

WHAT IS ISLAAM?



THE MEANING OF ISLAAM

Islaam is the faith of the Muslims; it is derived from the Arabic language and means **submission** or **surrender**. Specifically, it means to submit oneself to Allaah (God)¹, the one and only true God, by worshiping Him alone. He has no partners, no son, and no holy spirit. Islaam is a complete way of life, as it has made the guidelines clear on how to live a righteous, pious life, by obeying Allaah's commandments. Having true faith means believing in the unseen, knowing that it is the truth. A true Muslim believes that there is no one between him and his Lord. There are no intercessors, so they direct all of their worship to Allaah alone. If one commits a sin, he repents directly and only to Allaah; never to anyone else from amongst the creation such as priests, rabbis, or imaams. Only Allaah can take a person out of trials and tribulations. It is only He who can bless and reward a person for his deeds. Any assistance that comes along the way is only a means of help or tools sent by Allaah. It is further explained in the narration of 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab, (may Allaah be pleased with him) when he mentioned that Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) came in the appearance of a man dressed in clean, white garments and asked Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), intending to teach the Muslims about their religion, **"O Muhammad! Inform me about Islaam!"** Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) responded:

“ ISLAAM IS THAT YOU...

1. Testify that there is no god deserving of worship except Allaah, alone, without any partners and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings be upon him).
2. Establish the obligatory prayers (five times each day).
3. Give the Alms.
4. Fast in the month of Ramadhaan (from dawn until sunset).
5. Perform the pilgrimage to the House of Allaah (called the Ka'bah, located in the city of Makkah) if you have the means. ”

1 - God is the name that many people use to refer to their lord, but the correct and proper name is Allaah who is the one and only lord who created everything in existence, He has no partners, offspring, or spouses. Allaah is unique in His characteristics, actions, and attributes. Nothing in the creation can be compared to Him and His attributes. He is the sole creator of everything and everyone in existence.

WHAT IS FAITH IN ISLAAM?

Faith in Islaam revolves around **belief** in six aspects of the religion. This was also explained in the same narration as previously mentioned when Angel Gabriel (Jibreel) asked Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), “**O Muhammad! Inform me about Eemaan (faith)!**”. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) responded:

“**FAITH IS THAT YOU BELIEVE IN...**”

1. Allaah.
2. His Angels.
3. His Revealed Books.
4. His Messengers.
5. The Last Day (i.e. Day of Judgment).
6. The Pre-Ordainment (i.e. the complete decree of Allaah).”

Faith and belief in these six aspects entail that a Muslim must worship Allaah, the Almighty, the Creator, with complete sincerity. He is not to have any partners associated with Him in worship. He created everything in existence from nothing, He owns everything that exists in His creation and He also manages all of the affairs of the creation.

We affirm our belief in the Angels and we do not say that they are the souls of people who have passed away. The Angels were created by Allaah long before us without the choice to disobey Allaah that mankind were given. All of the Angels consistently obey Allaah and perform each of their individual tasks without fail in full completion.

Allaah has sent mankind guidance, teachings and direction for what we are meant to do in the life of this world in preparation for the Hereafter. As He states in the Qur'aan, “**And I (Allaah) did not create the Jinns and Humans (for any reason) except that should they worship Me (alone).**” (Qur'aan, 51:56). Allaah has sent the Qur'aan with Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) to guide us just as He sent books before him with previous Messengers, including the Tawraat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel).

The Messengers were sent by Allaah with revelation to call and guide the people to His worship. In Islaam, the Prophets and Messengers of Allaah are many, including, but not limited to, Aadam (Adam), Nooh (Noah), Ibraaheem (Abraham), Ismaa'eel (Ishmael), Ishaaq (Isaac), Ya'qoob (Jacob), Moosaa (Moses), and 'Eesaa (Jesus) (peace be upon them all) and Muslims believe in all of them.

The Last Day, also known as the Day of Judgment, is when everyone will be gathered and taken to account for what they did with their lives. As Allaah states in the Qur'aan, "**[He] who created death and life to test you [as to] which of you is best in deed - and He is the All-Mighty, the Oft-Forgiving.**" (Qur'aan, 67:2)

Allaah has pre-ordained or pre-decreed everything that ever happened or will ever happen from the absolute beginning of time until the Last Day and Muslims believe that nothing ever happens except by the Will and Decree of Allaah.

WHO IS ALLAAH?

The word **Allaah** is an Arabic word for **God**, and even to this day, Arab Christians and Jews refer to God as "**Allaah**". Muslims are those who submit themselves willingly to the one and only Allaah, directing all of their worship to Him alone. Allaah is the Creator, the Owner, the Provider, the Supreme Being over all of the creation. The Muslim firmly believes that Allaah, with His All-Encompassing Knowledge and Wisdom, did not create mankind without a purpose, nor did He leave mankind neglected. Rather, Allaah sent Messengers to proclaim the message that **'there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah alone'**. When Allaah sent these noble Messengers, He sent them with divine revelations and books, as Allaah sent Moosaa (Moses) with the Tawraat (Torah), Daawood (David) with the Zaboor (Psalms), 'Eesaa (Jesus) with the Injeel (Gospels) and Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) with the Qur'aan (peace be upon them all). Allaah is absolutely unique in His characteristics, attributes and actions. Therefore, none from amongst the creation can be compared to Him. He has no father, son, spouse or partner. He has always existed and will remain for eternity; nothing came before Him and nothing will

come after Him. He is the one who controls all the affairs of the entire universe and he is the one who gave us life and will resurrect us after our death.

WHO IS MUHAMMAD?

Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was born in the city of Makkah in the year 570 CE. Since his father died before his birth and his mother died shortly thereafter, he was nursed by a kind woman named Haleemah. She took him in as an orphan, until he was given to his grandfather, 'Abdul-Muttalib. After his death, Muhammed (peace and blessings be upon him) was raised by his uncle, Abu Taalib, who was from the respected tribe of Quraysh. He was brought up illiterate, unable to read or write, and remained so until his death. His people, before his mission as a Prophet, were ignorant of science and most of them were illiterate. As he grew up, he became known, even among those against him, to be truthful, honest, trustworthy, generous, and sincere. He was so upright and virtuous that they called him the Trustworthy One. Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was very religious, and he had long detested the decadence and idolatry of his society.

At the age of forty, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) received his first revelation from Allaah through the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel). The revelations continued for twenty-three years, and they are collectively known as the Qur'aan. There is not one word or letter that has ever been changed in this noble book, as every single written character is exactly the same as that which Allaah had sent down and Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) recited the same Qur'aan that we read today, word-for-word, to the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him).

As soon as he (peace and blessings be upon him) began to recite the Qur'aan and preach the truth which Allaah had revealed to him, he and his small group of followers suffered persecution from unbelievers. The oppression grew so fierce that in the year 622 CE, Allaah gave them the command to emigrate. This emigration from the city of Makkah to the city of Madeenah, some 260 miles to the north, marks the beginning of the Islaamic calendar.

After several years, Muhammad (peace and blessings be

upon him) and his followers were able to return to Makkah, where they forgave their enemies. Before Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) died, at the age of sixty-three, the greater part of the Arabian Peninsula had become Muslim, and within a century after his death, Islaam had spread to Spain in the West and as far East as China. Islaam was able to spread rapidly and peacefully due to its status of being the truth and the clarity of its doctrine. The religion of Islaam calls for faith in only one Allaah, Who is the only one worthy of worship.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) was a perfect example of an honest, just, merciful, compassionate, truthful, humble, and brave human being. Though he was only a man, he was far removed from all evil characteristics and strove solely for the sake of Allaah and His reward in the Hereafter. Even though he (peace and blessings be upon him) was promised Paradise, he was ever mindful and fearful of Allāh in all his actions and dealings.

Allaah, the Exalted, says:

“And verily, you (O Muhammad) are on an exalted standard of character.”

[Qur'aan, 68:4]

Allaah, the Exalted, says:

“Indeed in the Messenger of Allaah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allaah and the Last Day and remembers Allaah much.”

[Qur'aan, 33:21]

Despite the fact that Heaven was already guaranteed for the Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him), he did not stop worshiping Allaah. The Prophet's (peace and blessings be upon him) wife, 'Aa-ishah, (may Allaah be pleased with her) asked him why he would pray at night until his feet would swell and his beard was soaked in tears if Allaah has forgiven all of his past and future sins. In these long, night prayers, the Messenger (peace and blessings be upon him) supplicated to Allaah, asking Him to forgive all of us Muslims, as we are from his nation. Even though he has never seen us, he knew we would believe in him, and that we would sin greatly in this world. We are his brothers and sisters in Islaam. He (peace and blessings be upon

him) responded to 'Aa-ishah (may Allaah be pleased with her) by saying, "Should I not be a grateful servant (of Allaah)?"

WHAT IS THE QUR'AAN?

The Qur'aan is the final revelation from Allaah to all of mankind. It was revealed to Allaah's final Messenger, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). The Qur'aan completed and abrogated all of the previous books and revelations which came before it such as the Tawraat (Torah), Zaboor (Psalms), Injeel (Gospels), etc... The Muslims believe in all of these revelations in their original form before alteration. They also believe in all of the Messengers and Prophets which Allaah sent, without the exclusion of any one of them. The Qur'aan was revealed to Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) over 1400 years ago and this glorious book still remains in its original form, free from alterations, changes and from being mixed with human opinions and views. The Qur'aan is one of the most distinguishing features of the religion of Islaam. In it are the sources, hope, clarity and guidance the Muslims depend upon for understanding their religion.

Allaah, the Exalted, says:

“This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favor upon you, and have chosen for you Islaam as your religion.”
[Qur'aan, 5:3]

Allaah, the Exalted, says:

“Truly, the religion with Allaah is Islaam.”
[Qur'aan, 3:19]

Allaah, the Exalted, says:

“For those who have done good is the best [reward] (i.e. Paradise) and even more (i.e. having the honor of glancing at the Face of Allaah). Neither darkness nor dust nor any humiliating disgrace shall cover their faces. They are the dwellers of Paradise, and they will abide therein forever.”
[Qur'aan, 10:26]

الإسلام

هُوَ الْإِسْتِسْلَامُ لِلَّهِ بِالتَّوْحِيدِ وَالْإِنْفِيَادِ لَهُ بِالطَّاعَةِ وَالْبِرَاءَةِ مِنَ الشَّرْكِ وَأَهْلِهِ

Islaam means submitting to Allaah, worshiping Him alone and obeying Him, and shunning shirk (polytheism, associating others with Allaah) and those who believe in that.

Narrated by Suhayb (may Allaah be pleased with him):

"The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings be upon him) recited this Verse: **"For those who have done good is the best reward and even more."** Then he said: 'When the people of Paradise enter Paradise, and the people of the Fire enter the Fire, a caller will cry out: "O people of Paradise! You have a covenant with Allaah and He wants to fulfill it." They will say: "What is it?" Has Allaah not made the Balance (of our good deeds) heavy, and made our faces bright, and admitted us to Paradise and saved us from Hell?" Then the Veil will be lifted and they will look upon Him, and by Allaah, Allaah will not give them anything that is more beloved to them or delightful, than looking upon Him.'"

[Saheeh Muslim]



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