

# Islam

## The Interfaith Religion

*“O mankind, indeed we created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may get to know each other. Indeed the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (the one who is) most righteous of you. Allah has full knowledge of all things.” 49:13*

*“Say (O Muhammad): We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants, and in (scriptures) given to Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets, from their Lord; we do not differentiate between any one of them, and to God we surrender.” 3:84*

### **Muslims, Jews, and Christians Worship the same God**

Allah is the unique Arabic name for God. It is always used in singular form and does not accept a plural form. The Arabic-speaking Jews and Christians in the Middle East also use the word Allah for God.

*“Say (O People of the Scripture): Come to an understanding that is common between us and you, that we serve none but God, and that we associate no partners with Him, and do not some of us take others as Lords apart from God. . .” 3:64*

*“Say (O People of the Scripture): Do you argue with us about Allah, while He is our Lord and your Lord as well? We are responsible for our actions and you are for yours; and we are sincere to Allah.” 2:139*

### **Islam Acknowledges and Confirms the Earlier Sacred Books**

One of the important concepts in Islam is the fact that the Qur’an confirms the Torah and Gospel by names. In other words, it confirms the teachings of Moses and Jesus.

One of the basic elements of faith in Islam is to believe in the earlier revelations from God.

*“Say (O Muhammad): We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants, and in (scriptures) given to Moses, Jesus, and the Prophets, from their Lord; we do not differentiate between any one of them, and to God we surrender.” 3:84*

*“This is the book (Qur’an). In it is guidance indeed, without doubt, for those who are God-conscious. Who believe in the unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend (for the needy) out of what We have provided for them. And who believe in the revelation sent to you, and sent before your time and have the assurance (in their hearts) of the hereafter.” 2:2-4*

### **Islam the Message for All Mankind**

Some 1400 years ago when some religious leaders claimed that they were the only people close to God and the prayers of others will not be answered by God, Islam introduced a universal message to include all mankind:

*“Those who do righteous deeds, and believe in God, be it male or female, shall enter Paradise and not the least of injustice will be done to them.” 4:123*

According to the Islamic teachings, no one is excluded from the Grace of God.

*“Indeed God is most Compassionate and Kind towards all mankind.” 22:65  
also refer to 49:13*

### **Respect for the Followers of other Religions**

*“Those who believe, including those who are Jews, Christians, and Sabean who believe in Allah and hereafter, and lead a righteous life, and engage in good deeds, surely God will reward them, and no fear or sadness shall come upon them.” 2:62*

Muslims during the annual pilgrimage to the City of Mecca pay tribute to Prophet Abraham, his wife, Hagar, and their son, Ishmael.

Prophet Muhammad brought the message of love, compassion, kindness, and mercy not just for the Muslims, but for all people.

*“We sent you (Muhammad) to be a fine example of compassion and mercy for all mankind.” 21:107*

Islam even recognizes the right of idol worshippers to practice their own religion.  
*Refer to 109:1-6*

### **Dialogue with God**

It is written for Muslims to pray directly to God, without any intermediary.

*“Those who believe, their hearts find tranquility in remembrance of God. Indeed the remembrance of God places peace and tranquility upon people’s hearts.” 13:28*

*“Let My people know that I am very near to them. I answer the prayers of those who turn to Me. So let them hear My call and let them learn to place their trust in Me, in order that they may be led to a righteous life.” 2:186*

*“So (O people) remember Me, and I remember you; and always be thankful and never be ungrateful.” 2:152*

*“Those who are gifted with knowledge believe in the Qur’an and they know that it is the truth from their Lord; and their hearts humbly submit unto Him; indeed God guides the believers to the straight path.” 22:54*

### **Promoting Love and Kindness**

Muslims are taught to love and honor all people, regardless of gender, race, religion, or national origin.

According to the Qur'anic teachings, God created mankind in the most beautiful complexion, and gifted him (her) with that of His spirit. Paraphrased 40:64; 64:3; 32:9; 95:4; 32:7

*“ . . . Allah loves them (mankind) and they love Allah.” 5:54*

*“Indeed We have honored mankind; provided them with transport on land and sea; and have made provision of good and pure things for them; and conferred on them special favors, above a great part of our creation.” 17:70*

*“Indeed God is most compassionate and kind toward all mankind.” 22:65, also refer to 42:19*

### **Extremists Do Not Represent Islam**

Islam is the religion of moderation and peace. The extremist people are deviating from the basic Islamic teachings.

*“Thus, We have set you up as a nation of moderation so you may act as witnesses for mankind as the Messenger is a witness for you.” 2:143*

### **Jihad does not Mean Holy War**

Engaging in a hostile and violent act, causing destruction and death of innocent people, is against the Qur'anic teachings.

Jihad means strivings in the name of Allah to build a *beautiful heaven* on this earth.

However, it is written for Muslims to defend themselves against aggression, but definitely not to engage in aggression.

*“Fight in the cause of Allah against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression, for indeed God does not love the aggressors.” 2:190*

**Some Misinformed Muslims** quote the following verse from the Qur'an and claim that Islam does not recognize other religions:

*“The only true religion with God is Islam . . .” 3:19*

However, the Qur'an refers to all Monotheistic religions as Islam. In the following verses, all Prophets of God are mentioned as Muslims:

*“Abraham said: I have, as a Muslim, committed myself to the Lord of Universe.” 2:131*

*“Jacob's sons said: We worship your God, the God of your fathers, Abraham, Ishmael, and Isaac, One God, and unto Him we have surrendered, as Muslims.” 2:133*

In verse 3:52, even the apostles of Jesus are referred to as Muslims.

In the following verse, Islam is referred to as the religion of Abraham.

*“Strive for Allah, sincerely and truthfully. God has chosen you and has placed no hardship on you in practicing your religion, the religion of your spiritual father, Abraham . . .” 22:78*

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P.O. Box 42005, LA, CA 90042  
Publisher: Linda Behshid Foundation