

Islam is it like other religions? assignment

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About 18% live in the Arab world; the world's largest Muslim community is in Indonesia; substantial parts of Asia and most of Africa are Muslim, while significant minorities are to be found in the Soviet union, China, North and South America, and Europe (Islamic Bulletin 2009). This paper will discuss what the Islamic is, the history behind the Islamic Faith and how it compares and contrasts to Christianity and Judaism. According to The Islamic Bulletin the meaning of Islam is an Arabic word that simply means 'submission', and derives from a word meaning 'peace' (Islamic

Bulletin, 2009). In a religious context it means complete submission to the will of God. 'Mohammedanism' is thus a misnomer because it suggests that Muslims worship Muhammad rather than God. 'Allah' is the Arabic name for God, which is used by Arab Muslims and Christians alike. Muslims believe in one unique incomparable God; in the angels created by him; in the prophets through whom his revelations were brought to mankind. In the Day of Judgment an individual is accountable for his or her actions; in God's complete authority over human destiny and in life after death.

Muslims believe in a chain of prophets starting with Adam and including Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Elias, Joana, John the Baptist, and Jesus, peace be upon them. But God's final message to man, a reconfirmation of the eternal message and a summing-up of all that has gone before was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad through Gabriel (Islamic Bulletin, 2009). The Islamic Faith has a framework that each individual shall follow, it's called the five pillars.

The five pillars are, the faith, prayer, the fast, the alms and lastly pilgrimage. The first pillar faith states that there is no god worthy of worship except God and Muhammad is his messenger. This declaration of faith is called the Shahada, a simple formula which all the faithful pronounce. In Arabic, the first part is: La ilaha illa Allah - "there is no god except God;" ; Allah (god) can refer to anything which we may be tempted to put in place of God, wealth, power, and the like. Then comes Lilla Allah: "except God" the source of all creation (Islamic Bulletin, 2009).

The second pillar is prayer. Salat is the name for the obligatory prayers which are performed five times a day in Islam, and no priests, so the prayers are led by a learned person who knows the Quran, chosen by the congregation. These five prayers contain verses from the Quran, and are said in Arabic, the language of the revelation, but personal supplication can be offered in one's own language. Prayers are said at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset and nightfall, and thus determine the rhythm of the entire day.

Although it is preferable to worship together in a mosque, a Muslim may pray almost anywhere, such as in fields, offices, factories and universities (Islamic Bulletin, 2009). Visitors to the Muslim world are struck by the centrality of prayers in daily life. Zakat is the third pillar is one of the important principles of Islam. It states that all things belong to God, and that wealth is therefore held by human beings in trust. The word Zakat means both "purification" and "growth".

Our possessions are purified by setting aside a proportion for those in need, and, like the pruning of plants, this cutting back balances and encourages new growth (Islamic Bulletin, 2009). Each Muslim calculates his or her own Katz individually. For most purposes this involves the payment each year of two and a half percent of one's capital. The fast is the fourth pillar and refers the month of Ramadan. Muslims fast from first light until sundown, abstaining from food, drink, and sexual relations (Islamic bulletin, 2009).

Those who are sick, elderly, or on a Journey, and women who are pregnant or nursing are permitted to break the fast and make up an equal number of days later in the year. If they are physically unable to do this, Muslims must feed a needy person for every day missed. Children begin to fast and to observe the prayer from puberty, although many may start earlier. However, the fast is most beneficial to their health, and it is considered as a method of self-purification.

By cutting oneself off from worldly comforts, even for a short time, a fasting person gains true sympathy with those who go hungry as well as growth in one's spiritual life (Islamic Bulletin, 2009). The last pillar pilgrimage is the annual pilgrimage to Mecca - the Hajj], which is an obligation only for those who are physically and financially able to perform it (Islamic Bulletin, 2009). The annual Hajj] begins in the twelfth month of the Islamic year. Pilgrims wear special clothes: simple garments which strip away distinctions of class and culture, so that all stand equal before God.

