

## **Are all Muslims Arabs?**

Islam is the religion of over 1.2 billion people in the world today, and only 15-20% of these are Arabs. The countries with the largest Muslim populations are Indonesia and India, which are non-Arab countries. Muslims today come from a wide range of ethnic groups, including Asians, Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics. Arabs, meanwhile, represent a number of different religions, including Christianity and Judaism.

## **What is the difference between Islam and Muslim?**

Islam is the religion that Allah (God) sent through the Prophet Mohammad. The followers of the religion of Islam are called Muslims. "Mohammadan" is a misnomer for Muslims because Prophet Mohammad is not considered the "founder" of Islam. Muslims consider Islam to be the same Divine message sent to the earlier nations in history. Muslims believe in Adam, Noah, Moses, Jacob, Jesus as all divine prophets of God. There is a distinction between what Islam as a religion advocates and what Muslims do. As Islam spread through different regions and cultures over the course of history, some of the Muslim practices have mixed with local customs, which are not necessarily advocated by Islam as a religion. This difference is visible, for example, in the case of women suffrage, which is not allowed in Kuwait, but practiced in Pakistan, Iran, and Malaysia.

## **Do Muslims believe in Original Sin?**

Muslims believe that God is just, and it would be unjust of Him to punish someone for a crime that the person never committed. There is no idea of Original Sin in Islam. Islam teaches that humans are born free of any sins in this world and will be rewarded in the hereafter based on the actions they did in this world.

## **Do Muslims believe in Jesus and Mary?**

Muslims believe in Jesus as one of the divine prophets and Mary to be the chosen one from all women of her time. There is a full chapter in Qur'an (chapter 19) named after Mary.

## **What is the value of learning in Islam?**

The first word revealed to the Prophet Muhammad was, "Read, in the name of your Lord Who created." (Qur'an 96:1) Prophet Muhammad taught the importance of education in these words: "Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave." There is another tradition from the Prophet saying, "Seeking knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim man and woman." Muslim civilizations have contributed to the fields of medicine, mathematics, physics, astronomy, geography, architecture, art, literature, and history. Many crucial systems such as algebra and sophisticated instruments including the astrolabe, the quadrant and

good navigational maps were transmitted to medieval Europe from the Muslims.

## **Veil (Hijab): Identity or Oppression?**

Islamic teachings uphold that both men and women dress in a modest and dignified manner. "Hijab," or head covering, worn by Muslim women, is often wrongly taken as subjugation and oppression, whereas for the people observing hijab, it is part of their Muslim identity; a symbol of piety, similar to that observed by Christian Nuns.

## **Is Jihad terrorism? Does Islam support terrorism?**

The term '*jihad*' literally means 'struggle.' Islam teachings define jihad to be of two kinds: minor jihad and major jihad. The minor jihad is an armed struggle which can be waged only in defense of life and property. The Holy Qur'an states, "Whosoever kills a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind, and whosoever saves the life of one, it shall be as if he had saved the life of all mankind."(5:32) The greater jihad is the individual's internal struggle in the path of God against vices of ego and temptations.

## **What is the place of tolerance in Islam?**

Islam teaches individual freedom and respect for other religions, as it is a

function of Islamic government to protect the rights of minorities. The Holy Qur'an states, "There is no compulsion in religion." (2:256) The Qur'an also emphasizes that all humans are equal in the sight of God. "O mankind! We created you from a single soul, male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may come to know one another. Truly, the most honored of you in God's sight is the greatest of you in piety. God is All-Knowing, All-Aware." (49:13) Special respect is given to Christians and Jews in Islam and they are regarded as the "People of the Book."

*For more information on these topics and more, please visit:*

<http://al-islam.org/discover.php>

Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi. "Beginner's introduction to Islam." Available. Online <http://al-islam.org/begin/intro/rizvi.html>

Al-Qazwini, Mustafa. "An invitation to Islam." Available. Online <http://al-islam.org/invitation/>

J.A Progler. "The Utility of Islamic Imagery in the West." Available Online <http://al-islam.org/al-tawhid/default.asp?url=islamicimageryinwest.htm>



**Society for Islamic Awareness**

This brochure has been prepared by the Society for Islamic Awareness to promote a better understanding of Islam. For questions regarding the content of the brochure, please email us at [siainformation@gmail.com](mailto:siainformation@gmail.com)

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## **ISLAM: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

*In the name of Allah (God), the Beneficent, the Merciful.*

*All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds.*

*The Beneficent, the Merciful.*

*Master of the Day of Judgment.*

*You alone do we serve and You do we beseech for help.*

*Keep us on the right path.*

*The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favors. Not (the path) of those upon whom Your wrath is brought down, not of those who go astray.*

*Al-Fatiha (The Opening)  
The Holy Qur'an : Chapter 1*