

from selfishness, greed, extravagance and other vices.

**The Charity (Zakah-Fourth pillar of Islam):** By the order of God once a year every able Muslim who has wealth above certain limit must pay a certain amount (2.5%) of their excess wealth to the poor and needy. It purifies one's wealth and carries many benefits for both the giver and the receiver. One benefit is that it reduces the gap between the rich and the poor and ensures an equitable society where everyone has a right to contribute and share. Muslims are always encouraged to give more of their time, labor and wealth as voluntary charity (Sadaqa) for the sake of God.

**The Pilgrimage (Hajj-Fifth pillar of Islam):** By the order of God pilgrimage to Makkah in Saudi Arabia, must be performed at least once in a lifetime, if she/he is physically and financially able. It occurs annually in the 12th month of the Islamic calendar, unifying people of every color, race, status and age, as they join in worship of the One Absolute God. All pilgrims wear simple and similar clothing, which strip away distinctions of class and culture, so that all stand equal before God. This great journey consists of many components which are of Abrahamic origin, including rituals and sacrifices, travelling and praying at various locations.

**PROPHET MUHAMMAD** (peace be upon him)  
Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) a descendent of Abraham thru Ishmael, the awaited Prophet prophesized by Moses (Bible, Deuteronomy 18:17-19), the final messenger of Allah, was born in Makkah, Arabia, around year 570 CE. His father died before his birth and his mother died when he was only six. He received first revelation from Allah at the age of forty.

The people of Makkah at that time used to worship idols. The Prophet invited them to Islam. Some of them accepted and became Muslims, while others rebuked him and turned against him. In the 13th year of his prophethood, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) migrated from Makkah to Madinah.

The Prophet organized the early Muslims and preached the message of Allah with patience and profound wisdom. Eventually Islam was established in the whole of Arabia and beyond and was set to make a tremendous contribution to the history and civilization of the world. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) died around 632 CE at the age of 63. He left behind the Quran and his Sunnah (recorded in Hadith) as the source of guidance for mankind.

**(1400 years have passed since his death yet no one anywhere in the world came after him and claimed prophethood in a big way which itself is a proof of finality of his message and messenger ship.)**

## MARRIAGE & SOCIAL MANNERS

Marriage is the basis of family life in Islam. Islam does not allow the free mixing of men and women; nor does it allow sex before marriage. The husband and wife are

complementary partners of the family who are equal in the sight of God and play their respective role in the family and society.

Islam teaches decency, humility and good manners. Keeping promises, truthfulness, justice, fair play, helping the poor and needy, respect for parents, teachers and elders, love for children and good relations with neighbors and relatives are the most valued virtues of a Muslim

## DIET AND DRESS

Muslims are encouraged to eat and live healthy. Just as mentioned in Bible, Islamic law requires certain allowed animal to be slaughtered in a specific way for consumption. Pork and blood are also forbidden which is also in line with the teachings of Prophet Moses and Jesus. All varieties of alcoholic drinks are prohibited. Both men and women are expected to dress in a way which is modest and dignified. No particular dress is recommended. However, men must cover their body modestly and women must cover their whole body except the face and hands when in public.

## FINALLY

ISLAM CONDEMNS ALL ACTS OF TERRORISM & VIOLENCE AGAINST INNOCENT PEOPLE AND RESERVES THE MOST SEVERE PUNISHMENT FOR THOSE TERRORIST/CRIMINALS IN THIS LIFE AND HEREAFTER. As God said in Quran, "-- if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land - it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind."(Quran translation 5:32)

## HOW TO BECOME A MUSLIM

According to Islam all people are born sinless and as Muslim. It is as they grow up take on other path based on their family, society and information available to them. So when one is ready to come back to her/ his natural religion all she/he has to do is take the SHAHADAH, ". "There is no deity worthy of worship except God, Muhammad is the messenger of God". With this declaration of faith God forgives all her/his past sins and thus one restarts her/his journey of Islam-- the Straight Path to paradise and God.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit a Mosque near you.

Call toll free: 1.877.949.47523 or 1-800-662-ISLAM

Visit **www.whyislam.org** & **www.thedeenshow.com**

For Quran: **www.quranexplorer.com** or **www.quran.com**

Your Local Mosque: Masjid An-Noor

1300 Fairfield Ave, Bridgeport, CT-06605.

203-579-2211 or **www.masjidan-noor.com**

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## A COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROJECT TO EXPLAIN ISLAM & MUSLIMS

## SHORT INTRODUCTION TO ISLAM

## WHAT IS ISLAM

The Arabic word "Islam" means total submission or surrender to One and Only true God worthy of worship and thus acquiring Peace. Islam is both a religion and complete way of life. Islam is not a new religion but the final affirmation, culmination and fulfillment of the same basic truth that God revealed through all His prophets beginning with Prophet Adam and ending with Prophet Muhammad- to all people. A way of life symbolized by peace - peace with God, peace within oneself, and peace with the creations of God through submission to God alone and commitment to His guidance.

## WHO ARE MUSLIMS

Followers of Islam are called Muslims. Approximately 1.8 billion Muslims (a quarter of world's population) from all races, nationalities, and cultures live all over the world. There are estimated to be about 4 to 6 million Muslims live in America. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Islam is the world's fastest-growing religion by number of conversions each year.

## CONCEPT OF GOD IN ISLAM

Monotheism, belief in One Absolute God, is the most important and foundational concept in Islam. Muslims believe in one God Who is Eternal and Absolute, Who created everything seen and unseen, Who is free of all imperfection, needs, wants and has power over everything. God is unique, independent and exalted above everything. God's attributes and greatness cannot be compared to God's creation. God is the Only One deserving of any worship and the ultimate purpose of all creation is to submit to God alone.

"Allah" is the Arabic word for "God" (Arab Christians uses the word Allah for God). Muslims do not worship a different God than Christians and Jews. However, it is important to understand that Jews, Christians, and Muslims all have different concepts of the same Almighty God. For example, Muslims reject the Christian belief of Trinity and Divine Incarnation. Muslims also reject the human like qualities,