

# ISLAM AND THE MUSLIM WAY OF LIFE

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## BRIEF NOTE

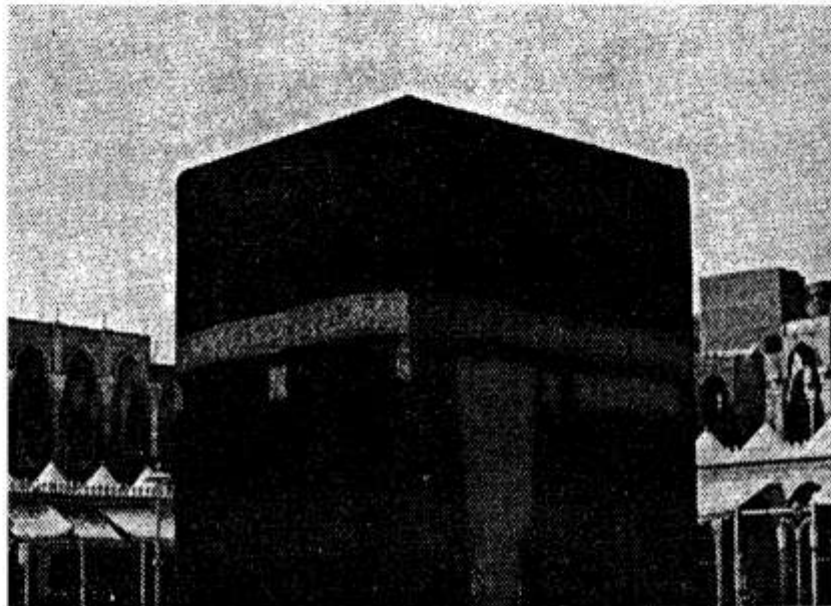
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ISLAM  
and the  
MUSLIM WAY  
OF  
LIFE

a  
brief note



**Muslim Educational Trust**

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**(Registered with the Dept. of Education & Science as an Educational Charity)**

# ISLAM and the MUSLIM WAY OF LIFE

## 1. Islam

- (a) *Meaning*: Islam means obedience and peace. It is acceptance of God and following His Commands. The real success in this life and the life after death is in obeying God. It is obedience to the Will of God which brings peace to individuals and society. Islam is, therefore, a message to people to obey God and live in peace and happiness in both the Worlds.
- (b) *Its characteristics as a Religion*:
- (i) It is the last of the chain of revealed religions, confirming and completing the religious tradition established by the Apostles of God.
  - (ii) It is a complete way of life, covering all aspects of individual and social life.
  - (iii) It has a universal message, embracing peoples belonging to all races, colours, nationalities and regions.

## 2. Basic Teachings of Islam

**Tauheed (Unity of God)** that God is One and Only One.

- (a) **Concept of Allah (God)**  
He is Allah, the One and Only; the Eternal, Absolute. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him. There is no deity but He; the most Merciful, most Gracious. All praise be to Him.
- (b) **His Attributes**  
He knows all things, both secret and open; He is the Creator of all things; the Bestower of Forms and Colours. He is High above the partners the polytheists attribute to Him. He is Light of the heavens and the earth and doth guide whom He pleaseth to His Light. He causeth the seed-grain and the date-stone to split and sprout; He causeth the living to issue from the dead, and the dead to issue from the living. He cleaveth the daybreak from the dark, and the night for rest. It is He Who sendeth down rain from the skies and produces vegetation of all kinds. To Him is due the primal origin of the heavens and the earth. How can He have a son when He hath no consort? He Created all things, and He hath full knowledge of all things.
- (c) **Man's Obligation to God**
- (i) *Ibadah (Worship)*: Adore your Lord, Who created you and those who came before you, that you may walk the road of righteousness.
  - (ii) *Obedience*: Man like other creation

must obey his Creator and submit his affairs completely to the Will of God.

- (iii) *Love*: Remember God and He will remember you for He loves those who do good.
- (iv) *Thanksgiving*: If you are grateful to God, and you must be, He will add more favours unto you.

## 3. Prophethood

God sent His Messengers to different peoples at different times for their guidance. They were the excellent example for men of their age to follow.

A Muslim believes in all the Messengers of God, including famous Apostles like Noah, Ibrahim, Moses, Jesus and the last Apostle Mohammad.

Mohammad, the last of the chain of Messengers, is an excellent model for the people of the modern World to follow.

