

Islam



- The word Islam means “submission” to the will of Allah.
- The basic creed is: “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah”.
- One night in the year 610, the first of many revelations came to Muhammad.
- Muhammad saw his task as a continuation and conclusion to Judaism and Christianity.¹

Islam



- Muhammad is the last Prophet.
- The revelation that Muhammad received were collected in a new book the Qur'an.
- Because Muslims believed that everything Muhammad said and did was inspired by Allah many reports (*hadith*) of his sayings and deeds were collected.

Basic Beliefs

- Islam teaches that there is one God, the Creator of the universe.
- Allah is compassionate and just.
- Because He is also just, on the Last Day He will judge every person according to his deeds.
- Mankind is regarded as the crown of creation.

The five pillars of Islam



- Profession of faith
- Prayers
 - Personal (*du`a*)
 - Ritual (*salat*)
- Prayer is equally a proclamation of the greatness of God and of his oneness.
- It brings human beings nearer to God.

Prayers

- Purifying the one who performs it
- Obtaining forgiveness for his sins
- Be steadfast in trials
- Islam has no ordained clergy
- The Pilgrimage is intended to reenact the hegira, the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina in 622.

Pilgrimage

- The ritual clothing is called *ihram*.
- You call us, we are here, O God! We are here! We are here, there is no one beside you! Praise and good deeds belong to You, and the empire! There is none but you!
- It secures the remission of all former sins.
- It makes those who take part in it aware of the force of Islam and the solidarity of Muslims.
- Moments of intense religious emotion

Pilgrimage

- They have been marked by the atmosphere of fervor, the sense of a presence of God.
- The pilgrim feels that he is representing his family on pilgrimage.
- A series of traditions is associated with Hagar the mother of Ismail, and her flight between Safa and Marwa (cf. Genesis 21: 14-19)
- The ceremonies of the 10th Dhu-l-hijja are directly associated with Abraham and his sacrifice. The stoning of the three pillars have been presented as a repetition of action performed by Abraham.

Pilgrimage

- The temple of Jerusalem is called the house of God.
- The obligation to be in a state of ritual purity in order to approach God. (Exodus 19:10)
- God tells Moses to mark out the boundaries of a sacred area which no one is to enter (Exodus 19: 12)
- The Ka`ba is called the house of God.
- The obligation of ritual purity. Men must wear the *ihram* and women must wear a discreet garment.
- The existence of a territory around Mecca forbidden to anyone who is not a Muslim.

Pilgrimage

- Moses tells his people before the theophany on Sinai to abstain from women (Exodus 19: 15).
- The believer who makes a special vow of consecration to God (Numbers 6.5) allows his hair to grow freely, without cutting it.
- Sacrifice of Passover
- Number Seven
- In Islam the sexual prohibitions is also observed by the pilgrim.
- While in a state of *ihram* the pilgrim may neither cut or let fall hair from the body
- On the pilgrimage we also have a sacrifice.
- Number Seven

Fasting

- “Fasting is decreed for you as it was decreed for those before you.”
- The meal which breaks the fast after sunset is a sign of brotherhood.
- As the month to celebrate the memory of the Qur’an. Ramadan is also the month in which hunger reminds the rich of the existence of the poor.
- This month is a month of self-mastery.
- *Hadith*: those who practice their fast become as pure again as a new born.

Almsgiving (Zakat)

- The root signifies purification.
- “But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you” (Luke 11: 41).
- There is the Legal principle that the poor have a right to part of the property of the rich.
- To give alms in secret is better (2: 271).
- The *zakat* is constantly mentioned alongside prayer as having been taught by all Prophets before Muhammad.

Divisions and Schools of Thought

- Islam has always been characterised by diversity and unity.
- Muhammad said: “Difference of opinion in my community is a manifestation of divine mercy”.
- There were less persecutions in Islam than in other major religions.

Divisions and Schools of Thought

- The major division in the history of Islam arose over questions of leadership of the Muslim community, called the Caliphate.
- Only later did there emerge groups based on divergent emphases in doctrine and practice.

The Four Caliphs



- Abu Bakr (Muhammad's father-in-law)
- Umar (companion)
- Uthman Ibn Affan (Muhammad's son-in-law)
- Ali (cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet)

Two Major Groups

Sunnites

- The Prophet did not explicitly name his Successor.
- Some companions of the Prophet elected Abu Bakr as the first Caliph.

Shi'ites

- The Prophet explicitly named his Successor Ali b. Abi Talib.
- Ali and his descendants know the inner meaning of the Qur'an.