

History of Islam

BS Foad, M.D.

2006

Islam is the religion of all God's prophets

Islam means willful submission to God, thereby attaining inner peace

All of God's prophets submitted to God, therefore the Qur'an regard them as Muslims

Religion to God is one religion, for there is only One God Who sent us Divine revelation and messengers to guide us to His way

Abraham was a Muslim

“ O people of the Book why dispute about Abraham, when the Torah and Gospel were not revealed till after him? Have you no understanding?

Al-Imran 3 : 75

“ Abraham was not a Jew nor a Christian, but he was devout and submitted his will to God in Islam, he joined not other gods with God “

Al-Imran 3 : 67

All god's prophets taught the same message : serve God

“ Not a messenger did We send before you (O Muhammad) without the inspiration sent by Us to him: “ that there is no god but I, therefore worship and serve Me “

Al-Anbia'a 21 : 25

Prophets represent a continuous process of enlightenment to mankind

“ The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah, the which We have inspired to you, and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses and Jesus: namely that you should remain steadfast in religion and make no divisions therein”

Ash-Shura' 42 : 13

Muslims believe in all God's prophets

The Qur'an mentions 25 Messengers, including five major ones:

- Noah
- Abraham
- Moses
- Jesus
- Muhammad

Islam, Christianity and Judaism are Monotheistic religions

The prophets that represent these three main religions are descendants of Abraham:

- * Moses
- * Jesus
- * Muhammad

God looks at your intentions and deeds, not your face or money

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said :

(God looks not at your face or possession, but looks at your heart and deeds)

Muslim

* The heart represent our intention or motive; and our deeds are either good or bad

What makes our deeds acceptable?

1- Our intention or motivation must be good: to please God, not for personal glory

2- Our deeds must be good: to help and serve others

A charity to help the poor and needy is only acceptable if the motive was selfless, not for fame or recognition

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)

- Was an Arab: therefore the Qur'an inspired to him was an Arabic Qur'an
- Was sent as a universal messenger to all mankind
- He is the last of God's prophets, and the Qur'an is God's last divine revelation
- His teachings and life story are alive

Sources of knowledge and rulings in Islam

- 1- The Qur'an: God's literal words, safe-guarded from alteration
- 2-The Sunnah (tradition of Prophet Muhammad) : his sayings, actions and what he approved as God's messenger

Prophet Muhammad noble character

- He was truthful & trustworthy
- He was wise
- He was kind & forgiving and never sought revenge for himself
- He patiently persevered despite abuse and rejection
- He was a great teacher

Prophet Muhammad's plan for the Muslim society in Madinah

- The Muslims are brothers one to another, helping each other: shifting the economic burden from the state to individuals
- The mosque is the focal point of activity: education, planning, governance..
- Muslims & Jews rights are to be safeguarded

The prophet's mission

- Deliver God's message
- Explain the message
- Apply the message
- Serve as an example
- Teach and spread useful knowledge

We need both a divine message
and the human example to follow

“ How would you reject faith while the
signs of God are being rehearsed to
you, and among you lives His
messenger? ”

Al-Imran 3 : 101

Basic beliefs in Islam

- 1- Belief in one God
- 2- Belief that we are accountable to Him
- 3- Belief in God's angels
- 4- Belief in God's messengers
- 5- Belief in God's divine Books
- 6- Belief that God controls our destiny

Belief in God

- God created us and provides for us
- We are accountable to Him: there is a Day of Judgment
- God is forgiving & merciful
- God guides us to His way
- God responds to our prayers
- We cannot hide anything from God

We know God as He described Himself & through His creation

1- God described Himself in the Qur'an in attributes of perfection

2- We see evidence of God all around us and within ourselves

“ We will show them our signs in the universe and within themselves till the truth becomes clear to them”

Fusselat 41 : 53

After we die God will resurrect us on the Day of Judgment

Man argues about resurrection:

“ And he makes comparisons for us,
and forgets his own origin and
creation: he says: “ Who can give life
to dry and decomposed bones? “
Say: “ He will give them life Who
created them for the first time, for
He fully knows all creation”

Yasin 36 : 78 & 79

The Hereafter

- Eternal
- We will have whatever our hearts desire
- No sadness, sorrow, weariness or boredom
- Mansions with rivers flowing beneath
- We will see God in the Hereafter

How to become a Muslim?

By saying Shahada (Decree of faith):
“ I Bear witness that there is no god but Allah the One and only God; and I bear witness that Muhammad (PBUH) is God’s messenger and servant)

Rituals of worship in Islam

- 1- Prayer
- 2- Zakat (obligatory charity)
- 3- Fasting Ramadan
- 4- Hajj (pilgrimage to Macca)

Every day of our life is worshipping and serving God

Every activity in our daily life is an act of worship to God if it encompasses two main objectives:

1- The deed is good

2- Our intention is to please God

* Being honest at work; or being kind and helpful to others is an act of worship, no less than prayers or fasting

Prayer in Islam is structured

- Muslims pray five obligatory prayers every day and night: Dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset & night prayers
- Three phases: standing, bowing & prostration
- Only the Arabic Qur'an is acceptable
- We pray as Prophet Muhammad taught us how to pray

Du'a is calling on God or asking Him for guidance & forgiveness

Du'a is not prayer, and we can use our own words when we call on God

We are ordered to call on God

God hears our calls and responds to us

We should not lose faith or become impatient and say: " I called on You Lord but You did not answer me"

Fasting in Islam

- Muslims fast the month of Ramadan
- Fasting from dawn to sunset: no food or drink or intimate relations
- The idea is to learn self-control and refrain from what is wrong, and get closer to God
- We should not lie or cheat or be dishonest, otherwise our fast is not accepted

The concept of Zakat

- There is a right for the poor and needy in the wealth of the rich
- We purify our souls from greed
- Our money does not decrease when we give in charity
- The money circulates and the community benefits
- All our wealth actually belongs to God, we only have temporary use

Abortion

- Abortion is forbidden in Islam except for saving the life of the mother
- The soul begins after 40 days
- Life is sacred and cannot be taken away except for a legitimate cause
- Birth control can be practiced

Life is sacred

“ If anyone kills a soul unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief on earth, it would be like killing all mankind; and if anyone saves a soul, it would be as if he saved all of mankind”

Al-Maeda 5 : 32

What distinguishes Islam from other religions ?