## 4. Belief in Divine Guidance

A Muslim believes that God always sent His Messengers and His Books for human guidance. Mohammad is the last of the Messengers and the Qur'an is the last of the Books of God after Torah and Injil contained in the Old and New Testament. It is the only Book which exists today in its original form.

## 5. Day of Judgement

The hour will come and there is no doubt about it, or about the fact that God will raise up all who are in the graves. It is high time that man should prepare himself for the Day when none shall avail another; no intercession shall save him, no compensation shall be taken from him, nor shall there be any power to offer help from outside.

## 6. The Five Pillars of Islam

- (a) *Creed*: A Muslim believes in One God (Tauheed).
- (b) *Prayer*: He offers his prayer five times a day and a weekly prayer on Friday.
- (c) *Fasting during Ramadhan*: He observes fasting during the Islamic Month, Ramadhan, the month during which revelation of the Qur'an began and was completed.
- (d) *Pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca*: Once in life if one is able to undertake the journey, physically and financially.
- (e) *Zakat (Poor-Due)*: A Muslim has to pay a compulsory payment of 2½% on all his

annual savings. It is not a tax but an act Ibadah (prayer) like Salah.

## 7. The Muslim Way of Life

(a) *Culture*: Major cultural manifestations of the Muslims are:

(i) Festivals:

(a) Eid-al-Fitr. It is celebrated at the end of the month of fasting as a token of thanksgiving to the Almighty God. All Muslims, men and women (it is desirable that women and children should also join in the Eid celebrations) gather together to offer prayer to thank their Lord for the happy ending of the month of Ramadhan. Thereafter, they go home and invite their relatives and friends to parties.

(b) Eid-al-Adha: It is celebrated one day after the Annual Day of Pilgrimage (Hajj at Arafat near Mecca) all over the Muslim World to commemorate the Grand sacrifice by the Apostle Ibrahim of his son Ismael. Again the Muslims offer prayer as a token of thanks to their Lord before any celebrations. Then they sacrifice lambs, goats, cows, camels etc. The meat is divided into three parts: one part is distributed among the poor, the other among relatives, neighbours and friends and the third part is utilized at home to fete relatives and friends.

(c) Eid-i-Milad: Celebrations to mark the birthday of the Holy Messenger, Mohammad.

(d) Ashura: People remember this day for Hussain, the grandson of the Holy Messenger, who was mercilessly killed by the enemies.

(e) Jume-tul-Wida: It is the last Friday during the month of Ramadhan. Muslims gather together in large numbers in mosques to offer their prayers in congregation.

(ii) Architecture and Calligraphy.

(iii) Language, Literature and Poetry.

(b) *Birth*: When a baby is born in a Muslim family, the first message for him is tauheed. The Azan is made near the ears of the baby. Then after seven days Aqeeqah is celebrated. A lamb (two lambs in the case of a boy) is sacrificed and all relatives and friends are invited to aqeeqah party.

(c) *Marriage*

(i) Marriage is a solemn contract in Islam. It requires: (1) Agreement of both the

girl and the boy; (2) Mehr (dower money) is guaranteed or paid in cash by the man to the wife; (3) There must be at least two witnesses to the marriage ceremony, and (4) The ceremony must be publicised.

(ii) When the bridegroom takes the bride to his home, next day he gives waleemah party to all his relatives and friends.

(d) *Death*

The deceased is given a complete wash and then wrapped in a clean and pure cloth. Funeral prayer is offered for the deceased by the Muslims (men only) in congregation and finally the dead body is buried, the sooner the better.

(e) *Dress*

Muslim men and women are required to wear dress to cover their bodies properly and decently. Women and girls are required to cover themselves from head to foot, leaving only the face and hands uncovered.

(f) *Food and Drink*

All good and pure things are lawful for Muslims except the following four things: (1) dead-meat; (2) blood; (3) the flesh of swine; and (4) the meat of the animal slaughtered in the name of any one other than God. Besides, all kinds of spirits and wines are prohibited. All other pure and good animals, except beasts, which are slaughtered in due form are lawful.

(g) *Worship*

A Muslim worships and obeys the One God, Allah. He can offer his prayers to Him in the mosque, at home, or any other place which is convenient provided the place is clean and pure.

(h) *Priesthood*

There is no priesthood in Islam and no titles for religious officials like that of Christianity and Judaism. Anyone, who knows Qur'an, can lead the prayer. The one who leads the prayer is called Imam, the leader.

