

A Quick and Easy Introduction to Islam

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1 - Does God exist?

The answer to this question may become clear if we think about the following:

Are you in this world for a reason?

It is surprising how many people have no idea why they are in this world, or why they were born. Yet, if we ask why they are in the specific place in the world at this moment, they will have a rational answer. The reason most people have no clue about the purpose of their existence is that such an answer cannot be discovered by human experience or by scientific experiments. Our Creator told us why we were born. His scriptural revelations over time have emphasized that He created us to receive His mercy through

our attachment to Him in humble devotion. The Qur'an tells us that God created us to worship Him and to receive His mercy.

Is there really a God?

Since ancient times, philosophers have shown good reasons to believe that God exists.

First, it seems that the universe had to have a cause of its existence. It is our common experience that we do not get something for nothing. We also know that nothing comes from nothing. The fact that our universe exists, calls for an explanation and the best explanation seems to be that it is due to a powerful and knowledgeable force.

Second, wherever we look we see things which appear to be designed to work precisely. Many of these things we know are

designed by humans. If someone were to show us something working as if it was designed to work that way, our natural inference is that it has an intelligent designer. We know, for example, that in order for a watch to tell the time, it must have been designed to work the way it does. Surely, nature itself seems to be designed to work in a particular way. Our ecosystem, for example, is finely balanced, and it is our upsetting of that fine balance that now imperils our very existence. The fine-tuning of the ecosystem before we began burning trees seems, then, to have been perfectly balanced to ensure our existence in the first place.

But who was there to perform this fine balancing act? It seems that the best explanation for the earlier state of our

ecosystem is that it was designed by its Creator to work that way. This means that the Creator must have been a willing, deliberate, conscious and intelligent being. Third, most people will agree that humans have a sense that things are either right or wrong. This is different from saying that some actions lead to beneficial results and that some other actions lead to harmful consequences. We know that murder, rape, and molesting a child are terrible acts. We have a conscience that says to us that such actions are simply wrong, and if someone cannot see that these actions are wrong, something must be wrong with that person. When we complain of injustice in the world, we are not measuring the situation in terms of who is better at surviving, but in terms of who is doing the right thing and who is

responsible for such injustice. But where does this moral sense come from?

The philosopher, Tom Morris, in his book *Philosophy for Dummies*, writes that there are basically two possible explanations for this moral sense that we have. One possibility is that we received it through centuries of socio-biological evolution and the other possibility is that God created us with such a conscience. According to Mr. Morris, the first answer is not a complete one. Socio-biological evolution will tend to develop in people the sense of surviving at all costs, even if it means exterminating others in the process, but most of us believe that this would be wrong. We do not consider it good for someone to rise in success if this means stepping on others along the way. Hence, out of two possible explanations for the origin of

our moral sense, one is already eliminated. This leaves us with the other: that God made us that way. This latter answer is complete. If God really made us this way, then that would explain why we have a conscience that bothers us if things are not done right. This would explain why we have a sense that there is injustice in the world. In this case, God is himself the source of our moral sense and this seems to indicate that God Himself is a moral being.

Therefore we may conclude that a powerful, intelligent, moral being exists and that this being created us for a purpose and equipped us with a moral compass to guide us in life. But how can we know enough about who made us? Human thought can only lead so far. Our experiences are limited to our five senses through which we acquire an

understanding of ourselves and of the world in which we live. We are hardly equipped to discover for ourselves all the answers to life's big questions. Throughout the history of human existence, however, there have been persons who felt a divine calling. They were convinced that God spoke to them and gave them a message not only for themselves, but for other humans as well. The teachings of some of these men, prophets, who spoke as mediums for God, have been preserved in divine scriptures over time.

One such collection of ancient scriptures is the Tanakh, which is held to be sacred by Jews and is known to Christians as the Old Testament. Christians add to this the New Testament to form the Holy Bible, bound together as a single book.

Muslims believe that the Old Testament and the New Testament spoke of a Prophet who will receive more revelations than are contained in the Bible. In Deuteronomy, for example, which is one of the book of the Old Testament, we read of a prophet to come after Moses (Deuteronomy 18:12-18). Some of the descriptions of this prophet seem to point best to the Prophet Muhammad who was born in Arabia in the year 570 CE and who came to deliver to the world a book through which God Himself communicates to humankind. The Bible passage describes the manner in which this prophet will receive the communication: that it will be put into his mouth and that he will speak only that which he hears. Likewise, in the New Testament, we have testimony that in the time of Jesus the

scribes and religious interpreters of the Bible were expecting three great persons to come into the world. They called these three persons: Elijah, The Christ, The Prophet (John 1:19-29). Now we should ask about the identity of these three great persons. Who were they?

The Bible identifies them as the following: John the Baptist, who was born a few months before Jesus, was the very Elijah who was to come. Likewise, the New Testament identifies: Jesus was the Christ. But this means that the prophet, about whom the Bible spoke in these verses, was yet to be born. Muslims believe that the prophet Muhammad fulfilled this important role. He was a man who delivered the Qur'an to the world as a divine message. Hence, many Muslims feel that if we may call one set of

scriptures the Old Testament and another set the New Testament, we may call this final book, the Qur'an, the final Testament.

This means that we should take a moment to consider Islam, the set of teachings that depend on the Qur'an, a message from God. As we follow the latest order of our government, similarly we should obey the last order (revelation) of God which is in the Qur'an.

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2 - What is the Concept of God in Islam?

The primary source of Islam, the Quran, states, in chapter 112, verses 1-4:

“Say, He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begets not, nor is He begotten; and there is none like unto Him.”

According to the Quran, Allah (God) is the Creator and Sustainer of all things in all the universes. He is the One and Only God; He does not beget nor was He begotten. He is Self-sufficient, Eternal and Everlasting; everything depends upon Him alone, yet He depends upon no one. There is nothing we can imagine that is comparable to Him.

Similarly, in the Gospel of Mathew, we are told that:

...Jesus fell on his face, and prayed to God (Mathew 26:39).

Furthermore, Jesus declared that the one he prayed to is *"The only True God"* (John 17:3). Muslims believe that God speaks to us in His final scripture, The Qur'an. In it He announces good news for those who believe in Him and do good:

"And those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, and believe in the (Revelation) sent down to Muhammad – for it is the Truth from their Lord – He will remove from them their ills and improve their condition." (Qur'an 47:2).

3 - Is There Really Only One God?

If the Creator is Eternal and Everlasting, then His attributes must also be Eternal and Everlasting. If this is so, then His essential attributes must be absolute. Can there be more than one Creator with such absolute attributes? A moment's thought shows that this is not feasible. The Qur'an summarizes this argument in the following verses:

"No son did Allah beget, nor is there any ilah (god) along with Him: (if there had been many gods), behold, 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).

4 - Why Were We Created?

