

Fulfilling Answers

provided by

Islam

for

Pressing Questions

written by

Dr. Omar bin Abdulrahman bin Muhammad Al-Omar
Member of the Faculty Council for the Higher Institute for Law,
Imam Muhammad bin Saud University

translated by

Tariq Ben Nurid Porter
Graduate of Imam Muhammad bin Saud University,
College of Islamic Law

ح عمر عبدالرحمن العمر ، 1439 هـ

فهرسة مكتبة الملك فهد الوطنية أثناء النشر

العمر، عمر بن عبدالرحمن

الأجوبة الشافية على أسئلة مهمة في ضوء الاسلام

عمر بن عبدالرحمن العمر - الرياض ، 1439 هـ

32 ص 14×21 سم

ردمك: 3-6000-02-603-978

1- الاسلام - اسئلة وأجوبة ، العقيدة الإسلامية - أسئلة وأجوبة
العنوان:

ديوي 210.76 1439/2527

رقم الإيداع : 1439/2527

ردمك: 3-6000-02-603-978

الطبعة الأولى 1439 هـ



المكتبة العامة في الرياض

بدعمكم ننشر التوحيد والسنة

هاتف ٩٢٠٠٠٧٠١٠ - فاكس ٢٧٨٨٢٠٠ - جوال ٠٥٥٧٠١٠٣٣٣

الحساب العام : 454608010401116 مصرف الراجحي

للتحويل من أي بنك، IBAN : SA 618000454608010401116

Contents

Q1: Who created us? 7

Q2: Why did God bring us into this world? 8

Q3: How are we supposed to worship God? 9

Q4: What is Islam’s position concerning Jesus, may peace be upon him? 11

Q5: Is Jesus, peace be upon him, God? 12

Q6: Is Jesus the son of God? 14

Q7: What is Islam’s position concerning Mary, may peace be upon her? 17

Q8: What is Islam’s position concerning divine messengers and prophets? 18

Q9: What is Islam’s position concerning belief in the Last Day (the Day of Judgment)? 19

Q10: What are the “5 Primary Necessities” which Islam protects and preserves? 20

Q11: In what ways can Islam serve to bring about happiness and overall success for people? 22

Q12: What is Islam’s position concerning personal hygiene and public health? 25

Q13: What are the most important acts of worship in Islam and what are their benefits?	26
Q14: What are the advantages of Islamic Economics?	28
Q15: What is Islam's unique position concerning women?	29
Q16: Has Islam oppressed women by mandating that they cover themselves with hijab?	32
Q17: Is Islam a religion of terrorism?.....	33
Q18: Are Muslims terrorists?	34
Q19: What is Islam's position concerning violence?	36
Q20: What is Islam's position concerning racism?	38
Q21: How does one enter into the religion of Islam?	39

Author's Preface

All praise is due to God, the Lord of all worlds. May the most special blessings and peace be granted to our prophet Muhammad, along with all of the prophets and messengers.

Regarding the topic at hand, indeed, many people have gravely misunderstood Islam and have attributed various affairs to it which are incorrect, blaming Islam for issues from which it is completely free.

It is for this reason – oh reader – the book in your hands has been written, for the purpose of getting to the facts and presenting a correct image of Islam – the religion which terrorist groups and paid media channels strive to distort the image of. Herein, you will find fulfilling answers to various important questions and cases in light of the perspective of the perfectly balanced and fair of religion Islam – the same Islam which the final Messenger, Muhammad (may God's special blessing and peace be upon them), and his noble companions practiced and adhered to.

My intent behind writing this book is to bring about fair judgment concerning the religion of Islam by clarifying what it truly is and highlighting its uniquely beneficial aspects -- in order to encourage others to enter into the fold of Islam. I have put it in a question/answer format so that the information would be more easily understood and the facts more easily grasped.

Finally, I hope – oh reader – that you have an enjoyable time reading it and I would be pleased to communicate via the following email address:
Dromaralomar@gmail.com

All success is given by Allah (God). May Allah (God) grant His special blessings to Muhammad, and peace.

Q1: Who created us?

Allah, the Exalted, is the One who has created us; it is He who has brought us into existence. It is also He alone who created the skies above, the earth, the mountains, the trees, the seas, the rivers, the sun, the moon -- and all creation. He, the Exalted, said in the beneficent Qur'an:

32. "Allah is the One Who created the heavens and the earth, and has sent down rain from the sky above causing fruit to grow therewith, as provision for you; He has ordained that ships be of service to you, that they sail at sea as He has permitted, and He has made rivers of great service to you as well.

