

believe that there is a Day of Judgment when all people of the world, throughout the history of mankind till the last Day of life on earth, are to be brought for accounting (rewarded or punished).

E. Innocence of Man at Birth

Muslims believe that people are born free of sin. It is only after they reach the age of puberty and it is only after they commit sins that they are to be charged for their mistakes. No one is responsible for or can take responsibility for the sins of others. However, the door of forgiveness through true repentance is always open.

F. Comprehensive Way of Life

Muslims believe that Islam is a total and a complete way of life. It encompasses all aspects of life. Islam has rules and guidelines to economical and social transactions, as well as educational and political systems. Islam does not deny people the right and obligation to excel in developing political and economical thought. It provides a set of clear and decisive guidelines in those areas, as well as all others that impact the welfare of humans as individuals and societies. Such guidelines prevent people and systems from injustice and deviation. No one speaks on behalf of God in those areas or any others. There are things that are agreed upon amongst Muslims, and beyond them, no one's reasoning is sacred. Thus, the government of Islam cannot be described as theocratic nor is there a complete divorce between the state and religion.

VII. PRACTICES OF ISLAM

God instructed the Muslims to practice what they believe in. In Islam there are five pillars:

A. Creed (Shahadah)

The verbal commitment and pledge that there is only One God, and Muhammad (*Peace be upon him*) is the Messenger of God, is considered to be the Creed of Islam.

B. Prayers (Salat)

The performance of the five daily prayers is required of Muslims.

C. Fasting (Saum)

Fasting is total abstinence from food, liquids and sexual intimacy from dawn to sunset during the entire month of Ramadan.

D. Purifying Almsgiving (Zakat)

This is an annual payment of a certain percentage of a Muslim's savings, which is distributed among the poor or other rightful beneficiaries.

E. Pilgrimage (Hajj)

The performance of pilgrimage to Makkah is required once in a lifetime if the means are available. Hajj is, in part, a memorial to the trials and tribulations of Prophet Abraham (*Peace be upon him*), his wife Hagar and his eldest son, Prophet Ishmael (*Peace be upon him*).

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

The Islamic Society of Central LA
2232 Worley Drive, Alexandria, LA 71301
Phone: (318) 442-0401
www.islamincenla.com

Imam (Minister)

Will be available to answer any questions about Islam
Everyday from 2:00 to 3:00 PM

**Open invitation to the general public to attend
Friday sermon from 1:00 to 2:00 PM**



Introducing Islam

An introduction to basic Islamic beliefs and practices

I. ISLAM AND MUSLIMS

The name of this religion is Islam, the root of which, Silm or Salam, means peace. The word, however, means much more than just "peace". It means submission to the One God, as well as to live in harmony with other people and with the environment.

II. MUSLIMS AND ARABS

The followers of Islam are called Muslims. We should not confuse Muslims with Arabs. Muslims may be Arabs, or they may be any other nationality. Islam is not limited to any nationality or race. Arab Muslims comprise around 15% of the Muslim population of the world.

III. ALLAH, THE ONE AND THE ONLY GOD

Allah is the name of the One and Only God. Allah has ninety-nine beautiful names, such as: The Gracious, The Merciful, The Beneficent, The Creator, and many others. He is the Creator of the entire universe and of all human beings. Muslims worship God, and put their trust only in Him as they seek His help and guidance.

IV. MUHAMMAD *(Peace be upon him)*

Muhammad *(Peace be upon him)* is the final Messenger of God. His message was and still is to all of mankind, including the Christians and Jews. He is considered to be the summation and culmination of all the prophets and messengers that came before him. He purified the previous messages from adulteration and completed the Message of God for all humanity.

V. SOURCES OF ISLAM

The legal sources of Islam are the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The Qur'an is the exact words of God and His message to humanity. It's only one copy of the Qur'an since time of revelation till now; never changed.

The language of the Qur'an is Arabic. Any translation of the Qur'an immediately ceases to be the literal word of Allah. Different translations reflect how the translators understand and interpret the Arabic words. Some verses are very rich; they carry or imply more than one shade of meaning. Thus each translation is an attempt to convey some of the layers of meanings presented by Almighty in the same verse. Muslims pray in the language of the Qur'an, but supplications to God may be in any language.

The Sunnah is the reports of the sayings, deeds and approvals of Prophet Muhammad *(Peace be upon him)*.

• Scientific Miracles in Qur'an

There are many scientific miracles in the Qur'an. For more information please visit these websites:

- harunyahya.com
- al-islamforall.org
- scienceinquran.com
- whyislam.org
- islam-guide.com
- freequran.org

• Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* in the Qur'an

Muslims love, honor and believe in Jesus *(Peace be upon him)*. In fact, no Muslim can be a Muslim unless he or she believes in Jesus *(Peace be upon him)*. Qur'an says that Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* is the Messiah. He is a word from Allah and a spirit from Him. He is honored in this world and in the hereafter, and he is one of those brought nearest to Allah.

Qur'an recalls his miraculous birth, his teachings, the miracles he performed by God's permission and his life as a respected prophet of God. Qur'an also repeatedly reminds that Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* was a human prophet sent by God, not part of God Himself.

• What did Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* teach?

Qur'an tells us that Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* came to teach the same basic message which was taught by previous prophets from God – that we must shun every false God and worship only the one true God. Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* taught that he is the servant and messenger of that one true God, the God of Abraham *(Peace be upon him)*. This can be compared with the Bible (Mark 10:18; Matthew 26:39; John 14:28, 17:3, and 20:17) where Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* teaches that the one he worshipped is the only true God. See also Matthew 12:18; Acts 3:13 and 4:27,

where we find that his disciples knew him as Servant of God. It is worth noting that it is not quoted in the Bible that Jesus *(Peace be upon him)* said about himself that he is either God or the son of God.

VI. SOME ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES

A. Oneness of God

He is One and the Only One. He is not two in one or three in one. This means that Islam rejects the idea of trinity or such a unity of God which implies more than one God in one.

B. Oneness of Mankind

People are created equal in front of the Law of God. There is no superiority of one race over another. God made us of different colors, nationalities, languages and beliefs so as we may know each other. No one can claim that he is better than others. It is only God Who knows who is better. It depends on piety and righteousness.

C. ONENESS OF MESSENGERS AND THE MESSAGE

Muslims believe that God sent different messengers throughout the history of mankind. All came with the same message and the same teachings. It was people who misunderstood and misinterpreted them. Muslims believe in all Prophets and Messengers from Adam to Muhammad, peace be upon them all. The Prophets of Christianity and Judaism are indeed the Prophets of Islam.

D. Angels and the Day of Judgment

Muslims believe that there are unseen creatures, such as angels created by God in the universe for special missions. Muslims