The pilgrims then stand together and Join in prayers for God's forgiveness, in what is often thought of as a preview of the Last Judgment (Islamic Bulletin,

2009). Every religion has its story or history as to how it came about. In or about the year 570 the child who would be named Muhammad and who would become the prophet of one of the world's great religions, Islam, was born into a family belonging to a clan of Aquarius, the ruling tribe of Mecca, a city in the Hajji region of northwestern Arabia (Nephew, 2006).

The Mecca had, with the decline of southern Arabia, become an important center of sixth-century trade with such powers as the Assassins, Byzantines, and Ethiopians. As a result, the city was dominated by powerful merchant families, among whom the men of Aquarius were preeminent. When Muhammad reached his forties, he began to retire to meditate in a cave on Mount Hair, just outside Mecca, where the first of the great events of Islam took place. One day, as he was sitting in the cave, he heard a voice, later identified as that of the created man from a clot of blood.

Three times Muhammad pleaded his inability to do so, but each time the command was repeated. Finally, Muhammad recited the words of what are now the first five verses of the 96th chapter of the Quern - words which proclaim God to be the Creator of man and the Source of all knowledge (New-web, 2006). The Hegira - anglicized as Hegira - usually, but inaccurately, translated as "Flight" - from which the Muslim era is dated. In fact, the Hegira was not a flight, but a carefully planned migration that marks not only a break in history - the beginning of the Islamic era - but also, for Muhammad and the Muslims, a new way of life.

Therefore, the organizational principle of the community was not to be just a blood kinship, but the greater brotherhood of all Muslims. The men who

accompanied Muhammad on the Hegira were called the Majoring “ those that made the Hegira,” or the “ Emigrants,” while those in Medina who became Muslims were called the Nanas, or “ Helpers” (Nephew, 2006). The Constitution of Medina was the clans accepting Muhammad as the Prophet of God formed an alliance, or federation.

It showed that the political consciousness of the Muslim community had reached an important point; and that its members defined themselves as a community separate from all others (Nephew, 2006). The Constitution also defined the role of non-Muslims in the community. Jews, for example, were part of the community; they were called demise, or also known as the protected people, as long as they conformed to its laws. This established a precedent for the treatment of other peoples during the later conquests.

Christians and Jews, upon payment of a nominal tax, were allowed religious freedom and, while maintaining their status as non-Muslims. This status did not apply to polytheists, who could not be tolerated within a community that worshipped the one God (Nephew, 2006). The death of Muhammad was a great loss to the Muslim people. To his followers this simple man from Mecca was more than just a beloved friend, more than a gifted administrator, and more than the revered leader who had forged a new state from large groups of warring tribes.

Muhammad was also the exemplar of the teachings he had brought them from God, the teachings of the Quern for centuries that have guided the thought and action, faith and conduct, a number of men and omen, and in a distinctive era in the history of mankind. With a brief background and history

of the Islamic religion has been provided Christianity, Islam and Judaism can be compared and contrast. Although all three may be very different they have many similarities. All three religious groups believe in one God.

Each religious group has a holy book in which they follow. Christianity has the bible, Islam the Quern, and Judaism the Torah. Another subject all three religions have in common is sin. Each group believes in sin and that forgiveness is deed to be asked for that sin in order to enter the afterlife. Lastly, each religious group believes in salvation. Each group believes that salvation is gained through the grace of God (Nonsense, 2011). Although Islam, Christianity, and Judaism have their similarities they also have their differences.

Each of these religious groups believe in Jesus Christ however, each group views his purpose differently. For example, Christianity believes that from true God. " Whereas Islam believes that Jesus Christ is a prophet, sent by Allah and born of the Virgin Mary, but not divine. Lastly Judaism believes that Jesus Christ is an ordinary Jew, not the Messiah nor a divine person (Nonsense, 2011). Another difference lies on their views of women. Both Christianity and Judaism believe that women are equal and can worship equally with men.

However, Islam believes men and women should worship separately. Each religious group has a different house of worship. Jew warship in a synagogue, Christians in churches and Salami's mosques. Lastly all three groups differ in diet. Jews diet consists of foods that need to be kosher as well as no pork or certain seafood; other meat must be killed by kosher teeth; and have a

separation of meat and dairy (Brenner, 2007). Salami's diet consists of no pork, and other meat should be prepared by the hall method as well as no alcohol.