33. He has, in addition, made the sun and the moon, which are both miraculously constant upon their courses, of tremendous service to you. [The Qur'an, Chapter Ibrahim: 32-33]

And He, the Exalted, has also said:

12. And indeed We created man (Adam) from an extract of clay.

13. Then, We caused him (the offspring of Adam) to form into a *nutfah* (mixed drops of the male and female sexual discharge) lodged in a protected place (in the womb of a woman).

14. Then, We caused the *nutfah* to become a clot. After that, we caused the clot to develop into a small lump of flesh. Then, We formed bones out of that small lump of flesh. Thereafter, We clothed the bones with flesh. Finally, We brought it forth into a more advanced stage of creation.

15. Then after all of that, ultimately, you will all experience death.

16. Then once again, after that, you will all be resurrected (on the Day of Judgment).

[The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Muminoon: 12-16]

Q2: Why did God bring us into this world?

God, the Exalted, has created us and brought us into this world to worship¹ Him and obey Him, to carry out His orders and abstain from His prohibitions.

God, the Exalted, said: “**And I have not created jinn² or mankind except for them to worship Me (alone).**”

[The Qur'an, Chapter Ath-Thariyat: 56]

¹ As will be mentioned below in more detail, the Islamic concept of worship is not limited to formal prayer and rituals but encompasses life in general and the way people live their lives seeking to please God, the Creator of all.

²Jinn: an unseen creation which, like man, has intellect and a free will and will be judged based on his actions.

Furthermore, worship in Islam is not confined to the mosques in which Muslims pray; rather, while the Arabic term *ibadah* (worship) comprises of one's being dutiful to God--for example, in prayer -- it also involves treating others well (other human beings, animals, the environment, etc.) and dealing with the creation of God, as a whole, in goodness through helping and supporting others and behaving with good character. It is for this reason that some scholars of Islam have described worship as being "all actions and utterances which please God, whether they be outward, physical actions or internal actions (such as: beliefs, intentions, thoughts and emotions).

Q3: How are we supposed to worship God?

The correct way to worship God is by embracing the religion of Islam, and believing in the messenger of Islam, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him); he, Muhammad, is actually even mentioned in the Torah (Deuteronomy, Chapter: 18).¹

In addition, Jesus (peace be upon him) gave the great news to his followers that there would come a messenger after him whose name would be "Muhammad", he

¹This is because, only in Islam, the actual message and directions of God Himself, as sent to His prophets and messengers, have been preserved without any changes.

adamantly directed them to follow Muhammad as is found in the Bible (John, Chapter: 16).¹

Furthermore, the propagation of Muhammad (may peace and blessings be upon him) is one intended for all of mankind, Arabs and non-Arabs, and his divine message is a mercy for all of creation just as God, the Exalted, said [to Muhammad]:

“And We have not sent you except as a mercy for all of creation”

[The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Anbiya: 107]

In Summary: The Torah and the Bible both ultimately lead their followers to belief in Muhammad (peace and special blessings be upon him) and in his religion with which he was sent, Islam. Examples of this is when Abdulmailk LeBlanc, previously Christian, embraced Islam and authored a book which he named, “The Bible ultimately led me to Islam”. Similarly, when Simon Alfredo embraced Islam, he authored “My love for Jesus (peace be upon him) ultimately led me to Islam”.

Those who read about Islam and learn the facts about it and its distinguished advantages, and those not

¹ Even Christian scholars cannot and do not deny that the Bible is a book which has been changed and altered various times over the centuries. Islam teaches that Muhammad was mentioned by name in the original Gospel of Jesus (may peace and blessings be upon him) [See the Qur’an, Chapter As-Saff: Verse 6].

deterred by dishonest media sources, will come to know that it is the religion of truth, the religion of mercy, justice and peace. It is a religion which absolutely condemns the acts of all terrorists, including those who attribute their actions to Islam. When people embrace Islam, they experience the feelings of tranquility, peace of the heart, and true happiness in this life and the next.

Q4: What is Islam’s position concerning Jesus, may peace be upon him?

Muslims love Jesus tremendously (peace be upon him) and they believe that he is a noble messenger and an amazing man. One primary manifestation of this is the fact that his name is mentioned in the Qur’an (the Holy Book of Muslims) 25 times.

