

# Islam essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Islam is not only considered to be a spiritual connection to God, but it is a way of life; how one remembers God on day to day basis by not only praying five times a day but also by abiding to the rules and regulations that he has bestowed upon adherents for prevention of sin. The quote “ If you want to be free of all affliction and suffering, hold fast to god, and turn wholly to him” is accredited to Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali (c. 1058–1111), a highly significant Islamic Scholar during the “ Islamic Golden Era”.

Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali is recognised as a significant scholar throughout the Islamic faith, particularly to both Sunni and Sufi members. Firstly, his ability as a Fiqh scholar (Islamic jurisprudence) was great; through his study of Islamic Fiqh sciences, he was able to come up with various approaches, which significantly impacted upon Islam. From his ability as a Fiqh scholar, he was able to form judgements objectively. Al Ghazali’s impact on the development of Islam can be seen in his accomplished synthesis of the areas of; theology, philosophy, law and mysticism.

He has made significant contributions to each of these disciplines yet what is often referred to as his most significant contribution was his ability to bring out the best from all these disciplines and strands of Islam in a way that provided strength and maturity to Islamic thought. Al Ghazali was a Sunni and Sufi philosopher of the 11th and 12th century, during the Golden Age, a period of great economic growth and stability and a time when both knowledge and power was at its peak. He was born in 1058 AD in Tus, Persia and impacted greatly upon the Islamic faith, particularly toward Sunni and Sufi members.

Al Ghazali provided a positive impact upon the Islamic faith and its million of devotees and still continues to do so today through his many works.

Educated in Tus, Persia, at the Nishapur School as well as at the Nizamayyah School in Baghdad, Al Ghazali excelled in Islamic sciences. In 1095, Al Ghazali experienced a personal crisis and had many questions about his life and where his faith was headed. He went on a pilgrimage to question both his belonging and faith. It was throughout his time that his beliefs in Sufism became strong, the perspective of the quote if exemplified in this.

After his personal crisis, he became a Sufi, believed by many members of Islam as the ‘ inner or mystical dimension of Islam’. Al Ghazali believed this approach to Sufism provided him with a closer relationship to Allah and a better understanding of his own beliefs. The significance of Hajj to adherents of Islam reiterates the influence the perspective “ if you want to be free of all afflicted and suffering, hold fast to god, turn wholly to him” on the nature and practise of Islam. Hajj is an integrated part of the life of a Muslim because of its position as one of the five pillars of faith.

This pillar expresses the obligatory pilgrimage to the Ka’ba in Mecca that all followers are expected to take at least once in their lifetime. This experience has great effect on the Hajjis that partake in the pilgrimage as it unites the Muslim community, and bring them closer to Allah and the core teachings of their religion. The community also receives positive effects from this significant practice due to its unification. Hajj is composed of many rituals that symbolize important events in the history of Islam which are represented in the Quran.

As Hajjis perform these rituals, they are reinforcing their belief in the Quran and their submission to Allah. “ Perform the pilgrimage and the visit [to Mecca] for Allah” Surah 2: 196. The perspective that “ if you want to be free of all afflicted and suffering, hold fast to god, turn wholly to him” is expressed through the rituals of Hajj. Hajj takes place on the 8th to the 13th of the last month of the Islamic calendar, Thul Hijjah. Before undertaking the pilgrimage, Muslims should pay debts and correct past wrongs as Hajj is seen as an opportunity for new beginnings.

The essence of Islam is to surrender to Allah; “ hold fast to god, and turn wholly to him”. This surrender is epitomised in the undertaking of Hajj. Hajj requires considerable sacrifice and commitment on the part of the pilgrim and this assists them to attain the appropriate inner disposition of surrender. The Hajj is in seven stages. Ibram is the purification stage the individual must enter a mentally/spiritually and physically pure state, adorn two pieces of white cloth, bathe and verbally state their intension to perform Hajj.

Talbiyah is the stage of prayer, the adherent first declares their intension to perform Hajj only for the glory of Allah the repeats the prayer three times. Tawaf is the stage of circling the Kaba. Sa’y is where the pilgrims walk between the two hills of Mecca, this is followed by repentance, prayer and reflection; known as wuguf. The stage of Mina is where they travel to Mina and throw pebbles gathered at Muzdalifah and throw them at white pillars to symbolize the rejection of temptation and ultimate surrender to Allah.

