



WHAT IS ISLAM?

Newsletter

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In this Issue:

- **Putting Things in Perspective: How Angel Jibril Taught Us Our Religion - A Nice Way to Explain About Islam**
- **Become a Monthly Donor - Help Us Continue Our Ongoing Services to Thousands in Need**
- **Introducing Hidaya's Driving School Project**
- **Hidaya's 2015 Accomplishments**
- **Independent Auditor's Report**

Putting Things in Perspective: How Angel Jibril Taught Us Our Religion - A Nice Way to Explain About Islam

As tensions rise worldwide due to escalating events of violence and rhetoric between extreme entities, there is a polarization and an increase in mistrust developing between followers of different religions and ideologies.

While there has been an increase in fear, hate crimes, and bigotry, there have also been many instances of positive dialogue between caring and wise individuals from different walks of life in an attempt to create bonds of love and understanding.

With the topic of Islam being so hot these days, all Muslims will have opportunities to explain what Islam stands for and what Muslims believe to those around them, including family, friends, neighbors and even strangers they encounter. But with Islam, being such a deep and life encompassing religion – where would one begin to try to explain it?

In the famous "Hadith of Jibril," the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) came in human form to Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in front of some of his companions to teach them the basics of the religion. It is one of the best ways to explain to others about Islam and what Muslims believe.

Hadith of Jibril

It was narrated on the authority of Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: "While we were one day sitting with the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him), there appeared before us a man dressed in extremely white clothes and with very black hair. No traces of journeying were visible on him, and none of us knew him. He sat down close by the Prophet (pbuh), rested his knee against his thighs, and said, "O Muhammad! Inform me about Islam."

The Messenger of Allah (pbuh) said, "Islam is that you should testify that there is no deity except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger, that you should perform salah, pay the Zakah, fast during Ramadan, and perform

Hajj to the House, if you are able to do so."

The man said, "You have spoken truly." We were astonished at his questioning him (the Messenger) and telling him that he was right, but he went on to say, "Inform me about iman."

He (the Messenger of Allah) answered, "It is that you believe in Allah and His angels and His Books and His Messengers and in the Last Day, and in qadar (fate), both in its good and in its bad aspects." He said, "You have spoken truly."

Then he (the man) said, "Inform me about Ihsan." He (the Messenger of Allah) answered, "It is that you should serve Allah as though you could see Him, for though you cannot see Him yet (know that) He sees you."

He said, "Inform me about the Hour." He (the Messenger of Allah) said, "About that, the one questioned knows no more than the questioner." So he said, "Well, inform me about the signs thereof." He said, "They are that the slave-girl will give birth to her mistress, that you will see the barefooted, naked, destitute, the herdsmen of the sheep (competing with each other) in raising lofty buildings." Thereupon the man went off. I waited a while, and then he (the Messenger of Allah) said, "O Umar, do you know who that questioner was?" I replied, "Allah and His Messenger know better." He said, "That was Jibril (the Angel Gabriel). He came to teach you your religion." [Sahih Muslim Book 1, Hadith 5]

While many beautiful scholarly commentaries exist about this hadith, as there is so much that can be analyzed and learned from it, we just want to give a basic explanation about the questions and answers in the dialogue:

- Inform me about Islam
- Inform me about Iman
- Inform me about Ihsan
- Inform me about the Hour and its signs

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Basic Terminology:

For better understanding, one must learn some basic terminology first:

Allah - The Creator and God of the universe and all that exists

Islam - Submission to Allah

Muslim - One Who Submits to Allah

Iman - Faith, belief in the message of Islam

Ihsan - A Muslim's responsibility to strive for perfection, or excellence in worship and all areas of life

The Hour - The time for the Day of Judgment

What is Islam (Submission to Allah)?

Here we learn what have been come to known as the 5 pillars of Islam. They are called so because such that a house is built with pillars to hold it together with strength against the elements, these 5 pillars are what holds together the faith of a Muslim against the happenings of life. The 5 pillars mentioned are:

1. Shahada (The Testimony of Faith) - Once one has believed in the message of Islam, that person only needs to utter the following phrase to declare their faith, hence becoming a Muslim: "There is no true deity except Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger."

2. Salah (Prayer) - The word "Salah" literally means "link" as the prayer is our direct link to Allah. Muslims are required to take a break from the world 5 times a day to perform a short prayer and get refocused and re-aligned with their Creator.

