

religions had their origin in truth. with lapse of time, the truth was either forgotten or became overlaid with human inventions. Moreover, some of these teachings were of a local or temporary nature and to these a universal character was later assigned. We believe that the Quran preserves and includes all those teachings that are of a permanent nature and supplies additional teachings of universal nature which satisfy the needs of the people of all countries and can help them in their never ending march to progress.

The establishment of true democracy and universal brotherhood without discrimination of cast, creed, colour or country is the unique and unrivalled distinction of Islam. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things. Virtue and the service of Humanity are matters of real merit. Islam has not only propounded but fulfilled and realised the splendid principles of democracy into the life and actions of human society.

There are five pillars of Islam. Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God and in the divine Messengership of Muhammad<sup>saw</sup>; fixed daily prayers; fasting in the month of Ramadhan; fixed almsgiving and charity; pilgrimage once in one's life to the Holy shrine at Mecca, provided circumstances allow. Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient unless translated into action.

A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and the hereafter.

Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

The following are some of the distinctive features of Islam:

- a. Liberation of women by establishing the equality of both sexes, safeguarding their rights and liberties and raising their status.
- b. Absolute veto on all intoxicants.
- c. Solution of economic problems.
- d. The furnishing of humanity with the noblest practical ethics.
- e. The promotion of science and education.

According to Islam, life after death is the continuation of life on earth. Heaven and Hell begin right from this life. Heaven is eternal and everlasting while Hell is only temporary. Hell is like a place of surgical treatment for the human soul. As soon as the soul is cured, it goes to Heaven. Heaven is attainment of a life of everlasting progress and complete joy and happiness through union with God, and by the development of the fine spiritual qualities and the unlimited capacities that have been implanted in man. The state after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

This is a very brief account of Islam and some of its teachings.

*For further information please contact:*

**UGANDA AHMADIYYA MUSLIM ASSOCIATION**  
(Headquarters)  
Plot 66 Bombo Rd. Wandegaya  
P.O. BOX 98 Kampala

**WHAT  
IS  
ISLAM?**

## بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

### WHAT IS ISLAM ?

Islam literally means peace, surrender of one's will; and to be in amity and concord. The significance of the name Islam is the attainment of a life of perfect peace and eternal happiness through complete surrender to the will of God. The Quran - the Holy Book of the Muslims interprets it be the religion whose teachings are in consonance with human nature. Islam as the Quran has stated (5:4) is the completion of the religion inaugurated god in the beginning of the world on his sending the Quran through the holy prophet Muhammad<sup>saw</sup>. As a child is taught his alphabet; so God taught the religion to the world gradually and little by little by sending His prophets at different times and to different peoples.

When the word reached that stage of understanding; when it was read for final lesson he sent the last and complete Book through the Holy prophet Muhammad<sup>saw</sup>. This Book not only corrects the errors which had found their way into various religions, but preaches the truths which have not been preached before, on account of special circumstances of the society or the early stage of its development. At the same time it gathers together in itself the truths which were contained in any divine revelation granted to any people for the guidance of men (*The Quran 98:4*) lastly it meets all the spiritual and moral requirements of the ever advancing humanity.

This is Islam which is wrongly called Muhammadanism. According to Islam objects of man's life is its complete unfoldment. Islam does not support the idea that man is born in sin. It teaches that everyone has within him the seed of perfect development and it rests solely with a person himself to make or mar his fortune. *We created man in the best make says (Holy Quran 95:5).*

The cardinal doctrine of Islam is the unity of Godhead. There is none worthy of worship but the one and the only God and Muhammad<sup>saw</sup> is His prophet, He is free from all defects, Holy and transcendent. His all Good, all mercy and all power. He has no partner. He neither begets nor is He begotten because these are the traits of frail and weak humanity. Furthermore, Islam help us to establish a permanent relationship with God and to realise Him during our earthly life as our Helper in all our affairs and undertakings. This unity of God is the first and foremost pillar of Islam and every other belief hangs upon it.

Islam requires belief in all the prophets, including Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Krishna, Buddha, Confucius and Zoroaster. (*May peace of Allah be on them*). We regard them all (and many more mentioned here) as heavenly teachers born to reform and regenerate man and lead him to God. Adherents of some other religions may consider it an act of piety to use disrespectful words and heap abuse on the prophets of other religions, but if a Muslim were to show the slightest disrespect towards the founder of any other faith, he has to utter the respectful benediction *Alaihis - Salam (peace be upon him)* after mentioning the name of every prophet. Thus Islam establishes peace between all religions. We draw no line of discrimination. All we add is that the

Holy Prophet<sup>saw</sup> was also a great teacher and a Prophet of God. Due to the magnitude and extent of his work, we regard him as the greatest of them all. Yet we do not believe that the Divine door of prophecy and the door of communication with the Creator is closed for the future. It is now in the footsteps of the Master-prophet Muhammad<sup>saw</sup> that each one has to walk.

Our own age has not been without its own witness. In **Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya movement in Islam**, we have the prophet of the age whose sole mission has been to lead mankind to Islam. That is why we regard Muhammad<sup>saw</sup> as *the seal of Prophets*. Without the yoke of Muhammad<sup>saw</sup>, nobody can be a leader and teacher of mankind. Islam is not a dead religion of myth and wonderful tales of the past. It is a religion full of life for the benefit of the present generation.

The Omniscient, Omnipotent God is still very much alive to those servants who sincerely strive in His faith and whom He honours to one of the four stages, i.e. Prophets, Saints, martyrs and the Righteous (*Quran 4:70*). It also proves beyond all doubt that Islam is the only religion of the present day.

The Holy Quran is the Muslim Scripture. This word of God was revealed to the Holy Prophet Muhammad<sup>saw</sup> fourteen hundred years ago and has been preserved intact without the slightest change. There are countless Muslims who know the entire book by heart. Just as we believe in all the prophets, we believe that all