

Discovering Islam

BY THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST BENEFICENT, THE MOST MERCIFUL

Islam, the great monotheistic faith, is currently the world's fastest growing religion. There are over 1.2 billion Muslims throughout the world, and over 6 million in the United States. Muslims live in every country in the world, and it is estimated that by the year 2025, one third of the world will be Muslim, with Islam surpassing Christianity as the world's most populous faith. The word "Islam" comes from the Arabic root "S-L-M" which means peace. Muslims believe that true inner peace and tranquility are achieved through belief in the one true God (or "Allah" in Arabic), who has no partner or consort, and who is the divine Creator and Sustainer of the universe.

Islam is also the fastest growing religion, by choice, in North America. Every year, thousands of North Americans embrace God's true faith - the faith of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and all of Allah's Prophets (peace be upon them all). Some are attracted by the rational message of Islam and its call to belief in true monotheism. Others are convinced by the Qur'an, a perfect, living miracle that does not contain a single error or inconsistency, and whose truths - both scientific and otherwise - have never been disproven. And still others are attracted by the sublime character of the God's final Messenger, Muhammad (May Allah's peace be upon him and his progeny) and are convinced by the profundities and the simple truths of existence that he expounded. Consider the following testimonies:

It is almost too difficult to describe what it is like for someone who begins to feel Allah in their heart. Islam means so much more than rituals, language, culture or country. Islam is a glorious state of being, and it is a fundamentally different experience than what I had previously been learning. My husband taught me much of what I know about Islam today. While observing, listening and opening my heart, I slowly began to understand. Allah presents himself to people in different ways, and Allah impacts everyone's life differently. I had to come to an understanding of what Allah meant to me, and why it was necessary that I follow this path of life. I began to learn the meaning and significance behind the rituals I had only before observed at a primitive level. I began to read Qur'an for hours at a time. Allah began to reach out to me and fill the vast hole that was in my heart. For when an individual does not follow the path of Allah, they are in a constant search for that missing element. And once I stopped refusing the knowledge of

Islam and opened my heart to my fellow Muslims and the teachings of the Qur'an, the transition was as easy as eating a piece of pecan pie.

Themise Cruz, 1997

In 1997 my fiancée had given me the Qur'an as a gift, simply because I loved to read... When she gave me the Qur'an it caused a fight between us and we had separated for quite some time. Eventually I had picked it up and began reading it. I can remember that very day. The house was crystal clean, the air was soft and sweet and the lighting was dim and perfect for reading. It was the translation from Abdullah Yusuf Ali. I read his introduction, the first 3 pages, and I began to cry like a baby. I cried and cried and I couldn't help myself. I knew that this was what I was looking for and I wanted to beat myself to death for not finding it earlier. I just knew in my heart how magical it was. This was not the Islam I knew. This was not the Arab thing I was taught to think was dirty. This was my life wrapped up in a few pages. Every page told my life. I was reading my soul and it felt good, but regretful. After this I had reunited with my fiancée and we discussed the whole matter maturely. Shortly afterward we both accepted Islam and were willing to live our lives as Muslims...

James Farrell, 1998

Moderation and temperance in all things, the keynotes of Islam, won my unqualified approbation. The health of his people was cherished by the Prophet, who enjoined them to observe strict cleanliness and specified fasts and to subordinate carnal appetites ... when I stood in the inspiring mosques of Istanbul, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, Algiers, Tangier, Fez and other cities, I was conscious of a powerful reaction [to] the potent uplift of Islam's simple appeal to the sense of higher things, unaided by elaborate trappings, ornamentations, figures, pictures, music and ceremonial ritual. The mosque is a place of quiet contemplation and self-effacement in the greater reality of the One God.

Colonel Donald S. Rockwell (U.S.A.)

(Poet, Critic & Author)

I have known very many instances of zealous Protestants who have thought it their duty to visit Roman Catholic homes in order to make 'converts' of the inmates. Such irritating and unneighbourly conduct is, of course, very obnoxious, and has invariably led to much ill-feeling — stirring up strife and tending to bring religion into

contempt. I am sorry to think that Christian missionaries have also tried these methods with their Muslim brethren; though, I am at a loss to conceive, why should they try to convert those who are already better Christians than they are themselves? I say 'better Christians' advisedly, because charity, tolerance and broad-mindedness in the Muslim faith come nearer to what Christ himself taught than do the somewhat narrow tenets of the various Christian Churches.