3. Zakat (Obligatory Charity) - The original meaning of the word zakat is both 'purification' and 'growth.' All things belong to Allah, and wealth is therefore held by human beings in trust. Allah appoints a small share of the wealth of each person for certain classes of people in need. Muslims are required to give this specified small portion of their wealth once a year to the deserving. By doing so, they fulfill a form of worship while purifying their wealth and allowing it to grow.

4. Sawm (Fasting in the Month of Ramadan) - Muslims undergo a spiritual and bodily cleansing once each year by fasting the month of Ramadan.

5. Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca) - Muslims are required to make a pilgrimage to Mecca once in their lifetime if they are physically and financially able to. The Hajj consists of rituals performed along with large crowds of Muslims from all corners of the world in a way that strips away distinctions of class and culture so that all stand equal before Allah.

References [Al-Qur'an 2:43; 2:183-184; 2:196-198; 3:96-97; 22:27]

What is Iman (Faith)?

Here we learn about what have been come to be known as the 6 articles of faith. In Islam, faith is not supposed to be blind, but accompanied by reason and understanding. The 6 articles of faith are:

1. Belief in Allah - The concept of Allah in Islam is that God is The Greatest, The One Creator of all things, dissimilar to any of His¹ creations and Eternal. Allah has many names and attributes by which He has described himself, however, we can not fully comprehend what He is. All we know is what He has revealed to us, and what we can ponder upon from what little we know about of what He has created.

2. Belief in the Angels - Muslims believe in the existence of angels and that they are honored creatures made of light. The angels worship Allah alone, obey Him, and act by His command. The angels have ranks and are delegated tasks by Allah.

3. Belief in The Scriptures - Muslims believe in all of the Scriptures revealed by Allah to His prophets as they were given in their original form. This includes the Taurat (Torah) revealed to Musa (Moses), the Zabur (Psalms) revealed to Dawud (David), the Injeel (Gospel) revealed to Iesa (Jesus), and of course the Qur'an revealed to Muhammad, peace be upon them all. However, the only scripture still remaining in its true revealed form is the Qur'an which remains unchanged in the Arabic language in

1: Note that Allah is not gender specific as He is unlike any of His creation, however due to limitations in the English language, we are somewhat forced to choose a pronoun to make the description flow better.

which it was revealed, while all other scriptures have lost some meanings due to undergoing several translations, as well as changes/additions/omissions by people over time to serve their own agendas.

4. Belief in the Prophets - Muslims believe that all Prophets were Muslims (those who Submit to God) and that they all invited their people to Islam (Submission to God). The Qur'an mentions 25 prophets by name but also tells that Allah (God) sent many other prophets and messengers, to all the different nations that have existed on Earth. Prophets that we know of include Muhammad, Iesa (Jesus), Musa (Moses), Harun (Aaron), Yusuf (Joseph), Yunus (Jonah), Suleyman (Soloman), Dawud (David), Ayub (Job), Nuh (Noah), Idris (Enoch) and Adam to name some, peace be upon them all. Muslims believe that Muhammad (pbuh) is the final prophet to humanity and there will be no Prophets after him until the return of Iesa (Jesus) (pbuh) to earth.

5. Belief in the Day of Judgement - Muslims believe in the Day of Judgment (the Day of Resurrection) when all people will be resurrected for Allah's judgment according to their beliefs and deeds. From Qur'an and hadith of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) we are given a great deal of knowledge about the Hereafter, including prophecies of things that will happen (or in our case many have already happened) in the world before the advent of the Day of Judgment, things that will happen on the Day of Judgment, about life in the Grave, about Paradise and about Hellfire.

6. Belief in Allah's Predestination (Fate) - Muslims believe that we have freewill to live and make choices as we please on a path that Allah has already pre-determined for us. We believe that Allah is the Creator of all things and has all knowledge of what His creation will do, and has already written everything that exists, and that what Allah wills happens and what He does not will does not happen.

References [Al-Qur'an 2:255; 2:285; 4:136; 5:69; 112:1-4]

What is Ihsan?