Everything on this earth has a beginning, an end, and a purpose. Allah has created this world and everything that exists within it for the survival of mankind. It is known that eventually death will come upon every individual. With every birth of a life, an eventual death is guaranteed. Allah gave a reason why He created mankind:

"I have only created Jinns and men, that they may serve Me." (Qur'an 51:56).

"O ye people! Adore your Guardian-Lord, who created you and those who came before you, that ye may have the chance to learn righteousness." (Qur'an 2:21).

“He Who created Death and Life, that He may test which of you is the best in deed: and He is the Exalted in Might, Oft-Forgiving.” (Qur’an 67:2).

Thus, according to Islam, the purpose of life is to worship Allah alone. Worship can take many forms, such as prayer, charity and kindness to others. Moreover, we have been given a choice by Allah, to live our lives either according to our own will or the Will of God. We are able to choose to submit our will to Allah and live by His guidelines or choose otherwise. If we choose to submit to God by following Islam, Allah promises us paradise as a reward. Otherwise, we are warned of Hellfire as a punishment.

5 - What is Islam?

Islam is an Arabic word which literally means “to surrender”. A Muslim is one who submits his will to the One and Only God, who is referred to in Islam, as Allah. Islam means to accept the Oneness of Allah and to follow His commands.

The Qur’an, the sacred text of Islam is the last and final revelation of God which was sent down to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) more than 1400 years ago. Since then, this scripture has been preserved in its purest form.

Islam is a complete way of life. It encompasses all of life’s affairs from personal rituals to public government.

Islam is a simple religion that brings peace to individuals and society. It teaches the greater purpose of life: to bring harmony in to the world.

Besides the emphasis on the Oneness of Allah, Islam teaches that God has power over all of His creation, which not only includes mankind, angels and jinns (another creation of God), but also everything visible in the universe like the earth and the moon.

Unseen creations, such as the angels and the forces of nature, exist by the power of God. These teachings serve as the foundation of Muslim faith.

Islam is based on five basic fundamentals, known as the Pillars of Islam:

1. Shahadah: A Declaration of Faith that there is no deity worthy of worship except

Allah, and Muhammad is the last messenger of Allah.

2. Prayer: To be performed regularly five times a day with prescribed intervals.

3. Alms or Charity: Muslims are obligated to give a small percentage of their savings to the poor on an annual basis.

4. Fasting: To abstain from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse from dawn to dusk.

5. Hajj: An obligation to visit the sacred house of Allah in Mecca once in a lifetime. Those who cannot afford the journey are excused from this obligation.

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6 - Will My Sins Be Forgiven If I Accept Islam?

“...and none can forgive sins except Allah...”
(Qur’an 3:135).

According to Islam, every child born into this world is a Muslim. Over time, his/her parents and society convert the child away from the Truth. Subsequently, when the child reverts to Islam all his previous sins are erased by the Mercy of Allah.

According to a Prophetic Tradition, a man came to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and said, “Give me your right hand so that I may give you my pledge of loyalty. But I want to lay down a condition, that Allah forgives my sins.” The prophet

said, “don’t you know that accepting Islam erases all previous sins?” (*Muslim*).

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7 - Why Were Prophets Sent?

When the original message of Allah was corrupted by people over time, God sent prophets to guide humankind toward the truth and to be role models for their followers. They all carried the same message: Believe in One God.

“And We did not send any messenger before you (O Muhammad) but We inspired him (saying): ‘none has the right to be worshipped but me (Allah), so worship Me (Alone and none else).” (Qur’an 21:25).

All prophets were human beings and none had any of the divine attributes of God. They ate, walked, slept, married, etc. The prophets chosen by Allah were the best of their people.

They all struggled against falsehood. Some were granted miracles by God, but none ever claimed to be the source of the miracle.

All prophets of God, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Jesus, and finally Muhammad (peace be upon all of them) were Muslims (i.e. they submitted their will to the One and Only God).

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of Allah, and the Seal of the Prophets: and Allah has full knowledge of all things.” (Qur’an 33:40).

According to Islam, all the Prophets were sent to guide their own people, but Prophet Muhammad was sent to guide the entire human race.

8 - Why Was Muhammad The Most Influential Person In History?

According to many historians, Muhammad was the most influential person in the history of mankind.

Bernard Shaw said that if Muhammad were alive today he would succeed in solving all those problems which threaten to destroy human civilization in our time.

Thomas Carlyle was simply amazed as to how one man, single-handedly, could weld warring tribes and Bedouins into a powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades. Napoleon and Gandhi never tired of dreaming of a society along the lines established by Muhammad in Arabia

fourteen centuries ago. The Encyclopedia Britannica calls him “the most successful of all Prophets and religious personalities of the world.”

Michael H. Hart ranks Muhammad as the most influential person in his famous book, **The 100 - A Ranking Of The Most Influential Persons In History**. Hart wrote: “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 levels.” Although the majority of the persons in his book “had the advantage of being born and raised in centers of civilization, highly cultured or politically pivotal nations, Muhammad was born in the year 570 CE in

the city of Makkah, in southern Arabia, at the time a backward area of the world, far from the centers of art and learning.” Michael H. Hart explained in his book why he ranked Muhammad above his own saviour Jesus Christ. He said, “Muhammad has been ranked higher than Jesus. There are two principal reasons for that decision. First, Muhammad played a far more important role in the development of Islam than Jesus did in the development of Christianity. Although Jesus was responsible for the main ethical and moral precepts of Christianity, (insofar as these differed from Judaism), St. Paul was the main developer of Christian theology, its principal proselytizer and the author of a large portion of the New Testament. Muhammad, however, was responsible for both the theology of Islam and its main

ethical and moral principles. Additionally, he played the key role in proselytizing the new faith and in establishing the religious practices of Islam.” Michael H. Hart goes on to say, “Muhammad (unlike Jesus) was a secular as well as a religious leader. In fact, as the driving force behind the Arab conquests, he may well rank as the most influential political leader of all time.”

Jules Masserman, in an article for TIME magazine, entitled **Who Were History's Great Leaders**, wrote “perhaps the greatest leader of all times was Muhammad, who combined all three functions of providing for the well-being of the led, providing a social organization in which people feel relatively secure and providing his people with one set of beliefs.”

Therefore, many historians believe that none of the other great leaders of the world combined in themselves so many different qualities to such an amazing level of perfection as did Muhammad (peace be upon him).

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9 - What Is The Qur'an?

Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the word of God that was revealed to Prophet Muhammad through an angel named Jibra'il (Gabriel). The word Qur'an means "to recite" representing the fact that it is verbally revealed. Indeed, some of the verses of the Qur'an categorically state "Recite" as Prophet Muhammad was ordered to repeat what was being revealed to him.

Muslims refer to it as "**The Noble Qur'an.**" They believe the Qur'an to be the book of divine guidance and direction for mankind. *The Final Testaments.*

The Qur'an consists of 114 chapters of various lengths. Each chapter is generally known by a name related to a memorable

word or feature in the text of that chapter. The chapters are not arranged in the order in which they were revealed. Rather, the chapters are generally arranged by descending length.