Id-UI Adha “ festival of sacrifice” is the final stage of Hajj it’s the celebration of the prophet Abraham’s willingness to sacrifice his son as an act of

obedience, the sacrifice of animals is performed. The personal struggle to follow Hajj in all its stages is to visibly support the promotion and expansion of Islam, and demonstrates the individual's acceptance of the Qur'an and respect Muhammad. Hajj clearly shows how the perspective; " If you want to be free of all affliction and suffering, hold fast to god, and turn wholly to him", influences the nature and significantly the practise of Islam.

Muslims regard abortion as wrong and haram (forbidden), but many accept that it may be permitted in certain cases. Many schools of Muslim law accept that abortion is permitted if continuing the pregnancy would put the mother's life in real danger. This is the only reason accepted for abortion after 120 days of the pregnancy. Different schools of Muslim law hold different views on whether any other reasons for abortion are permitted, and at what stage of pregnancy if so. Some schools of Muslim law permit abortion in the first 16 weeks of pregnancy, while others only permit it in the first 7 weeks.

However, even those scholars who would permit early abortion in certain cases still regard abortion as wrong, but do not regard it as a punishable wrong. The more advanced the pregnancy, the greater the wrong. The Qur'an does not explicitly refer to abortion but offers guidance on related matters. Scholars accept that this guidance can properly be applied to abortion. The Islamic view is based on the very high priority the faith gives to the sanctity of life. The Qur'an states; " Whosoever has spared the life of a soul, it is as though he has spared the life of all people. Whosoever has killed a soul, it is as though he has murdered all of ankind. "

Qur'an 5: 32. Most Muslim scholars would say that a foetus in the womb is recognised and protected by Islam as a human life. Islam allows abortion to save the life of the mother because it sees this as the 'lesser of two evils' and there is a general principle in Sharia of choosing the lesser of two evils. The Qur'an makes it clear that a foetus must not be aborted because the family fear that they will not be able to provide for it – they should trust Allah to look after things: " Kill not your offspring for fear of poverty; it is We who provide for them and for you.

Surely, killing them is a great sin. " Qur'an 17: 32. The same (and related) texts also ban abortion on social or financial grounds relating to the mother or the rest of the family – e. g. that the pregnancy wasn't planned and a baby will interfere with the mother's life, education or career. Some scholars state that abortion where the mother is the victim of a rape or of incest is permissible in the first 120 days of the pregnancy. Others say abortion for such reasons is never permitted.

Explaining the difficulty of such a case, one scholar says: " I believe that the value of life is the same whether this embryo is the result of fornication with relatives or non-relatives or valid marriage. In Sharia life has the same value in all cases". Sheikh M. A. Al-Salami, Third Symposium on Medical Jurisprudence If it is confirmed in the early period of pregnancy that a foetus suffers from a defect that can't be treated and that will cause great suffering to the child, a number of scholars would say that it is permissible to abort, provided that the pregnancy is less than 120 days old.

Widely quoted is a resolution of the Islamic jurisprudence council of Makkah Al Mukaramah (the Islamic World League) passing a Fatwa in its 12th session held in February 1990. This allowed abortion if the foetus was: grossly malformed with untreatable severe condition proved by medical investigations and decided upon by a committee formed by competent trustworthy physicians, and provided that abortion is requested by the parents and the foetus is less than 120 days computed from moment of conception.

Attributed, Makkah Al Mukaramah, February 1990 Islam forbids the termination of a pregnancy after soul or ‘Ruh’ is given to the foetus. There’s disagreement within Islam as to when this happens. The three main opinions are; at 120 days, at 40 days, when there is voluntary movement of the foetus (This usually happens during the 12th week of gestation but many women don’t notice the movement until much later – sometimes as late as 20 weeks).

A relevant hadith suggests that the moment of ensoulment is 120 days: Narrated Abdullah: Allah’s Apostle, the true and truly inspired said, “(as regards your creation), every one of you is collected in the womb of his mother for the first forty days, and then he becomes a clot for another forty days, and then a piece of flesh for another forty days. Then Allah sends an angel to write four words: He writes his deeds, time of his death, means of his livelihood, and whether he will be wretched or blessed (in religion).

Then the soul is breathed into his body... ” Sahih Bukhari, Volume 4, Book 55, Number 549 However, it’s important to note that many scholars believe

that life begins at conception, and that all scholars believe that an embryo deserves respect and protection at all stages of the pregnancy. The quote “If you want to be free of all afflicted and suffering, hold fast to God, turn wholly to him” is highly relevant to the nature and practice of Islam as explored through Al Ghazali’s significance and impact, the practice of Hajj and the ethical views on Abortion.