

INTRODUCING ISLAM

ISLAM IS: • Peaceful • Tolerant • Rational • Inspiring • Non-Sectarian • International

“And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful.” (The Holy Qur’an 3:104)

“Call to the way of thy Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and argue with them in the best manner.” (The Holy Qur’an 16:125)

The main object of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha‘at Islam Lahore (The Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement) is to present the true, original message of Islam to the whole world — Islam as it is found in the Holy Qur’an and the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), obscured today by grave misconceptions and wrong popular notions. Islam seeks to attract the hearts and minds of people towards the truth, by means of reasoning, good moral example, and the natural beauty of its principles. It neither aspires to gain political power, nor allows the use of force in support of the faith. The founder of this religious movement, *Hazrat* Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India (d. 1908, who did *not* claim to be a Prophet, and who claimed to be no more than a divinely guided reformer) arose to remind the world that Islam is:

1. International: God raised Prophets in all nations, not only among the Israelites (as already accepted by Muslims) but also in India, China, Persia etc. A Muslim must believe in and respect all these prophets and their scriptures. Islam restores the original purity of the eternal truths taught by them, and broadens the scope of their national teachings to provide a faith for all humanity. Goodness, good people and truth may be found in all nations. God is equally just to all human beings, irrespective of their race, nationality or religion.

2. Tolerant: It gives full freedom to everyone to hold, practise and adopt any belief and religion. Differences of belief and interpretation, with whomsoever these may occur, must be tolerated. Criticism against Islam must be answered only by word, and any offence felt must be borne with patience; responding by physical violence is alien to the teachings of Islam. The common image of Islam as an intolerant faith is completely false.

3. Peaceful: It condemns all use of force except in unavoidable self-defence. All battles of early Islam were purely defensive. Muslims must live peacefully under any rule which grants them freedom of religion. The impression that Islam urges its followers to wage war or rebellion to establish its rule is entirely wrong. The concept of Jihad is greatly misunderstood: it primarily signifies a spiritual, intellectual and moral struggle to reform oneself and others.

4. Non-sectarian: Any person professing the words “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah” (*La ilaha ill-Allah, Muhammad-ur rasul-Ullah*) must be treated as one’s fellow Muslim. No inquisition is allowed into anyone’s beliefs or motives. Issuing so-called rulings, on some pretext, to expel from Islam those who profess the *Kalimah*, or declaration of faith, is entirely against Islamic teachings.

5. Rational: It urges use of reason and knowledge in all matters, including religious affairs. Blind following and acceptance are disallowed, and independence of thought is granted. Blind, unthinking obedience to religious leaders is condemned.

6. A living faith: Acts of worship are not rituals to be performed without thought or feeling. They are meant to put the human soul in living contact with a Living God. We must know the purpose of prayer, fasting, etc, and carry them out in their true spirit. God listens to man’s supplications and answers his prayers. In every age there arise, among Muslims, saints who have closeness to, and communication with God. Their example shows others that there is a Living God Who speaks to man.

Please turn over

7. Supportive of women: A great deal of misunderstanding prevails on this point, mainly due to local customs being confused with the teachings of Islam. According to Islam, a woman is a full, responsible human being, just as a man is. She should have the same control over determining the course of her life (including matters of marriage and divorce) as a man has over his life.

8. Highly moral: It requires Muslims to develop the highest personal moral virtues, and display these qualities even at the cost of personal or national interest. An Islamic society is not created by imposing laws and regulations on people. It is only created by reforming the character of individuals through moral training and example, and this was what the Holy Prophet Muhammad did.

9. Heart-winning: It seeks to conquer hearts and minds by showing the logic, truth and beauty of its teachings, in a gentle, loving spirit. It condemns force or coercion to spread the faith or make people conform to it.

10. Complete: The Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) provide complete and perfect guidance for all mankind, for all time to come. The Holy Prophet is the perfect exemplar of the highest moral virtues: that is why he is the Last of the Prophets (*Khatam-un Nabiyyin*). After him, no Prophet (new or old) is to arise. However, *Mujaddids* (Reformers) will be raised by God to revive and rekindle the light of the faith of Islam. As *Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad* of Qadian, the Founder of the *original Ahmadiyya Movement* (today represented by the AAAIL), wrote:

“I firmly believe that our Holy Prophet Muhammad is the Last of the Prophets, and after him no Prophet shall come for this nation, neither old nor new.” (*Nishan Asmani*, p. 28).

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Websites:

<http://www.aaail.org>

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To find out more about Islam and the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam Lahore, please contact any of the above addresses.

PUBLICATIONS

The Holy Quran: Translation with Commentary by *Maulana Muhammad Ali*. Leading English translation with full commentary, comprehensive Introduction and Arabic text. Since 1917 has influenced millions of people all over the world. Model for all later translations. Thoroughly revised in 1951. Also available in French, Spanish, Russian, Dutch, Indonesian and Urdu editions.

The Muslim Prayer Book by *Maulana Muhammad Ali*. Full details of the Muslim prayer service and an explanation of the significance of prayer. The words of all prayers are given in Arabic script, together with a transliteration and a translation into English.

Muhammad the Prophet by *Maulana Muhammad Ali*. Researched biography of the Holy Prophet. Corrects many misconceptions about his life and answers Western criticism.

The Religion of Islam by *Maulana Muhammad Ali*. Comprehensive work on sources, principles and practice of Islam. Deals with all teachings in full detail. “*This book is among the most important single-volume studies of Islam written during the 20th century ...*” — Anthony T. Sullivan, Center for Middle Eastern and North African Studies, The University of Michigan.

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