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10 - Ten Major Commandments in the Qur'an

1. Worship only One God: *"Take not with Allah another object (deity) of worship; or thou (O man!) wilt sit in disgrace and destitution."* (Qur'an 17:22).

2. Be kind, honorable and humble to your parents: *"Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none but Him, and that ye be kind to parents. Whether one or both of them attain old age in your life, say not to them a word of contempt, nor repel them, but address them in terms of honor. And, out of kindness, lower to them the wing of humility, and say: "My Lord! Bestow on them your Mercy even as they cherished me in childhood."* (Qur'an 17:23-24).

3. Be neither miserly nor wasteful in your expenditure: *“And render to the kindred their due rights, as (also) to those in want, and to the wayfarer: But squander not (your wealth) in the manner of a spendthrift. Verily spendthrifts are brothers of the Evil Ones; and the Evil One is to his Lord (himself) ungrateful. And even if thou hast to turn away from them in pursuit of the Mercy from thy Lord which thou dost expect, yet speak to them a word of easy kindness. Make not thy hand tied (like a niggard’s) to thy neck, nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach so that thou become blameworthy and destitute.”* (Qur’an 17:26-29).

4. Do not kill your children for fear of starvation: *“Kill not your children for fear of want: We shall provide sustenance for them as*

well as for you. Verily the killing of them is a great sin.” (Qur’an 17:31).

5. Do not commit adultery: *“Nor come nigh to adultery: for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils.)” (Qur’an 17:32).*

6. Do not kill unjustly: *“Nor take life – which Allah has made sacred – except for a just cause. And if anyone is slain wrongfully, we have given his heir authority (to demand law of equality in Punishment through the court of law, or take blood money or to forgive.): but let him not exceed bounds in the matter of taking life; for he is helped (by the Law).” (Qur’an 17:33).*

7. Be honest and fair: *“Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight: that is the most fitting and the*

most advantageous in the final determination.” (Qur’an 17:35).

8. Keep your promises: *“...and fulfill (every) covenant, for (every) covenant will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning).” (Qur’an 17:34).*

9. Care for orphaned children: *“...Come not nigh to the orphan’s property except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength.” (Qur’an 17:34).*

10. Do not be arrogant in your claims: *“And pursue not that of which thou hast no knowledge; for every act of hearing, or of seeing or of (feeling in) the heart will be enquired into (on the Day of Reckoning). Nor walk on the earth with insolence: for thou canst not rend the earth asunder, nor reach the mountains in height.” (Qur’an 17:36-37).*

11 - The Permitted and Prohibited in Islam

According to an old saying, you are what you eat. Muslims are careful to eat only good and wholesome things. Allah commands Muslims and all mankind:

“O ye people Eat of what is on earth, Lawful and good; and do not follow the footsteps of the evil one, for he is to you an avowed enemy.” (Qur’an 2:168).

Hence, Muslims must refrain from eating that which is foul and bad for health. Allah has declared wine forbidden. From this, Muslim scholars rule by analogy that alcohol and harmful intoxicating plants or drinks are

likewise forbidden. The rationale is that these products have negative effects for the mind, spirit, integrity and health. In the Qur'an, Allah describes what is made unlawful to the believers:

“Forbidden to you (for food) are: Al-Maytah (animals dying without being deliberately slaughtered for the purpose of human consumption). Blood, the flesh of swine, and the meat of that which has been slaughtered as a sacrifice for others than Allah, and that which has been killed by strangling, or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall, or by the goring of horns – and that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal – unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death) and that which is sacrificed (slaughtered) on AnNusub (stone altars). Forbidden also is to use arrows seeing luck or decision, (all) that is

Fisqun (disobedience to Allah). This day, those who disbelieved have given up all hope of your religion, so fear them not, but fear Me. This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. But as for him who due to severe hunger is forced (to eat these above-mentioned meats) with no inclination to sin, then surely, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Qur’an 5:3).

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12 - What the Qur'an and Bible Say about Eating Pork

Both the Bible and the Qur'an prohibit the eating of pork. Muslims are aware of this prohibition and observe it strictly.

In the book of Leviticus, chapter 11 verse 7, it is recorded that God declares the pig to be unclean for believers. Then, in verse 8, God says: *You must not eat their meat or touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.*"

This command is repeated in Deuteronomy 14:7-8. Moreover, in Isaiah 65:2-4 and 66:17 God issues a stern warning against those who eat pork. Some people are aware of this prohibition from God, but they say that they can eat pork because St. Paul said that all food is clean in his letter to the Romans

(14:20). St. Paul said this because he believed that Jesus had abolished the Law with all its commandments and regulations. He seems, however, to have misunderstood what he heard about Jesus. In the Gospel According to Mathew (5:17-20) Jesus is reported to have said quite the contrary, as follows:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law.”

Jesus went on to denounce anyone who would break the smallest of the commandments and teach others likewise (*Mathew 5:17-19*). One of the commandments is to stay away from pork. (*Deuteronomy 14:8*). This is why the true followers of Jesus holding on to his teachings did not let unclean food such as pork enter their mouths. Peter, the chief disciple, said:

“I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” (*Acts of the Apostles 10:14*).

Jesus upheld the prohibitions against pork. His disciples also upheld it and so must his followers. Those who fail to uphold it need to be informed and reminded of this rule from God. This is one reason why God sent His final messenger, Muhammad.

“Say (O Muhammad): I find not in that which has been inspired to me anything forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, except animals found dead or blood poured or the flesh of swine – for that surely is impure – or impious meat which is slaughtered as a sacrifice for other than Allah. But if anyone is forced by necessity without wilful disobedience, or transgressing due limits, certainly your Lord is oft Forgiving, Most Merciful.” (Qur’an 6:145).

13 - Human Rights in Islam

According to Islam, human rights are granted by the Mercy of Allah to all mankind. Every Muslim must accept, recognize and enforce these rights. Islam enjoys the following human rights on all humans irrespective of race, color, sex, language, or religious beliefs:

1. The Right to Life & Security: The first and the foremost right is the right to life.

"...We decreed for the Children of Israel that if anyone kills a human being, except for the capital offences of murder or brigandage, it is as if he has killed all the people; and if anyone saves the life of a human being then it is as if he has saved the life of all the people." (Qur'an 5:32). Hence, taking a human life is a grave crime in Islam and saving and protecting a human life is a great service.

2. The Right and Equality of Women: Both men and women have equal rights in Islam. Furthermore, a woman's chastity must be respected and protected under all circumstances, irrespective of her background or heritage. In fact, she must be protected even if she is an enemy. Islam prohibits men from physically or mentally abusing women under any circumstances.