The term Ihsan refers to a Muslim's responsibility to obtain perfection and excellence in his worship of Allah. Muslims should strive to try to attain a level of God-consciousness at all times. Whether it be worshipping their Creator, any action they commit, any dealing with another person, or even how they treat animals or other creations – they would do it in the best way possible while giving it the full rights out of their love for Allah and seeking His pleasure and love, as well as their fear of Him and not wanting to disappoint or anger Him.

About the Hour and its Signs:

As the Prophet (pbuh) mentioned in the hadith, neither he nor Jibril knows when the Hour will take place, meaning that nobody but Allah knows its appointed time. However, through revelations in Qur'an as well as hadith of the Prophet (pbuh), we know many of its signs. It is amazing to note that, among the many prophecies of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), none of them have ever come out wrong. All of them have either been accurate in their descriptions and understood by Muslims when they happened, or are yet to happen.

The two signs mentioned in this particular hadith are indicating that society will change so much that things will be upside down. Amazingly, one can contest that both of the mentioned signs are among us today:

1. *The slave-girl will give birth to her mistress* - While there are different scholarly interpretations of this - one opinion is that children will be disobedient to the point of treating their own mothers like their own personal servants. We do see this kind of disrespectful behavior commonly in today's societies, when it was something very uncommon even just a few decades ago.

2. *The barefooted, naked, destitute, the herdsmen of the sheep competing with each other in raising lofty buildings* - Recently, in the Arab gulf countries we see that their rulers are active in building the current tallest buildings in the world, where just a few decades ago, before they discovered oil in their land, they were known to be the poorest of people.

Reference [Al-Qur'an 33:63] ◆

Become a Monthly Donor - Help Us Continue Our Ongoing Services to Thousands In Need!

"Aisha (raa) narrated that, "The most beloved action to Allah's Apostle (pbuh) was that whose doer did it continuously and regularly." (Bukhari #8.76.469)



Orphan Projects: Spending nearly \$300,000 per month on orphans and widows

Our monthly orphan support in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Cameroon and India is now in excess of 10,000 orphans and 5,000 widows each month.

No Orphan without Education: For **\$10 per month**, all educational needs are met for each 1st to 12th grade child.

Widow/Orphan Support: For **\$40 per month**, all basic needs are met for a household of a widow and her orphan(s).

Support Poor Students - Spending over \$40,000 per month to support nearly 11,000 students

Hidaya is currently supporting nearly 11,000 students from primary school up until the university level under the Support Poor Students project, and is continuing to support more and more students.

Support Hidaya Schools - Spending over \$40,000 per month to operate 81 schools

Currently, Hidaya is operating and supporting 81 schools in Pakistan with over 11,000 students from 1st to 8th grade.

It costs about **\$160 per month** to run a classroom of approximately 40 students.

Clean Drinking Water - Spending nearly \$20,000 per month for water

Hidaya installs water hand pumps in the homes/yards of villagers as well as distributes water via water tanker to poor people living in cities where the municipalities are failing them.

A **water hand pump costs \$300** and is a sadaqah jariah (continuous charity), but can also be given as Zakat.

It costs just **\$10 to distribute 1,200 gallons of water** via tanker to hundreds of people.

One Million Meals - Distributing over 1 million meals each year in several countries

Each year Hidaya provides over a million meals to thousands of families who are among the poorest in the world. Last year dry ration packages were given in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cameroon, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. Due to buying in bulk, **1 meal costs approximately 50 cents**.



If you would like to set-up a recurring donation to donate towards any of these featured projects, or any other Hidaya projects on a monthly basis, please go to: www.hidaya.org/donation-page/automatic-monthly-donation, or call us at 1-866-2HIDAYA. ♦

Introducing Hidaya's Driving School Project

As part of our Self Employment Program, and under our Small Businesses for the Poor project in Pakistan, Hidaya has purchased 8 vehicles and 2 tractors to teach driving skills to youth coming from poor backgrounds so they may earn for themselves.

