
Prostration creates a powerful sense of closeness and sincerity. It slows the mind and softens the heart.
2. **Purification of ego:** placing the forehead on the ground regularly weakens arrogance. It trains the soul toward humility.

3. **Emotional Relief** Prostration (sajda) becomes a safe space for expressing fears, hopes, gratitude, and pain. Many find it deeply therapeutic.
4. **Discipline and Mindfulness** The repetition of prostration throughout the five daily prayers builds spiritual consistency and awareness.

Psychological and Physical Benefits

Though prostration (sujud) is primarily spiritual, it also has secondary benefits:

- Encourages blood flow toward the head
- Gently stretches the back, shoulders, and neck
- Promotes calm breathing
- Reduces stress by inducing a meditative state

The rhythm of standing, bowing, and prostrating creates a structured, grounding routine throughout the day.





A Universal Human Gesture

Across cultures and history, prostration has symbolized reverence and surrender. In Islamic understanding, Prophet Musa (Moses) and Prophet Eesa (Jesus) (peace be upon them) are described as bowing or falling in prayer. Islam preserves this ancient form of devotion in its purest monotheistic form.

The Deeper Meaning

Although a person can prostrate and say whatever they like. During the prayer, a Muslim utters certain supplications, such as, Subhana Rabbi al-Ala ("Glory be to my Lord, the Most High"), there is a beautiful paradox:

The servant is at their lowest physically while glorifying the One who is the Most High.

In that contrast lies the secret of prostration (sajda): True elevation comes through humility, submission and letting go of one's ego.

Prostration is not weakness. It is strength directed toward the Divine. It is not humiliation. It is honour through surrender.

And for millions of Muslims around the world, it remains the most intimate, peaceful, and transformative moment of their day.



11. TO CHOOSE OR NOT TO CHOOSE?

One may ask: what is the need to follow a religion, and why Islam in particular?

Choosing to believe in one God and to live your life as a Muslim is not merely adopting a label, it is embracing a worldview built on clarity, purpose, and accountability.

At the heart of Islam is belief: the belief in the

absolute oneness of God. This belief offers a powerful simplicity: there is one Creator, one ultimate authority, one source of truth. No intermediaries. No divided loyalties. Our worship, hope, fear and love are directed to the One who created us, sustains us, and knows us better than we know ourselves. That unity brings inner alignment, our heart, mind, and actions revolving around a single, unshakable center.

Islam, as taught in the Qur'an and exemplified by Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him, presents life as meaningful and intentional. We are not an accident of the universe. We were created with dignity and responsibility. Every action carries weight. Every hardship carries wisdom. Every good deed echoes into eternity. This perspective transforms suffering into patience, success into gratitude, and daily routines into acts of worship.

Living as a Muslim structures our life with discipline and balance. The five daily prayers anchor our day. Fasting teaches self-control. Charity purifies wealth. Pilgrimage connects us to a global brotherhood and sisterhood that transcends race, status, and nationality. Islam does not separate the spiritual from the practical, it integrates faith into work, family, ethics, and social justice.

Belief in one God also liberates us from serving lesser "gods" such as wealth, status, ego and societal pressure. When we submit to the Creator alone, we are freed from being enslaved by creation. Our worth is not measured by trends or applause, but by sincerity and righteousness.

Finally, Islam offers certainty in a world of confusion. When looking at the principles, guidelines and actions one comes to the conclusion, 'ISLAM' makes sense. It answers the deepest questions:

- Why am I here? To know and worship God.
- What is right and wrong? Defined by divine guidance.
- What happens after death?
Accountability and eternal justice.

To accept one God and live as a Muslim is to choose coherence over chaos, purpose over randomness, and submission to the Most Merciful over submission to fleeting desires. It is a commitment to live consciously, ethically, and in constant awareness that your life has eternal significance.

In the end, believing in one God brings benefit to the whole community. It has a positive effect on society and helps create a God and Hereafter centric mindset. This, in turn, helps to build a more just society.

CONCLUSION

Research the Islamic faith for yourself, as opposed to what you have heard from others and the media. Order your copy of the Qur'an and a book on Islam today and Book on Islam today from www.freequrans.co.uk

A PERSONAL INVITATION

Throughout this guide, you have read about Islam, its beliefs, its message and the life of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). But the most important question is not simply what Islam teaches, but rather:

What will you do with the message now that you have heard it?

The most important decision a person can make in life is to recognise their Creator and worship Him alone. It begins with a sincere declaration of faith.

If you believe that there is only One Creator who deserves to be worshipped, and that Muhammad is His Messenger, then you already understand the message of Islam. Becoming a Muslim is simple.

Islam teaches that God is Merciful, Forgiving and Always Ready to accept those who turn to Him sincerely. The Qur'an says:

"Say, O My servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins."
Qur'an (39:53)

Becoming Muslim does not require a ceremony or a priest. It begins with a sincere belief in your heart and declaring the Testimony of Faith:

"There is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

If you believe this sincerely, you can say it right now. By doing so, you enter Islam and begin a new relationship with your Creator.

The Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him said:
"Islam erases what came before it." (Sahih Muslim)

This means every past sin is forgiven and you begin with a completely clean slate.

CONTINUE YOUR JOURNEY

If you would like help learning more about Islam or taking your Shahadah, we would be honoured to help you.

You can:

- Ask questions about Islam
- Speak privately with someone who can guide you
- Arrange to take your Shahadah
- Request a free copy of the Qur'an

VISIT

www.freequrans.co.uk

Request a free Qur'an delivered to your home.

www.becomemuslim.com

Learn how to become Muslim and arrange a call with a member of our team.

www.exploreislam.co.uk

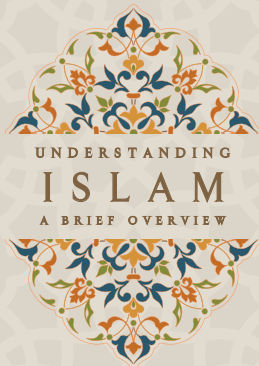
Access answers to common questions about Islam.

A FINAL THOUGHT

Life is short and uncertain. The Qur'an reminds us:

"Every soul will taste death." Qur'an (3:185)

But the message of Islam offers hope, purpose and a direct relationship with the One who created you. The door to Islam is always open. Perhaps today is the day you take the first step.



"Understanding Islam" is an insightful and accessible brochure that offers readers a brief overview of the Islamic faith. Authored by a team of scholars with deep expertise in Islamic studies, this brochure delves into the core beliefs, practices, and frequently asked questions. It provides a balanced and nuanced portrayal of one of the world's major religions, catering to both newcomers seeking an introduction to Islam and those looking to deepen their understanding.



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