3. The Right to a Basic Standard of Life: Islam stipulates that anyone who lacks the basic necessities of life (such as food, clothing, housing, medical care, education, etc.) has a right in the wealth of other Muslims. Every rich Muslim is required to give to the poor a compulsory charity called ZAKAT, thus making sure that no one is left deprived. *"And in their wealth and possessions (was remembered) the right of the*

(needy), him who asked, and him who (for some reason) was prevented (from asking).” (Qur’an 51:19).

4. The Right to Freedom: Modern states have abolished slavery. However, slavery was considered a normal practice in ancient times. Some sacred scriptures from centuries past said little to discourage the practice. But the Qur’an has said so much about the rights of slaves, and has encouraged the release of slaves to such a degree, that if Muslims followed its prescriptions they would have been the first people to abolish the practice. The Prophet Muhammad said: “There are three categories of people against whom I shall myself be a plaintiff on the Day of Judgement. Of these three categories, one is he who enslaves a free man, sells him and eats the food bought

with that money.” (Bukhari – collection of traditions from the Prophet Muhammad, second source of Islam).

Although slavery was somewhat tolerated in classical times, we should now, on the basis of Islam’s key teachings and broader objectives, declare that all human beings are born free and are equal in dignity and rights. Islam allows freedom of opinion and expression and gives the right for all to take part in government. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and religion: *“Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stand out clear from Error: whoever rejects evil and believes in Allah hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold that never breaks. And Allah heareth and knoweth all things.”* (Qur’an 2:256).

14 - How does Islam Guarantee Human Rights?

Islam commands all of its followers to maintain friendly relations with people of every race. Those who believe in one God, believe that all human beings are created by the one Creator. Thus, deeply rooted in their conscience is the duty to maintain human rights and to practice equality in the process. Islam leaves no room for any kind of discrimination against any individual or group regardless of his/her ethnicity, wealth or gender. It is the responsibility of all Muslims, according to their faith, to defend the rights of human beings and to protect the human merits and virtues of all the children of Adam. *“And their Lord hath accepted of*

them, and answered them: "Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female: Ye are members, one of another: Those who have left their homes, or been driven out therefrom, or suffered harm in My Cause, or fought or been slain – verily, I will blot out from them their iniquities, misdeeds and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing beneath as reward from Allah, and Allah has with Him the best reward." (Qur'an 3:195).

Thus, any discrimination between men and women in rights or responsibilities is forbidden. Furthermore, Islam does not only secure the rights of Muslims alone, rather it secures the rights of all human beings, whatever their beliefs may be. God urges His believers to respect all houses of worship.

"(They are) those who have been unjustly expelled from their homes simply because they

say, "Our Lord is Allah." Had it not been for the fact that Allah uses one set of people to defend another, then monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure would surely have been pulled down. Allah will certainly aid those who aid his (cause); for verily Allah is full of Strength, Exalted in Might (able to enforce His Will)." (Qur'an 22:40).

Islam secures the human rights even for those who may violate the human rights of others. A violation should be stopped instantly, but the rights of the violator as a human being should be secured. Islamic law aims to fight the crime in its origin, not just to inflict punishment. It is required that every possible effort be made to educate an offender and not merely to punish him.

Even in war, Islam requires human rights to be respected by an open declaration at the start of military operations and limiting fighting to the combatants only. Islam permits war only if the oppressors attack first and maintains that as soon as the aggressions desist, peace and justice must prevail. Muslims are told to protect and shelter any individual of the enemy's army who asks for refuge: *"And if anyone of the idolaters seeks your protection then protect him so that he may hear the word of Allah, and afterward escort him to his place of safety. That is because they are a fold who know not."* (Qur'an 9:6).

Furthermore, the wounded should not be attacked, but should be cared for until they have recovered.

The Qur'an assures the equality of all individuals and guarantees their rights to live in peace. Hence, an essential Islamic obligation to the followers of Islam is to defend the powerless oppressors.

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15 - Terrorism

Terrorism (i.e. the targeting of civilians for political ends) is an act of evil and a crime against humanity. Islam prohibits terrorism in the strongest possible way by declaring that killing one human being is like killing everyone. Murder is one of the greatest sins described in Islam. The Prophet Muhammad said: "The biggest of the great sins are:

To join other partners in worship with Allah;

To Murder a human being;

To be unkind to one's parents;

To make false statements, or to give false witness" (Bukhari).

The Qur'an commands Muslims to bring peace and security to the world by following

the tenets of Islam: *“O ye who believe! Enter into Islam whole-heartedly; and follow not the footsteps of the evil one; for he is to you an avowed enemy.”* (Qur’an 2:208).

Islam forbids violence and encourages peace between people and nations. Therefore, Islam and terrorism cannot co-exist as they are opposing views. People who act in the name of God and Islam but actually organize themselves to commit evil are condemned in the Qur’an: *“There were in the city nine men of a family, who made mischief in the land, and would not reform. They said: ‘Swear a mutual oath by Allah that we shall make a secret night attack on him (Prophet Salih) and his people, and that we shall then say to his heir (when he seeks vengeance): We were not present at the slaughter of his people, and we are positively telling the truth.’ They plotted*

and planned, but we too planned, even while they perceived it not. Then see what was the end of their plot! – this, that We destroyed them and their people, all (of them).” (Qur’an 27:48-51).

This incident described in the Qur’an reveals that some people do evil “in the name of God” and declare themselves to be men of God, but in fact what they do is against Islam. Such people are hypocrites, and Islam promises a most severe punishment for them.

While Islam condemns terrorism, it also enjoins justice amongst people and amongst nations. Terrorists seek to justify their actions by claiming that their aim is to bring justice to the world, but in fact they are only causing mischief. Such people are misguided even if apparently religious and they harm Islam even if they intend to support it.

A person who observes God's limits set out in the Qur'an can do no harm to even a single human being, let alone massacre throngs of innocent people. A true Muslim can, therefore, never be a terrorist.

On a side note, the topic of suicide in warfare come up from time to time. Suicide means to kill oneself. People committing suicide do so out of sheer frustration and hopelessness.

People reach such a state of mind after losing faith in God. Islam does not allow suicide, as life is considered to be a precious gift from God: *"Spend in the way of Allah, and do not be thrown to destruction by your own hands. And be generous. Surely Allah loves the generous."* (Qur'an 4:29-30).