It costed approximately \$75,000 to purchase the vehicles for this project. Additionally, Hidaya absorbs 100% of the training costs which includes: learner license fee, driving license fee, up to 16 hours of theoretical and practical training (which is completed in 4 to 8 weeks), instructor salaries, fuel and maintenance of vehicles, and rent for the buildings. *Hidaya has already trained over 300 youth under this effort in the last six months and approximately 2000 more are waiting in line.*



It costs approximately \$100 to train a youth in driving so they may be able to earn for themselves and their families. Please donate towards Hidaya's Driving School. ♦

Hidaya's 2015 Accomplishments



Widow/Orphan Support - Monthly Check Distribution



Support Hidaya Schools



One Million Meals - Dry Ration Distribution



Qurbani - Meat Distribution



Clean Drinking Water - Water Hand Pump

No Orphan without Education: Supporting over 10,000 orphans each month

Support Hidaya Schools: Operating 81 schools with over 10,000 students from KG – 5th grade

Adult Education: Educated nearly 588 illiterate adults to an 8th grade level

Support Poor Students: Supporting nearly 11,000 students each month

Job Skills Training: Trained over 500 students in sewing and more at Hidaya's Houses of Knowledge.

Hidaya Institute of Science & Technology (HIST): Educated hundreds of students in basic computer skills, Software Development, System Administration Training, and Network Administration Training

Hidaya Institute of Farming & Agriculture (HIFA): Educated dozens of young adults in ways of cultivating the land, growing vegetables, taking care of date palm trees and mango orchards at Hidaya Garden

Widow/Orphan Support: Supporting nearly 5,000 widows each month

Marriage Support: Helped 141 young women with their marriages

Container Shipment for In-Kind Donations: Sent 11 forty ft. containers with relief supplies to Pakistan, worth over \$180,000

One Million Meals: Distributed over 62,000 dry ration packages to families - enough for over 1.6 million meals throughout 7 countries

Sadaqat-ul-Fitr: Distributed over 1,700 dry ration packages to families, benefiting over 10,000 individuals

Fidya: Distributed over 4,700 dry ration packages to families, benefiting over 28,500 individuals

Kaffara: Distributed over 830 dry ration packages to families, benefiting nearly 5,000 individuals

Sadaqah Sacrifice: Sacrificed over 1,800 goats and 270 oxen and distributed the meat to benefit thousands of families

Aqiqah: Sacrificed 244 goats on behalf of donors' new born children and distributed meat to benefit thousands of families

Qurbani: Arranged 5,170 shares of Qurbani on behalf of our donors (4,102 cow shares, 1,068 goats) and distributed the meat to over 50,000 poor families throughout 9 countries

Medical Assistance: Arranged for 685 examinations and treatments for patients in need

Medical Camps: Held 97 medical camps and treated over 24,000 poor patients

One Million Trees: Planted nearly 30,000 seedlings

Green Energy: Installed solar panels at Hidaya Trust offices in Pakistan reducing electricity costs and ensuring smooth operation during frequent power outages.

Clean Drinking Water: Installed nearly 1,700 water hand pumps which benefited over 10,000 people, and distributed over 3 million liters of water via water tanker benefiting tens of thousands of families ♦

Independent Auditor's Report for Fiscal Year 2015

With the Blessings of Allah, on Feb. 17, 2016, Hidaya Foundation successfully completed its 2015 financial audit. A copy of the audited financial statements (as well as previous year statements) are available for review at: www.hidaya.org/financials ♦

Board of Directors

Adeel Ahmed (Dallas, TX), Mazhar Uddin (Dayton, NJ), Irfan Baloch (Geneva, Switzerland), Mohamed S. Shamsuddin (Santa Clara, CA), Waseem Baloch (Santa Clara, CA)

Donation Form



Hidaya Foundation is a non-profit 501(C)(3) charitable organization with US Tax ID # 77-0502583.

Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Signature _____ Date _____

No Orphan without Education (\$10 per month) Zakat \$ _____

Widow/Orphan Support (\$40 per month) \$ _____

Support Poor Students (\$12 per student) \$ _____

Support Hidaya Schools (\$160 per month) \$ _____

Clean Drinking Water (\$300/hand pump, \$10 per tanker) \$ _____

One Million Meals (50 cents per meal) \$ _____

Small Businesses for Poor (Driving School \$100/student) \$ _____

Other : _____ \$ _____

Total \$ _____

You can make **Automatic Recurring Donation** or **Quick Donations** towards any of our projects on our secure website by creating a profile: www.hidaya.org/createprofile

Double your donation with **Corporate Gift Matching**. Contact us if you need help setting it up at your organization.

Name on the card: _____



Card No: _____

Expiry Date: (mm/yy) _____