(i) *Mosque*

It is not merely a central place for worship but also a centre of all their activities, be they social, religious, political, or educational. It is an educational institution for the young; a youth centre for the grown ups and a community centre for all the Muslims.

(j) *Manners*

Muslims are required to behave decently in social gatherings, in the mosques, and at home. They are enjoined to be humble and not to walk with pride, nor look down upon

other men. They are advised to be moderate in all things. When a courteous greeting is offered, a Muslim is enjoined to meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or at least with equal courtesy. When they gather together they are asked to give place to others and to lower their voices.

(k) **Social Ethics**

The believers are a single brotherhood. They are all equal. They are therefore enjoined to treat others with respect. Mutual ridicule with arrogance or malice, defamation, sarcasm or calling by offensive nicknames or suspicion, or back-biting etc., are all unlawful in an Islamic society. All mankind is created from a single pair without any distinction of colour, race, or nation. The most honoured in the sight of God is he who is the most righteous among them. Believers are asked not to enter other people's houses without permission. When permission is granted, they should enter and salute each other. They are enjoined to treat with kindness their parents and relatives, orphans and those in need and speak fair to the people. Help one another in righteousness and piety. To each is a goal to which he turns but Muslims strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good and virtuous. "Be just, that is next to piety. Stand out firmly as witness to fair dealings and let not the hatred of others make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. And if you judge, judge in equity between people. Whenever you speak, speak justly, even if it is against your own self or your near relatives." (Al-Quran Suhas, 5/6).

(l) **Economic Relationship**

For Muslims, righteousness is not confined to the outward observance and forms of worship merely. Offering financial assistance to the relatives, orphans and the needy for the pleasure of God is also a great act of Righteousness and Piety.

(m) **Sex Manners**

Islam refers to the wonderful mystery of sex relationship which must be respected and enjoyed with dignity and honour but without shame and obscenity.

God has created man in pairs and put love and mercy in their hearts, so that they may live in peace and happiness with their mates. The relationship between man and woman is for their mutual support, benefit, comfort, pleasure and protection. Both must respect and honour each other's feelings, views, desires and aspirations and try to accommodate each other on the broader principle of 'give and take'.

(n) All men and women are children of Adam and Eve and are therefore equal before God. They are equal but dissimilar, and are equipped for different functions in life.

**8. Muslims in Britain**

During the last 25 years the Muslim community in Great Britain has grown into a sizeable proportion of the total population. There are different estimates but no reliable statistics. According to the Muslims, their population is between  $\frac{1}{2}$  million to one million. Eric Butterworth puts the number at a  $\frac{1}{2}$  million. Unofficial estimates make it 1.5 millions, with 150,000 Muslims living in London alone.

Muslims are a distinct religious and cultural group with long established traditions. Their cultural norms and values are deeply rooted in their religion. Above all, they are eager to protect, preserve and further develop their distinct ideological and cultural character.

According to Roy Jenkins, the former Home Secretary, a really integrated society can be founded on the principle of religious and cultural co-existence and of tolerance and co-operation between different groups, and not by supplanting or ignoring minority religious and cultural entities.

**9. Muslims in the World**

Muslims are spread all over the world, with 36 independent states and seven protectorates in the Gulf states. Total area of independent Muslim states is 9.5 million square miles with 540 million population.

There are  $\frac{1}{2}$  million Muslims in France and Germany,  $\frac{1}{2}$  million in Greece, 2 million in Albania, 2.5 million in Yugoslavia,  $\frac{1}{2}$  million in Bulgaria  $\frac{1}{2}$  million in U.S.A., exclusive of Black Muslims, 100,000 in South America, 20 million in African countries where they are in minority, 60 million in India, 50 million in China, 30 million in U.S.S.R., 136,000 in West Indies, 4 million in Kashmir, 1.7 million in Palestine, and 2.8 million in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cyprus, Philippines and Quamar Islands.

Total Muslim population in the world is about 700 million.

**10. Further Reading:**

- (a) Towards Understanding Islam by A. A. Maudoodi; price 70p.
- (b) Islam and the World by Syed A. H. A. Nadvi, Price 40p.
- (c) Islam the Misunderstood Religion by Syed Mohammad Qutb, Price 130p.

Note: 1. Set of Zenth price 50p; by post 70p.  
2. Set of pictures of Muslim Architecture, Mosques, price 25p; by post 35p.  
3. Calligraphy price 25p; by post 35p.  
4. Books on Islam and its cultural aspect can be supplied on order.