The Qur'an does not promise Paradise to those who commit suicide but rather warns them of Hell. The Qur'an commands people

never to despair or lose hope despite the circumstances. Islam preaches optimism and encourages people to work for a brighter future. Suicide bombing is a tool used by terrorists to achieve their means. In the process of killing other innocent people, the suicide bomber also loses his/her life. Such acts are not allowed in Islam. **Robert Pape** of the **University of Chicago** analyzed every suicide bomb attack between 1980 and early 2004 – a total of 462 incidents – and compiled his results in his book, *Dying to Win*. He concluded that Islamic fundamentalism “has very little to do with suicide terrorism, which is a response to occupation. From Lebanon to Sri Lanka to Chechnya to Kashmir to the West Bank, every major suicide terrorist campaign – over 95 percent of all the incidents – has had

its central objective to compel the oppressive stat to withdraw.” The suicide bombings usually stop once the occupying forces have withdrawn. The Qur’an urges Muslims to resort to peace first and whenever possible: yet they are allowed to fight the oppressors [without the murder of the innocent] if peaceful means fail. The Qur’an says: *“But if the enemy inclines towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace, and trust in Allah, for He is One that heareth and knoweth (all things).”* (Qur’an 8:61).

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16 - The True Meaning of Jihad

The concept of Jihad is explained nicely by **Ira G. Zepp Jr.** in his book, "**A Muslims Primer**": The essential meaning of Jihad is the spiritual, psychological, and physical effort we exert to get closer to God and thus achieve a just and harmonious society. Jihad literally means 'striving' or 'struggle' and is shorthand for struggle for God's cause." Jihad can be divided into two categories: major and minor Jihad. The major Jihad is the inner struggle to pray on time as well as to be a good person and citizen. The minor Jihad, on the other hand, is defensive warfare.

Dr. Ibrahim Abu-Rabi calls Jihad: "The execution of effort against evil." In a way,

Jihad is the Muslim's purest effort of sacrifice, a struggle to live a perfect life and completely submit to God.

Fighting is permitted in Islam only as a last resort and only under the following conditions:

self-defence, defence of Islam and defence of those who are expelled forcibly from their homes. *“Sanction (to fight) is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged; and Allah is indeed able to give them victory. Those who have been driven from their homes unjustly only because they said: Our Lord is Allah – For had it not been for Allah’s repelling some men by means of others, monasteries and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft mentioned, would assuredly have been pulled down. Verily Allah helps those who help His*

*(cause). Lo! Allah is Strong, Almighty.”
(Qur’an 22:39-40).*

Islam does not condone invading other nations or forcefully imposing the Islamic way of life on others. Furthermore, it lays down strict rules of combat which include prohibitions against harming civilians and against destroying crops, trees, and livestock.

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17 - Status of Women in Islam

In Islam, a woman is an independent entity. A woman assumes full capacity and liability once she has attained maturity.

No woman is said to have truly accepted the message of Islam unless she does so out of her own independent will. In Islam not only does a woman have a right to choose her religion, but she also has the right to choose whom she marries, and to seek divorce.

Widows have a right to remarry and they are in fact encouraged to do so.

Furthermore, women have the right to conduct business and to have access to knowledge. Prophet Muhammad said: "Seeking knowledge is mandatory for every

Muslim.” In this saying, the word ‘Muslim’ is used to include both males and females.

In Islam, a man is responsible for maintaining and protecting his family and providing basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter for his entire family. Women are not primarily responsible for this, even after they are married. The Prophet Muhammad said that the most perfect in faith among the believers is he who is best to his wife.

Before the time of the Prophet Muhammad, women were devalued and female infants were buried alive. The Qur’an raised the value of women and prohibited female infanticide.

The Qur’an also abolished the practice whereby inheritance went to only the oldest male heir. Instead, a woman can inherit from

her father, husband or childless brother (Qur'an 4:7 and 32:176).

In Islam when a woman gets married she does not have to surrender her maiden name, rather she can maintain her distinct identity. Allah says: "*Women have rights similar to their husbands.*" (Qur'an 2:228).

In a Muslim marriage, the groom gives a dowry to the bride. This becomes her private property to keep or spend. Any money she earns or receives is strictly her own. She has similar rights as men to possess, own and sell property.

A woman is also not required to cook or do other housework for her family, although she may do so out of love and compassion. The Prophet Muhammad assisted in cleaning the household and mended his own clothes.

The Qur'an charges men with the responsibility of protecting and maintaining women (Qur'an 4:34). However, this does not mean that men should dominate women, rather that they should deal with them in kindness. A leader is necessary to direct a unit, such as a family unit. A good leader is a good communicator, open to ideas, and leads by example. The affairs of Muslims are to be decided by mutual consultation. It is imperative that couples govern their domestic life by mutual agreement. A couple may find that the husband has more expertise in some issues, and that the wife has more in some other issues. Hence, they can decide to let the decisions for particular issues be made by the person best qualified. This way each person feels included and special.

18 - Gender Relationship

The Qur'an addresses all Muslims, and for the most part it does not differentiate between male and female. It says, "*O mankind reverence your Guardian-Lord, who created you from a single person, and created, of like nature, His mate, and from them twain scattered (like seeds) countless men and women; reverence Allah, through whom ye demand your mutual (rights), and (reverence) the wombs (That bore you): for Allah ever watches over you.*" (Qur'an 4:1).

Further the Qur'an says: "*And for women are rights over men similar to those of men over women.*" (Qur'an 2:226). This verse of the Qur'an shows how God emphasizes the equality between men and women. Both are

promised the same reward for their good deeds and the same punishment for evil. Generally, in classical times, the man was considered the head of the family, and a verse of the Qur'an (4:34) was interpreted as giving him this automatic right. But today it is clear that women also make capable leaders, and, on closer study, that the verse does not really grant men the automatic right to lead. Rather, the verse places on them the responsibility to protect and maintain their families.

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19 - Is Jesus the Way?

Muslims believe that Jesus was indeed the way. This means that he showed the way by which people should approach God. He expected that people should follow him and imitate him. His early followers were called followers of the way because they followed Jesus and Jesus was the way (Acts 9:2; 18:25; 19:9; 19:23; 22:4; 24:14; 24:22). They were also called Christians, which means “imitators of Christ” (Acts 11:26). This shows that the early followers of Jesus copied and imitated him.

Jesus said that his true followers will hold on to his teachings, then they will know the truth, and the truth will set them free (see John 8:31-32). God did reveal His truth in

these last times. And true followers of Jesus will readily accept that truth, for they will find it in agreement with the unadulterated teaching of Jesus. In these last times, God has sent a messenger and declared that anyone who claims to love Him must follow His messenger, God directs His messenger as follows: *“Say! If you love Allah then follow me. Allah will love you and forgive your sins. Surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.”* (Qur’an 3:31). Now this messenger, Muhammad, has brought God’s final message for all of humankind. If we love God, we must follow Allah. He brought the truth, which Jesus said his true followers will recognize. The truth sets people free from unreasonable doctrines and dogmas.

Confusion arises in the minds of some who imagine that Jesus is the only way for people

of all times and all places. Clearly, the Old Testament prophets directed people to Yahweh, the only God. They showed therefore the way to Yahweh. In fact, people were calling on the name of Yahweh since the time of Adam. (Genesis 4:1). Jesus was the way for his time, now Muhammad is the way. Muslims believe in both of them and we worship the one God whom they both worshipped. These men showed us the way to worship God. Jesus, for example, fell on his knees and worshipped God (Luke 22:41). He also fell on his face and worshipped God (Mathew 26:39). Muhammad too adopted similar postures of humility in worshipping God (Allah). Finally, we should recall that Jesus is the way, not the destination. He spoke of

God who is greater than himself. (John 14:28).

