

Spread of islam essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Islam or “ peace” when translated is the name of one of the religions with the largest following to date. The Arabic word, “ Islam” also means surrendering one’s will and pleasure to Allah. It was the name given to the religion preached by Muhammad. One thousand four hundred years has passed since the Angel Gabriel revealed the message of Islam to the Prophet Muhammad. Such message was then preserved in the holy book of the Muslim, called the Qur’an.

The teachings of Islam comprise every conceivable circumstance and its rules of conduct are universal and timeless (Islam. om, Inc. , 2000). The central message of Islam is that there exists only one true god, and he is Allah.

He is worthy of praise. His works must be cared for with kindness and compassion. Muhammad was the last Prophet sent by Allah to be his servant and messenger. The Muslims, as the believers of Islam are called has five main obligations, namely, to bear witness to the unity between Allah and the Prophet Muhammad; to fast during the Ramadan; to observe the recommended prayer; to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca and to pay the Zakat (Islam. com, Inc.

, 2000). The Prophet MuhammadThe year was 570 a time when Christianity has not yet gone full swing in Europe, the same year when Muhammad was born. He was an Arab who came from the Hashim, a very poor clan in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. His father died before he was born and his mother soon followed when the little Muhammad was just 6 years of age. As an orphan, it was his uncle who raised and trained him to become a merchant as a form of

livelihood (Ismalicity, 2001). He grew up in poverty since there was no way he can inherit the wealth of his deceased father.

At the age of 25, he met his soon to be wife, Khadija, a rich widow (Islam. com, Inc. , 2000). It has been a tradition to put the words “ peace be upon him, or its abbreviation, pbuh” as a sign of respect whenever the name of Muhammad and other prophets are mentioned.

Muhammad was in his forties when he began to preach Islam in Mecca. It was the message that initially revealed to him by the Angel Gabriel three years ago (Islam. com, Inc. , 2000). The Muslims The believers in the one Allah and accepts Muhammad as the one sent to be His messenger are called Muslims.

It is an Arabic word which means he who submits to Allah. From across the globe, they are united by one faith. Differences in culture, tradition and race are set aside to praise the one, sovereign and “ tawhid” Allah (IslamiCity, 2001). Muslims find the terms Muhammadans to be erroneous. They reason that such reference would mean that it is Muhammad whom they worship and not Allah.

The largest Muslim communities are concentrated in the Middle East, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, North Africa, the Soviet Union and Bangladesh (Islam. com, Inc. , 2000). They live a life of compassion, forgiveness and peace (IslamiCity, 2001). They keep the faith in knowing that the road towards spiritual development is made available to all of humanity. They believe that it is through genuine and diligent worship that one may be able to draw close to Allah.

Drawing close to Allah must be the kind of relationship every Muslim must seek to aspire. This challenge fills one's heart with faith and strength (Islam. com. Inc. , 2000).

By uttering the words " Allah is the one true god, there is no other gods besides him and the Prophet Muhammad is Allah's messenger," one may be regarded as a Muslim. This is their profession of faith before Allah's messengers and the teachings they preached (IslamiCity, 2001). Mecca The city of Mecca, also known in Arabic as Makkah is the heart of the Islamic faith. It is also the place where the Prophet Muhammad was born.

Mecca is the place where he first established the Islam religion. It is situated in the Mountains of Sirat found at the central part of Saudi Arabia. It is found 45 miles inland coming from the Jiddah or Jeddah port of the Red Sea. In the days of old, Mecca was believed to be a sanctuary on the ancient trade route forming the link between the Mediterranean world with South Arabia and Asia and East Africa (Gray, 2006). It has evolved into a significant trade and religious hub during the Roman and Byzantine eras. It came to be called as the Makkah.

The Hijaz is the consecrated land where the city of Mecca and Medina may be found. It is at the western portion of the Arabian peninsula. The Hijaz is a tapered strip of land stretching for about 875 miles long at the eastern portion of the Red Sea. The Tropic of Cancer runs across its center. The word " hijaz" means barrier. It is so called because it has the Mountains of Sirat forming its backbone.

