

The culture and practices in islam theology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The origins of Islam are from Saudi Arabia, it is a religious tradition that is monotheistic. The literal meaning of the word Islam is submission to God Julie Williams, 2008 This complete code of life is based on the divine revelations preached by Prophet Muhammad (p. b. u. h) it addresses all aspects of life: spiritual, social, moral, intellectual, political, economical etc. Its teachings show us how to surrender to Allah's will in every area of life, Who is the supreme creator and sustainer of this world. The sacred scripture of Islam is the Quran, which is the compilation of all the divine revelations sent to Holy Prophet (p. b. u. h) and were taught by him. The underlying principle which is the foundation of Islam is that there is only one God, Allah. He has no equal or any partner.

Five Pillars of Islam are its unifying characteristic; they are the primary aspect of religion. These five pillars include Tauhid, which is the first and most important; it is faith in one true God, Allah. The second is Salah or Namaz, which is the ritual prayer Muslims are required to perform five times a day. Fasting is the third pillar of Islam where Muslims fast for a whole month. Zakat, the charity compulsory on certain wealth is the fourth pillar, the fifth pillar is Hajj, which is a pilgrimage a Muslim with enough wealth is required to take at least once in his lifetime.

Apart from the five pillars of Islam, there are also six articles of faith. These include:

Belief in One God

Belief in all the prophets

Belief in the four original Holy scriptures

Belief in the angels

Belief in the Hereafter and day of judgement

Belief in Divine verdict

Muslims are usually distinguished by their devotion to the obligation of praying five times to Allah in a day. Another defining characteristic of Islam is pre-eminence of the sacred places, which are Makah, Medina and Jerusalem. A ritual of Muslims is to gather in a congregation at mosque to pray and worship Allah, also study the divine scripture, Quran. The distinction as to who is better in the Muslim community is based on solely the individual Muslim's devotion to serving in the path of Allah. The universal aspect of Islam caused it to expand almost instantly after it evolved in Arabian Peninsula, in the present world it has spread across Africa, Europe, Asia and rest of the world. Although most of the Muslims are born into faith but Islam always welcomes the converts too (Julie Williams, 2008). Even though Islam originated from Arab region, the Muslims are not necessarily Arab; it is a universal religion which is for everyone across the globe. There are Muslims from almost every nationality in the world, now the Arabs are only 20% of the Muslim population across the world.

The influence of Arab culture on Islam has had effects on those who belonged to other cultures but adopted Islam too. This has created a cultural bond due to similarities that they share among their societies, although these different societies do still have characteristics that clearly distinguish

them. The culture of Islam inherited an Arab culture that was originated in desert, which although is simple yet not in any way unsophisticated.

It has a verbal tradition founded on the broadcast of culture by means of narrative as well as poetry. Although, the largest impact on Islamic civilization is that of the written scripture, the whole civilization is based on the teachings written down and compiled in form of Holy Quran and taught by the Holy Prophet (p. b. u. h).

Arts of animate beings. The focus of Islamic art is on Allah's omnipresence, which cannot be illustrated in any imagery. The calligraphy in Arabic is a famous art form to beautifully write Quranic verses. The Islamic art with its artistry as well as grandeur has not failed to inspire awe over the centuries. An important part of the Islamic culture is its signature art and architecture (Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter, Edwin R. McDaniel, 2009) which is marked by floral decorative patterns and abstract art. The fundamental aspect of Islamic art is that it is devoid of illustrations of living beings, especially humans according to the teachings of Islam, since it is forbidden in religion to paint or draw portraits of animate beings. The focus of Islamic art is on Allah's omnipresence, which cannot be illustrated in any imagery. The calligraphy in Arabic is a famous art form to beautifully write Quranic verses. The Islamic art with its artistry as well as grandeur has not failed to inspire awe over the centuries.

Critically outlines how the history and practices of Islam shape the lives of Muslims today in a short paragraph

Most of the practices which are prevailing in Muslim world of today are not mentioned in The Quran. Although, the saying of Holy Prophet (p. b. u. h) and his conduct of every day life provide the Muslims of today the basis for traditions and the practices of today in form of Sunnah. The Sunnah and Hadith of holy Prophet (p. b. u. h) provides a guiding path for all the Muslims of today from every day rituals like eating with the right hand, growing beard for men and hijab to cover the head for women, greeting another Muslim with salaam etc to major issues like marriage and legal problems. In the troubled world of today however, it is crucial to be able to differentiate as to what is true to Islamic nature and what only a part of culture. Many of the customs that prevail in today's Muslim world have no roots in either Quran or Sunnah.

Compare Islamic culture with other cultures

Islam is one of the three Divine religions, other two being Judaism and Christianity which preceded Islam but were annulled when Allah sent the message of Islam through Holy Prophet (p. b. u. h), which was to be the last and universal religion for the entire mankind.

The preceding cultures have various similarities but major differences in comparison to Islam. Let's take Judaism for instance, there are many differences among these two religions yet they all originate from one basic difference. Although they both believe in One God, they have difference in the belief of Prophet, Islam is based on the teachings that Holy Prophet (p. b. u. h) came with and believes him to be the Last Prophet. Where as Jews

believe only in the prophet hood of Moses. According to Islamic belief any who denies that Holy Prophet Muhammad (p. b. u. h) was the last prophet would be doomed to an eternity in hell. There are other contrasting beliefs in both the religions too, for example Jews believe prophet Ismail to be an idolater where as Muslims respect him as prophet of Allah.

Christianity and Islam have a lot of similarities. Both of them hold the belief in Prophet's, Divine scriptures, day of judgement/resurrection, importance of religion. Many of the teachings in their scriptures are similar too, although the Original transcript of Bible has now been tampered with. Regardless of these similarities there are a lot of crucial differences too.

Their Understanding of Allah is very different, in Islam God is one and only with no equals where as in Christianity they deem Jesus to be the son of God. In Christian culture, the belief of divine revelation is that God himself appeared to preach and provide redemption. Islam on the other hand looks upon revelation as a form of guidance.

Aside from difference of islam with these two major religion cultures, since islam has spread across the world, its true culture has taken various changes depending on the region it exists in, for example in subcontinent, Malaysia and Indonesia. The influence of hindu culture is dominant on muslim practices too, since the people that converted to islam and formed muslim communities there were originally hindus. Practices like lighting candles on the last seven Ramadan nights has been adopted from a Hindu festival, so are many of the customs involved in marriage that require bride and groom to sit centre stage and get appraised and blessed by the crowd. These

practices are contrasting to what is truly Islamic and have no origins in islam whatsoever.