God has sent numerous prophets and messengers. Each, in his time, was the way to God. No one can approach God in a way contrary to the way of God's messenger. This is why God said that He will call to account anyone who does not listen to His prophet who will speak in His name (Deuteronomy 18:19).

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20 - Why don't Muslims follow the Bible?

The Qur'an commands Muslims to believe in the revelations given to all of God's prophets. These prophets include Moses, David, and Jesus (peace be upon all the prophets).

Muslims, thus, believe in the revelations received by such prophets. Books associated with them are known by the names Torah, Psalms and Gospel. Muslims, therefore believe in the original Torah, Psalms and Gospel.

To be more specific, the Bible contains **66** books in the Protestant version, and **73** in the Catholic version. In the Bible consisting of 66 or 73 books, the Torah is represented as **5** books, the Psalms as **1** and the Gospel as

4 versions. This makes a total of **10** books within the Bible. Muslims are not required to believe in any more than these 10 books. But that assumes the 10 books referred to are the same as what the Qur'an refers to when the Qur'an speaks of the Torah, Psalms and Gospel.

A further check proves that these books changed contents over time although their names remained the same. To understand this concept, consider that a book like the *Encyclopedia Britannica* changes its content and size several times throughout history, yet is called by the same name. Obviously, the *Encyclopedia Britannica* is not the same as it used to be.

A closer check shows that something similar occurred with the Torah, Psalms and Gospel. For a long time many people believed that

Moses wrote the books called Torah in the Bible.

But now it is widely known that Moses could not have written these books in their entirety. One piece of evidence for this is that Chapter 34 of the book of Deuteronomy describes the death and burial of Moses, and how the people mourned for him after his death. Obviously, Moses did not write that passage.

Biblical scholars also acknowledge that the present composition of the Psalms cannot in its entirety be traced back to David.

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21 - Who Was the God of Jesus According to the Bible and the Qur'an?

Jesus said;

1. *"Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one..." (Mark 12:28).*

2. *"I am ascending to my father and your father, to my God and your God" (John 20:17 RSV 1952).*

Jesus, at the end of his mission, made it clear that God is not only his father, but father of all and God of all and even his own God whom he worshipped throughout his earthly career.

Any believer can address God as 'Father'. Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, *"Do not call anyone on earth father, for you*

have one father, and he is in heaven.”
(Matthew 23:19 NIV 1984). According to Matthew, Jesus taught his hearers to call God “Father.” He said to them *“This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”* (Matthew 6:9 NIV). Jesus made it clear that he was not God: *“Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone”* (Mark 10:18).

Jesus depends on God for authority: “I can do nothing of my own authority.” (John 5:30). *“I do as the Father has commanded me.”* (John 14:31 RSV).

God does not receive commands from anyone.

Jesus also said:

“The words that I say to you I do not speak of my own authority.” (John 14:10 RSV)

"I do nothing of my own authority but speak as the Father has taught me." (John 8:28 RSV). God does not receive commands from anyone.

God has full authority and full knowledge. He cannot be taught. He teaches. Jesus is not equal to The Father: *"The Father is greater than I." (John 14:28)*

Some people forget this and they say that Jesus is equal to the Father. Whom should we believe – Jesus or the people? Did Jesus raise himself up? *"God raised him up." (Acts 2:24).* Jesus did not have the power to raise himself up. God had to raise him up. Jesus did not know the tree had not fruit: *"He (Jesus) was hungry. And on seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it,*

he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.” (Mark 11:12-13).

Jesus (peace be upon him) was referred to as a Servant of God: *“Behold my servant whom I have chosen.” (Matthew 12:18).* (In this passage God calls Jesus his servant). *“The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified his servant Jesus.” (Acts 3:13).* Jesus cannot guarantee positions: *“To sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared by my Father.” (Matthew 20:23).* Therefore if we want to secure our position with God in the life hereafter we must turn to God and ask Him for everything.

God Reveals the Truth About Jesus:

“O People of the Book! Commit no excesses in your religion: Nor say of Allah aught but the

truth. Christ Jesus the son of Mary was (no more than) an apostle of Allah, and His Word, which He bestowed on Mary, and a spirit proceeding from Him: so believe in Allah and his apostles. Say not "Trinity." Desist! It will be better for you, for Allah is one God. Glory be to Him: (far exalted is He) above having a son. To Him belong all things in the heavens and on earth. And enough is Allah as a Disposer of affairs. Christ disdaineth not to serve and worship Allah, nor do the angels, those nearest (to Allah). Those who disdain His worship and are arrogant, He will gather them all together unto Himself (to answer). But to those who believe and do deeds of righteousness, He will give their (due) rewards, - and more, out of His bounty: But those who are disdainful and arrogant, He will punish with a grievous penalty; nor will they

find, besides Allah, any to protect or help them. O mankind! Verily there hath come to you a convincing proof from your Lord: For we have sent unto you a light (that is) manifest.” (Qur’an 4:171-174).

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22 - The Messiah in the Qur'an

Refusing to call Jesus 'Son of God', is not done with a view to belittle Jesus. On the contrary, it is done to Glorify God, to magnify His name, and to proclaim His transcendent majesty.

Behold! The angels said: "O Mary! Allah giveth thee glad tidings of a Word from Him: His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the Hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah. He shall speak to the people in childhood and in maturity. And he shall be (of the company) of the righteous." She said: "O my Lord! How shall I have a son when no man hath touched me?" He said: "Even so: Allah createth what He willeth: When He hath

decreed a plan, He but saith to it, 'Be,' and it is!" (Qur'an 3:45-47).

The Qur'an seeks to correct a common misconception in the minds of people. Many assume that since Jesus had no father then God must be his father. Allah, however, does not father children. If Jesus was the Son of God then he had to be so from all eternity, not by becoming God's Son at a particular point in history. Allah says: *"The similitude of Jesus before Allah is as that of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him: 'Be'. And he was."* (Qur'an 3:59).

It is important to realize that Jesus **never** said that he is the Son of God. *Allah says that those who call Jesus 'Son of God' are following the saying of other people (see Qur'an 9:30). Jesus taught only what he was commanded. (Qur'an 5:117). Jesus himself was quite*

pleased with being a servant of Allah. (Qur'an 4:172). As a messenger of Allah, Jesus knew that none in the heavens or the earth can approach Allah except as a slave. (Qur'an 19:93). Finally, those who say that God has a son should know that they have no warrant for this, but they are saying something without knowledge. Such is the message of the Quran. (Qur'an 10:68).

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23 - Is the Qur'an copied from the Bible?