These mountains has volcanic summits and natural disaster building a bleak and rugged surroundings subjugated by extreme sunlight and slight rain fall (Gray, 2006). Old Arabian traditions have it that it was when the first men on earth, in the person of Adam and Eve were cast away from paradise they fell to different places. Adam on one hand was found at one of the mountains located at the Serendip Island or Sri Lanka. Eve, on the other hand was found near the Jeddah port along the Red Sea border. The two wandered separately for about 200 years. Ultimately, deliberating their misery and repentance, Allah allowed them to find each other back.

Their roads did cross again at Mt, Arafat, a place near the present location of the city of Mecca. Adam pleaded Allah to bestow upon him a shrine like the one he adored in at paradise. Allah gave Adam his heart's desire. It is believed that Adam died in Mecca and it was also where his remains were laid.

Eve, on the other hand wa buried in near the Sea of Jeddah, carrying her name Jiddah which would mean maternal forebear when translated in Arabic (Gray, 2006). Mecca gained it religious importance because it was the birth place of the Prophet Muhammad. It is where he first established the religion he founded which was later known the world over as Islam. The year was 630, when the Prophet Muhammad gained control over the city. A total of 360 pagan idols were wrecked except for the statues of the Prophet Jesus and his mother, Mary.

A huge stone located atop the Ka'ba is the statue of the Hubal. It was the largest statue in all of Mecca. Ali was commanded by his cousin, the Prophet

Muhammad to step on the latter's shoulders and overthrow the Hubal statue down the ground (Gray, 2006). Muslims go on a pilgrimage to the holiest shrine of Islam called the Kaaba. It is a square building in the Great Mosque located at Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The Islamic law states that Muslims must visit Mecca at least once.

Prohibited to non - Muslims, Mecca began to represent the confidentialities and ambiguities of the orient for the Europeans. It came to attract quest and discovery. To date, Mecca still forbids the entry of people other than those belonging to the Islam faith (Gray, 2006).

The number of people who perform the Hajj every year registers to 2, 000, 000. This pilgrimage unifies people from all walks of life, race, language and culture to gather for one purpose. Certainly, Muslims do visit the city of Mecca on a daily basis. For in a day, people arrive here not just once but five times which is in the Shi'a sect is equivalent to three times. Amounting to millions, these devotees fall on their knees and pray. Nevertheless, be it at a grand mosque, an isolated spot in the wilds or in the comfort of one's own home, the venue where one has to pray must face towards the direction of the city of Mecca and then form a unity with the Ka'ba through an unseen line of way known as the " qibla" (Gray, 2006).

The Qur'an The Islamic holy book is called the Qur'an. It is where the absolute message of Islam can be found. It contains the message that was delivered by the Angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad. Eventually such recitations formed the heart and soul the religion he founded (Islam. om Inc.

, 2000). If there is one superb literary work in the history of Islam, it would be none other than the holy Qur'an. Written in Arabic, it contains the definitive word of Allah spoken to the last Prophet he sent, Muhammad. It was the Angel Gabriel who delivered the message to the Prophet Muhammad. Whoever reads it should come into the realization that it is the voice of Allah in all certainty.

Since it is the direct communication between Allah and the Prophet Muhammad, translating the text of the Qur'an is equivalent to a sin of blasphemy. It is an unpardonable tampering of the words of Allah (Hooker, 1996). Even so, the holy Qur'an has gone from Arab to Farsi and Turkish translations over the century. It has been declaimed in religious gatherings using these native languages.

Muslims put up this kind of behavior but only to a certain degree. Being a Muslim connotes that generally, he must be able to read and comprehend Arabic whatever language his native tongue speaks, for all intents and purposes (Hooker, 1996). Monotheism The words tawhid and shirk are inseparable to the term we know as monotheism. On one hand, the word tawhid literally means " declaring Allah as one.

Shirk, on the other means " attributing partners with Allah. " In this light, it can be said that tawhid is monotheistic and shirk is idolatrous or polytheistic (Al-Muhajabah's Islamic Pages, 2002). Before the Prophet Muhammad revealed the message of the Angel Gabriel to him, Arabs already believe in a God being the creator of all things. But then again, while they acknowledge the power of God, they also believe in other gods, thus they are polytheistic.