- 1- The Qur'an has been safeguarded from alteration
- 2- The Qur'an is God's last Divine revelation
- 3- It has guidelines that are applicable at all times
- 4- Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent to all mankind

What distinguishes Islam from other religions

- The Qur'an addresses our physical and spiritual needs as human beings and talks to our hearts and minds
- Islam is a religion of moderation, not excesses
- Islam respects and safeguards the beliefs of others
- There is a difference between Islam: God's religion, and Muslims who are human beings and fall short

Misconceptions about Islam

- Jihad is holy war
- Women are inferior to men
- Islam is at war with non-Muslims
- Islam force non-Muslims to become Muslims against their will
- Islam is not applicable in a western society

Jihad in Islam

- Jihad means active struggle
- It involves mainly Jihad to control our vain desires
- It involves struggling to obey God's commands and fight Satan and his whispers and evil suggestions
- It involves explaining the truth and exposing falsehood & prejudice
- Fighting is only allowed for self-defense

Fighting in Islam

- Fighting is only allowed to defend ourselves, our families or our country against aggression
- Fighting to advance a personal agenda is not Jihad
- No killing of women, children, the elderly or innocent bystanders and no destruction of property
- Offers of peace must be accepted

Muslims were allowed to fight to protect their faith and state

“ Permission (to fight) is granted to those against whom war made, because they are wronged, and indeed God is most-powerful for their aid. Those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, for no just cause except that they say: ` Our Lord is God”

Al-Hajj 22 : 39 & 40

Do not commit aggression

“ And fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not commit aggression, for God loves not aggressors”

Al-Baqara 2 : 190

Muslims do not force others to accept Islam against their will

“ If it had been your Lord’s will they would all have believed, all who are on earth! Will you then compel mankind to believe against their will ! ”

Yunus 10 : 99

Argue with the people of the Book in the best possible way

“ Dispute not with the people of the Book except in the best way, unless it be with those who do wrong, but say: “ We believe in the revelation sent to us, and in that sent to you, our God and your God is One, and to Him we submit in Islam “

Al-Ankabut 29 : 46

The problem of poverty and world hunger

God provided for mankind plenty of resources: it is up to us to use them and distribute this wealth fairly

There is a right for the poor and needy in the wealth of the rich

Those who are powerful and wealthy should not use that power to enslave the poor and weak

We are accountable for our money

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

(When man dies he must account for 4 areas:

- 1- His whole life what did he do with it
- 2- His youth when he was creative did he use it or abuse it
- 3- His money: how did he earn it and how did he spend it
- 4- His knowledge: did he keep it to himself or spread useful knowledge

We only have temporary use of our money: we cannot take it with us

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

Three things go with the dead person: two of them return and only one thing stay with him in his grave: His family, money and deeds go with him; his family and money leave him and only his deeds (good or bad) stay with him)

We only have temporary use of our money: it actually belongs to God

Those who spend when the need is great are rewarded more:

“ How come you do not spend in the cause of Allah, for to Allah belongs the heritage of the heavens and earth. Not equal among you are those who spent and fought before the victory, they are higher in rank than those who spent and fought afterwards. To both Allah promised a goodly reward, for He knows well all that you do” Al-Hadeed 57 : 10

Homosexuality

- We can control homosexual tendency or impulse
- Homosexual behavior is forbidden in Islam: the people of Lut were punished for their wrong deeds
- Prejudice against homosexuals is wrong, and their rights as human beings should be safeguarded
- The idea that a person is born as a homosexual and cannot control himself, but then God is punishing him /her for their wrong behavior does not make sense

Homosexuals

- If they choose to follow this activity, then they are responsible and accountable for their choice
- They should not force their opinion on others or expect others to agree with them; in the same way they should not be singled out or be subject to prejudice or ridicule
- Influencing kids to follow their pattern of behavior is morally wrong

Noble character

The Qur'an tells us that God loves :

- The Righteous
- Those who do good & help others
- Who patiently persevere
- Who are truthful

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is our example of noble character

“ Indeed you are on an exalted
standard of character and morals ”

Al-Qalam 68 : 4

“ It is part of the mercy of Allah that you
deal gently with them; were you severe or
harsh-hearted they would have broken
away from about you: so pass over their
faults and seek Allah’s forgiveness for
them and consult them in your mutual
affairs” Al-Imran 3 : 159

The signs of a hypocrite

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

(The signs of a hypocrite are three:
when he talks, he lies; and when
makes a promise, he does not keep
it; and when he is entrusted, he is
not faithful to his trust)

Bokhari & Muslim

Important dates in a Muslim year

Muslims follow the Lunar calendar

There are 12 months: 29 or 30 days each, thus it is 10-12 days shorter than the Solar calendar

Two feasts (Eid): one following Ramadan (the month of fasting), and a feast on the day of sacrifice during Hajj (pilgrimage)

Ramadan is the 9th lunar month: Muslims fast 29 or 30 days from dawn till sunset

The best amongst you are those who are best to their families

Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

(The best amongst you are those who
are best to their families; and I am
the best to my family)

(Those closest to me on the Day of
Judgment are those of noble
character & best to their families)