It is not true that the Qur'an was copied from the Bible, as all evidence shows that the Qur'an was not copied from the Bible.

Take for example the story of the flood that occurred in the days of the prophet Noah (peace be upon him). This event is narrated in both the Bible and the Qur'an. A careful examination of the two will show that the Qur'anic version could have come from no other source but God alone. One important difference between the two is as follows:

- The Bible describes the flood as a worldwide flood (Genesis 7).

- The Qur'an mentions it as a local flood affecting the people of Noah (Qur'an 7:59-64).
- Today it is acknowledged that no record exists of a worldwide flood occurring at the time specified in the Bible.
- In the Bible we are told that God drowned the Pharaoh and his army when they pursued Moses and his people (Exodus 14:28). The clear indication in that description is that the body of the Pharaoh perished in the sea.
- However, the Qur'an differs and proves true. In the Qur'an we find that God promised to preserve the body of the Pharaoh as a sign for later generations. (Qur'an 10:90-92). It turns out that the body of the Pharaoh was discovered at Thebes in

the Valley of the Kings in 1898. A detailed description is found in the book by **Dr. Maurice Bucaille, The Bible the Quran and Science**. This seems to indicate not only that the Quran was not copied from the Bible but also that the Quran is of divine origin. Otherwise, how could the author of the Quran, if he were copying from the Bible, or simply composing on his own, know that the body of the Pharaoh will be discovered to serve now as a sign for those who come later?

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24 - Seven Reasons to Read the Glorious Qur'an

- **Inimitable:** It dares you to disprove it. It declares that humans cannot write a similar book even if they pooled all their resources. It has been fourteen hundred years and yet no one has been able to disprove it or write a similar one.
- **Incorruptible:** It is the only religious sacred writing which has been in circulation for such a long time and yet remains unchanged. Nothing was added or changed or taken away from the holy book since its revelation more than 1400 years ago.
- **Unsurpassable:** The Qur'an is God's final revelation to humankind. God revealed the Torah to Moses, the Psalms to David, the Gospel to Jesus and finally the Qur'an to

Muhammad. No other book will come from God to surpass His final revelation.

- **Indisputable:** The Qur'an withstands the test of time and scrutiny. No one can dispute the truth of this book. It mentions details of physical phenomena which were not known to people at that time; yet later scientific discoveries confirm that the Qur'an was right all along. Every other book needs to be revised to accord with modern knowledge. The Qur'an alone is never contradicted by modern discoveries etc.

- **Your Roadmap for Life & the Afterlife:** The Qur'an is the best guidebook on how to structure your life. No other book presents such a comprehensive system involving all aspects of human life and endeavour. The Qur'an also points out the way to secure everlasting happiness in the afterlife. It is

your roadmap showing you how to get to Paradise.

- **God's Gift of Guidance:** God has not left you alone. You were made for a reason. God tells you why he made you, what he demands from you and what he has in store for you. The Qur'an is a gift for you to make sure you function for success. It is a healing and mercy from God. It satisfies the soul and cleans the heart. It removes doubt and brings peace.

- **Your Card to Communicate with God:** Humans are social creatures. We love to communicate with other intelligent life. The Qur'an tells u how to communicate with the source of all intelligence and the source of all life – the one God. The Qur'an tells us who God is by what name we should address Him

and the way in which to communicate with God.

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25 - The Hijab (Veil)

Covering the head with Hijab is not a new idea. Even some christian women who follow their religion, and nuns, cover their head by scarf. Muslim women cover their head by hijab to please Allah and it is His order in the Quran . In reality, it is an honor for Muslim women.

Muslim men must cover their bodies properly and decently. Simplicity and modesty are encouraged. No particular dress is recommended, however, men must cover their body from navel to knees, and women must cover their whole body except for the face and hands. Any dress that is suggestive, transparent, skin-tight or half-naked may send the wrong signals to others– signals that are contrary to Islam's

teachings. Also, pure silk and gold are not allowed for men.

If we look at the clothing of women, about 100 years ago, we find that it is similar to the Islamic dress (i.e. long, full-dress and head coverings).

Virtues Of Hijab:

1. AN ACT OF OBEDIENCE AND MODESTY

The Hijab is an act of obedience to Allah and to His Messenger Muhammad:

Indeed, Allah ordered that women must put on the Hijab. Allah says: "O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks (veils) over their bodies (when outdoors). That is most convenient that they should be known and not molested." (Qur'an 33:59)

2. THE HIJAB IS PURITY

Allah had shown us the Wisdom behind the legislation of the Hijab:

"And when you ask them (the Prophet's wives) for anything you want, ask them from behind a screen that is purer for your hearts and their hearts." (Qur'an 33:53)

The Hijab makes for greater purity for the hearts of believing men and women because it screens against the desire of the heart. Without the Hijab, the heart may or may not desire. That is why the heart is more pure when the sight is blocked (by Hijab) and thus the prevention of evil actions is very much evident. The Hijab cuts off the ill thoughts and the greed of the sick hearts. Allah says: "Be not soft in speech, lest he in whose heart is a disease (of hypocrisy or evil desire)

should be moved with desire, but speak in an honorable manner." (Qur'an 33:32)

3. THE HIJAB IS RIGHTEOUSNESS

The widespread forms of dresses in the world today are mostly for show off and hardly taken as a cover and shield of the woman's body. To the believing women, however, the purpose is to safeguard their bodies and cover their private parts as a manifestation of the order of Allah. It is an act of righteousness.

4. THE HIJAB IS FAITH

A'isha, the wife of the Prophet (peace be upon him), addressed some women from the tribe of Banu Tameem who came visiting her and had light (see-thru) clothes on them: "If indeed you are believing women, then truly this is not the dress of the believing women, and if you are not believing

women, then enjoy it."

5. THE HIJAB IS BASHFULNESS

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:
"Each religion has a morality and the
morality of Islam is bashfulness (shyness)."
Furthermore, the Prophet (peace be upon
him) said: "Bashfulness and belief are fully
associated together if one is lifted the other
follows.

"

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26 - Why did Priests, Rabbis, Missionaries and others convert to Islam?

Use the internet to learn why the following famous people converted to Islam and other details about them. (Search "converted to Islam" after their names).

Prof. Abdul Ahad Dawud

Formerly known as Reverend D. Benjamin Keldani, was the bishop of Uramiah.

Abdullah al-Faruq

Kenneth L. Jenkins. He was a Minister and Elder of the Pentecostal Church.

Abdul-Ahad Omar (Dr. Gary Miller) was a former Missionary.

George Anthony was a former Catholic Priest.

Ibrahim Khalil was a former Egyptian Coptic Priest.

Dr. Jerald F. Dirks was a former Minister (Deacon) of the United Methodist Church.

Khadijah 'Sue' Watson was a former Pastor, Missionary and Professor.

Martin John Mwaipopo was a former Lutheran Archbishop.