In the advent of Islam, they were convinced that truly, there is one and true Allah that is worthy of praise. The belief to just one god is called monotheism (Islam Set, 2008). Before Islam, people were ignorant about Allah or jihiliya. Islamic references claim that Islam caused a full break from Arab beliefs about the most High and a major conversion of the belief in Him (Islam Set, 2008). The doctrine of Islam upholds that the religion carry on the monotheistic beliefs of other two religions, namely, Christianity and Judaism. Even though it is a belief in Islam that the fundamental message of Christianity and Judaism came from Allah, Muslims also believe that both Christians and Jews ultimately distorted them.

The self - professed mission of the religion, henceforth, is to bring back what they believe to be the true monotheistic tradition as well as to replace the earlier legal system of the Christian and Hebrew customs with a modern Islamic decree that is consistent with the ever changing situations happening in the society (Islam Set, 2008). The true essence of monotheism is not the glorification of Allah alone. One must have the right knowledge, understanding and motivation to be truly monotheistic. Indeed, pursuing monotheism is a continuous struggle. Not so many people have actually arrived at perfection in this pursuit (Al-Muhajabah's Islamic Pages, 2002).

The Spread of Islam in the United States The religion that has been regarded as the one " spread by the sword" is also the religion with the largest following to date not only in the United States but all over the world ().

Over 1. 2 million people adhere to Islam and they are continually growing in number (Gray, 2006). In the United States alone, Muslims register more than six million (Gray, 2006). The significant rise in the Muslim population in the

country may be attributed to the conversion of a great number of Americans to the faith. The converts to the religion grows at an approximate rate of 135, 000 Muslims annually (Gray, 2006).

The largest group of converts to the religion is composed of American women. It is estimated that in the year 2025, a ratio of one is to four people in the world will be converted to Islam (Gray, 2006). The presence of mosques as well as Islamic centers in the country may have significantly contributed to the rapid spread of Islam in the United States. Islamic schools, centers, and mosques in the country are already about 2000 (Gray, 2006). The rate of the spread of the religion is testament to the powerful message Islam has for all those who come to believe. Diversity as embraced in the Islamic religion In the Islamic religion, the existence of diversity in the world is well acknowledged.

Allah has created the world where each and every creature is distinctly different from everyone else. The Qur'an regards such diversity as signs from Allah (Tariq, 2004). Through diversity, the creative wisdom and power of Allah is manifested. It is through it that life on earth is made even richer and more beautiful. All of humanity is encouraged to benefit from diversity and not to produce unhealthy divisions and differences as a result of it.

In the Islamic religion, not all viewpoints are regarded as correct or of the same value. Nonetheless, it is also the fact well acknowledged in the religion that almost always the differences in standpoints, otherwise known as "ikhtifal" are also a symbol of Allah's mercy (Tariq, 2004). If a common standpoint would please Allah, He could have forced the people to believe in

one truth; but He did not. He willfully sent His Messengers and Prophets every so often in order to lay down the path of righteousness for the faithful. Those who followed the way towards righteousness and those who did not will face the final judgment on the day Allah has planned.

On that day, no one else but Allah will judge all of humanity. Allah has forbidden His Prophets as well as the faithful from resorting to oppression in religion. As stated in the Qur'an, in religion, there is not coercion (Tariq, 2004). It is necessary to consider the diversity of cultures in the world today. This is what affects the manner on which the Muslims communicate their association to Islam. Even while they are united by one Credo and share the same traditions, the Muslim, the world over logically partake of a host of cultural setting.

Beginning at Asia to North America and Europe, from North to West Africa, extends a melting pot of different cultures that allows the possibility for respecting the Islamic principles at the same time embracing the way of life, feelings, thoughts and tastes of one and the other. Setting aside cultural differences, Arab, European, American, Asian or African, all share the same religion. This is the truth that has an influence on their distinctiveness, sense of place and vision of current topics (Tariq, 2004). It is about time to expand the world's perspective. The world needs to know how to capture the dynamics of the religion in the term of its own, by means of its unique terminology, internal classification and logical organization.

They need to penetrate into a different referential world. They need to attempt to discern between the factor which provides that world its unity

between that which clarifies and offers the potential of complexity (Tariq, 2004). The time has come for us to exhibit humility. It is about time to value complexity. Let the need for greater research and the deferment of impulsive and uncertain judgment be recognized.

After all, the trademark of respect for others is the recognition of the complexity they find in their neighbors as well as in themselves. It is the recognition of their craving for human dignity and the acknowledgment that like theirs, the religion of others are worthy of mutual respect (Tariq, 2004).