

# The Truth About Islam

*The Truth About Islam*, the "best, short introduction to Islam," has been published in *Foreign Affairs*, *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, *The Washington Times*, and other publications. Ideal for promoting interfaith understanding, it is available as a poster suitable for your home, office, place of business, or mosque. For answers to questions on Islam see Issues and Answers. For Islamic values see Sayings Of The Prophet.

## The Truth About Islam

Islam means "submission to the Will of God." In its ethical sense Islam signifies "striving after the ideal." A Muslim is one who submits to the Will of God. "Islam" and "Muslim" derive from the same word as the Arabic for "peace." The traditional Muslim greeting is "Peace be unto you."

Islam offers hope for salvation to the righteous and God-fearing of all religions. Muslims believe in the Divine Revelations of many prophets including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad; but do not believe that God (Allah) assumed human form. The Quran, Muslims believe, is God's Word and Final Revelation to The Prophet Muhammad. Revealed over a period of twenty-three years, The Quran was compiled and distributed to distant lands within twenty-five years of The Prophet's death in 632 A.D. This is the only Quran recognized by Muslims.

Comprising laws, moral precepts, and narratives, The Quran's timeless text remains an inspiration and guide for more than one fifth of humanity. Together with The Quran, the epitome of Classical Arabic, Muslims lives are guided by the examples and sayings of The Prophet. Thousands of sayings have been attributed to The Prophet. Some are accepted as authentic; some traced to The Prophet's companions; some are the subject of debate. Some examples:

- "The first thing created by God was the Intellect."
- "The most excellent Jihad is that for the conquest of self."
- "The ink of the scholar is more holy than the blood of the martyr."
- "One learned man is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant worshippers."
- "Riches are not from an abundance of worldly goods, but from a contented mind."
- "Reflect upon God's creation but not upon His nature or else you will perish."
- "He who wishes to enter Paradise at the best door must please his mother and father."
- "No man is a true believer unless he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself."
- "When the bier of anyone passes by you, whether Jew, Christian, or Muslim, rise to your feet."
- "The thing which is lawful, but disliked by God, is divorce."
- "Heaven lies at the feet of mothers."
- "Women are the twin-halves of men."
- "Actions will be judged according to intentions."
- "That which is lawful is clear, and that which is unlawful likewise, but there are certain doubtful things between the two from which it is well to abstain."
- "The proof of a Muslim's sincerity is that he pays no attention to that which is not his business."
- "That person is nearest to God, who pardons ... him who would have injured him."
- yield obedience to my successor, although he may be an Abyssinian slave."
- "Assist any person oppressed, whether Muslim or non-Muslim."
- "The creation is as God's family ... the most beloved unto God is the person who does good to God's family."
- "Modesty and chastity are parts of the Faith."

Islamic Law is based upon The Quran, examples and sayings of The Prophet, consensus among the learned, analogical deduction, and individual reasoning. Islamic society comes closer than any other society to the ideal democracy. All persons are equal before God; goodness is the only criterion of worth. There is no priesthood in Islam; even a child, with greater knowledge of The Quran than his elders, may lead them in prayer. To become a Muslim one need only profess, "There is no god but God! Muhammad is the Messenger of God."