Rabbi Moisha Krivitsky was from the Makhachkala synagogue.

Raphael Narbaez, Jr. was a Jehovah's Witness Minister.

S.M. SULAYMAN was a Baptist Church Minister in U.S.A.

Viacheslav Polosin was an Archpriest of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Dr. Yahya A.R. Lehmann was a Doctor of Theology and a Former Roman Catholic Priest in Germany.

Abdur-Raheem Greene

Anthony Greene is a well known Preacher of Islam.

Abu Ameenah Bilal Philips is a great Muslim scholar.

Hamza Yusuf

Mark Hanson destined for the Greek Orthodox priesthood, became a great Islamic Preacher.

Keith Ellison was the first Muslim elected to Congress.

Kristiane Backer was a TV presenter and journalist based in London.

Lord Headley Al-Farooq from England was a Statesman and author.

Hülya Kandemir was a German Pop Singer who became Muslim.

Dr. Jeffrey Lang was a Professor of mathematics at the University of Kansas.

Jermaine Jackson, brother of the world-famous star Michael Jackson.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe was the greatest writer of the German tradition.

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar is one of the greatest basketball players of all time.

Leo Tolstoy was a great writer of Russian Literature.

Malcolm X was the famous Afro-American Muslim Minister, public speaker and human rights activist.

Myriam Francois-Cerrah was a British actress enchanted by the Prophet's life.

Michael Wolfe was the author and writer of Islamic documentaries.

Dr. Maurice Bucaille *was the author of "The Bible, the Qur'an and Science"*.

Muhammad Ali was the first three-time Heavy Weight Boxing Champion of the World.

Muhammad Asad was a Statesman, Journalist, Author, and translator of the Quran.

Nuh Ha Mim Keller turned from an American Catholic to one of the leading contemporary scholars of Islam.

Professor Umar Mita was an Economist, Social Worker and Preacher.

Lauren Booth is Tony Blair's Sister-in-law who converted to Islam after a 'holy experience' in Iran.

Wilfried (Murad) Hofmann is a German Diplomat and NATO Officer.

Yusuf Islam (formerly Cat Stevens) is a famous Folk-rock star.

Yvonne Ridley was a British-born award winning journalist who was captured by Taliban and later converted to Islam.

Asiya Abd al-Zahir said "...the only religion I have ever been completely sure of..."

Chahida Zanabi said, "...I found [a belief that Jesus died] illogical and unjust."

Fareena Alam is an 18 year old female convert and the author of the great website the modern religion.com.

Haji Maryam Mohammed Ahmed was an American Muslima who lived only to talk

about Islam.

Dr. Kari Ann Owen said, "I began to look... to Islamic culture for moral guidance."

Madonna Johnson said, "...All of my turmoil and anxiety was gone..."

Maryam al-Mahdayah said, "There is no more conflict within, because I have come home."

Maureen McCormick said, "Life is good for Muslim women."

Nakata Khaula wrote an article called "A Japanese Woman's Experience of Hijab"

Jocelyn Wiener was a young, female Times Staff Writer.

Rashida S.

Rachel Singer was the daughter of a devout Roman Catholic mother and a very devout Jewish father.

Um Luqman said, "Jesus (P.B.U.H) made sense to me as being a Prophet."

Zainab said, "No a guy did not convert me." She was an ex-Sunday School teacher who discovered Islam while training to be a nun.

Zubaidah Gibbs found peace at a southern mosque.

Abdullah. My journey to Islam is a Video. It is a must watch.

Abdul Malik Hamidullah said: "I discovered the logic and simplicity in Islam."

Abdul Malik LeBlanc tells how he discovered Islam within the pages of the Bible.

Abdus Salam Sipes is a former member of the Ku Klux Klan.

Ahmed Corpus

Marco Corpus is a former Sunday school teacher & full-time ministry worker.

Dr. Ali Selman Benoist was a doctor of Medicine and a descendant of a French Catholic family.

Christopher Patrick Nelson said, “Islam saved my mental health and returned my soul.”

Fauzuddin Ahmad Overing was a Preacher and Social Worker.

Giles Whittell wrote an article called “Allah came knocking at my heart”.

Jameel William Aalim-Johnson organizes the weekly Muslim Congregational Friday prayer on Capitol Hill.

Hussein Amin wrote an article called: "My Conversion from Christianity to Islam."

John Kirch said, "I went on a 20-year-long search for the truth."

Mahir Abdal-Razzaaq is a Native American who wrote an article called: "Have you ever wondered what the name Tallahassee means?"

Mike LoPrete is a 19 year old college student who said, "I didn't get the idea of the trinity."

Phreddie/USA wrote an article called: "My Conversion to Islam." He said, "I am only 18, and that fact seems to astound most people."

Sheriff Quinn wrote an article called:
“Christianity: The Point of Departure.”

Abdul-Lateef Abdullah

Steven Krauss wrote an article titled “A
Martial Art Led Me to Islam.”

Terry Holdbrooks is a guard at Guantánamo
Bay who converted to Islam.

Tim Weis wrote an article titled “I have
European Lineage. I am a Muslim. I am a
Westerner.”

Walter 'Abdul-Walee' Gomez wrote an
article titled “Latino Immigrant Finds Peace
in Islam.”

Yahya Donald W. Flood wrote an article titled “The Best Way to Live and Die.”

Musa Caplan wrote an article titled “The Story of a Jewish Boy - Finding Islam in Cyberspace.”

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Books and Articles for Further Reading

1- ARE YOU AFRAID TO BECOME A MUSLIM? : The Personal thoughts of Kian Yit of Malaysia.

2- BEGINNERS GUIDE TO PERFORMING ISLAMIC PRAYERS.

3- Practical advice for the new Muslim on this sensitive issue.

4- Glossary of Islamic Terms and Concepts

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www.collectfreequran.org/links

27 - How to Become a Muslim

Many people are Muslims without knowing it. A Muslim by a broad definition is one who submits his or her will to the one God. A more specific definition of a Muslim is one who also believes that God sent Muhammad as a messenger to guide us. If, after reading this booklet, you are convinced that there is only one God, and that Muhammad is His Messenger then you are already, in terms of belief, a Muslim. What remains is for you to act according to that belief. The first required act is for you to confess your faith. You may do so privately at first, and, at your earliest convenience, in the presence of other Muslim witnesses such as the Imam of a

mosque in your area. The confession is simple. Say these words with confidence: **“I testify that there is no true deity except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger.”** After this declaration of faith, you should try your best to learn and follow the commands of God (Allah) through his last book, the Quran, and the teachings of his Messengers Mohammed (Peace and blessing of Allah be upon him). Once you accept Islam, Allah forgives ALL your previous sins, no matter how many and how big they may be. This is a major blessing for a new Muslim. It is recommended that new Muslims contact a mosque nearby and attend classes to study Islam.

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