In the present day men are prone to become atheists when asked to subscribe to dogmatic and intolerant beliefs, and there is doubtless a craving for a religion appealing to the intelligence as well as to the sentiments of men. Whoever heard of a Muslim turning atheist? There may have been some cases, but I very much doubt it. There are thousands of men — and women, too, I believe — who are at heart Muslims, but convention, fear of adverse comments, and desire to avoid any worry or change, conspire to keep them from openly admitting the fact. I have taken the step.

Lord Headley al-Farooq

(formerly Rt. Hon. Sir Rowland George Allanson)

And when I received the book [The Qur'an], a guidance that would explain everything to me - who I was; what was the purpose of life; what was the reality and what would be the reality; and where I came from - I realized that this was the true religion; religion not in the sense the West understands it, not the type for only your old age. In the West, whoever wishes to embrace a religion and make it his only way of life is deemed a fanatic. I was not a fanatic, I was at first confused between the body and the soul. Then I realized that the body and soul are not apart and you don't have to go to the mountain to be religious. We must follow the will of God. Then we can rise higher than the angels. The first thing I wanted to do now was to be a Muslim.

Yusuf Islam

(formerly British pop star Cat Stevens)

One night I was watching the news on television, and of course they were continuing their one-sided half-truth reports on Muslims (always in a negative light instead of balancing it by showing the positive side as well) with images of violence and terrorism. I decided long ago that the news media has no morals whatsoever and will trash anyone for that "juicy story", and I pretty much refused to believe anything they said. I decided to re-

"And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors; most surely there are signs in this for the learned." (5:8)

search Islam for myself and draw my own conclusions.

What I found paled all the negative images that the satanic media spewed forth. I found a religion deep in love and spiritual truth, and constant God-mindfulness. What may be fanaticism to one person may be devotion to another. I picked up a small paperback Qur'an and began devouring everything I could. It opened my eyes to the wonder and mercy of ALLAH, and I found the fascination growing every day...it was all I could think about. No other religion including Catholicism impacted me in such a powerful way...I actually found myself in God-awareness 24 hours a day 7 days a week...each time I went to my five daily prayers, I went with anticipation...finally! What I have been searching for all of my life

David Pradarelli

Many more new Muslims' stories can be found at the following:

www.convertstoislam.org

www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/newmuslims/

Some Thoughts About Guidance:

O mankind! There has indeed come to you an admonition from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts and a guidance and a mercy for the believers. [10:57]

He hath ordained for you the religion which He commended unto Noah, and that which We inspire in thee (Muhammad), and that which We commended unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus, saying: Establish the religion, and be not divided therein. Dreadful for the idolaters is that unto which thou callest them. Allah chooseth for Himself whom He will, and guideth unto Himself him who turneth (toward Him). [42:3]

Those who listen to the word, then follow the best of it; those are they whom Allah has guided, and those it is who possess understanding. [39:18]

This is a clear statement for mankind and a guidance and an admonition for those who guard against evil. [3:138]

He it is Who sent His Apostle with the guidance and the true religion that He may make it prevail over all the religions; and Allah (swt) is enough for a witness. [48:28]

Criterion for Truth

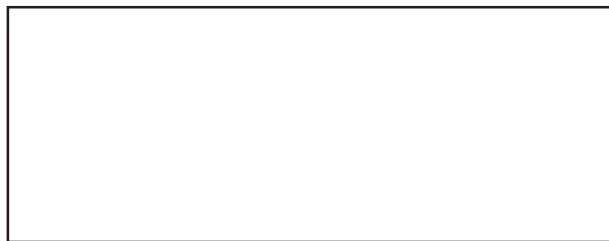
In light of the wisdom of Islam that has just been presented, take some time to consider the following:

- Are the teachings of your belief system rationally tenable?
- Is your belief system universally applicable?
- Does your belief system enhance your progress towards spiritual perfection?
- Who is the creator of your belief system? Is he a creation or is he the Creator?
- Has your belief system been corrupted by superstitions, myths, or man-made philosophies?
- Does your belief system concur with the discoveries of modern science?
- Could a human being have invented your belief system?

To receive your copy of the Qur'an and other Islamic literature, please write to:

Thaqalayn Muslim Association
info@thaqalayn.org

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Inquiries about Islam
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Discovering Islam

At a Glance



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