Likewise, there is an entire chapter in the Qur’an named after one of the miracles of Jesus (peace be upon him), the chapter called *Al-Maidah* (The Table Spread)¹. Interestingly, this particular miracle is not even mentioned in the Four Gospels. Furthermore, Muslims do not even prefer that the Messiah (Jesus, peace be upon him) be mentioned except that the phrase “peace be upon him” is mentioned thereafter,

¹ At the end of this amazing chapter, *Al-Maidah*, which literally means “the table spread”, God mentions the miracle of Jesus which involved Him sending a table spread down from the heavens in response to the special request of the disciples. [See “The Noble Qur’an, Chapter Al-Madiah: 112-115]

and it is normally considered bad manners if a Muslim does not utter this prayer for him after mentioning his name.

Q5: Is Jesus – may peace be upon him -- God?

To believe that anything other than God is equal to God or similar to Him in any way is polytheism (shirk), which is the greatest of all sins. This is due to the fact that polytheistic beliefs and acts are in utter disrespect to the exclusive right of God, the Exalted – with regards to the divine reverence and worship which is due only to Him. Therefore, we assert that it is not allowed for us to believe that there is any other god with the One True God, the Exalted, not Jesus nor anyone else.

In addition, Jesus, himself (peace be upon him), made it clear in his actions and words that he is a prophet sent by God, and that God alone is his God and the only True God of all creation. A clear manifestation of this is how, when he was on earth, he prayed to God saying, “You alone are the only True God” (John, Chapter: 17, Verse: 3).

Likewise, the Qur’an informs that Jesus, himself, declares that he is not God, and that The God is his God and the only True God of all creation. God, the Exalted, said:

“Indeed, those who have asserted that the Messiah, son of Mary, is God have disbelieved. As for the Messiah, he said, “O children of Israel, worship God alone, my Lord and yours; surely, concerning those who worship other than Him, He has prohibited their entrance to Paradise, and their abode will be the fire, where there will be no one to help such transgressors.” (The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Maidah: 72)

It is further noted that Jesus is a created being who ultimately came out of his mother Mary’s womb (peace be upon her) and that which is created cannot be God, because God is the Creator, He’s the One and Only True God. God, the Exalted, said:

21. “O mankind! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those before you, so that you might truly become pious.”

22. He Who has made the earth a conveniently distributed habitat for you, and the sky as an upper boundary; and has sent down water from the sky and brought forth therewith fruit as provision for you. So, do not set up rivals to God (in worship) while you know (that He is the Only One worthy of worship). [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Baqarah: 21-22]

To summarize: it is the Creator of human beings, the earth, the heavens above, and the Only One Who is

able to cause rain to come down from the sky, who is – indeed -- the Only One worthy of worship; He is Allah, the Exalted.

Q6: Is Jesus the son of God?

Jesus (peace be upon Him) is not the son of God, for indeed one of the names of God is “Al-Gani” (The Rich, Free of all Needs); so God, the Exalted, is “Al-Gani” to whom all wealth truly belongs and He is absolutely free of all needs. Therefore, since He is the rightful owner of all things and completely free of all needs, then for what reason would He take on a son? Is it due to a need? That would contradict the fact that He is absolutely free of all needs, because having a son (or a child), in and of itself, is a manifestation of the parent’s imperfect, mortal nature.

God, the Exalted, said in the beneficent Qur’an:

“And they have said that God has taken a son; however, He is highly Exalted above all that they attribute to Him, which does not befit Him. He is “Al-Gani”¹; He owns everything in the heavens above and on earth. You have no proof to support what you have said. Do you say concerning God that which you have no proof for and no true knowledge of?” [The Qur’an, Chapter Yunus: 68]

¹ See previous footnote (1)

Other points which clarify the falsehood of Jesus (peace be upon him) being the son of God is the fact that a child resembles his parent in various ways, specifically with regards to their general characteristics and physical capabilities; as for God, nothing resembles Him. Concerning this issue God, the Exalted, has said:

“There is nothing comparable to Him, and He is The All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.” [The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Hashr: 10]

And He, the Exalted, also said:

“Say, “He is God; God is “Al-Samad” (The Only One Who is truly Self-Sufficient, while everyone and everything needs Him). He did not beget a child, nor was He begotten. And there is absolutely nothing similar to Him.”
[The Qur’an, Chapter Al-Ikhlās: 1-5]

And He, the Exalted, also said:

“And they have said that the Most-Merciful¹ has a son; you have indeed invented an abomination. The sky and heavens above have almost torn apart, and the earth has nearly split, and the mountains have just about collapsed and become dust, all in

¹ One of the many great names of God

devastation that you have claimed that The Most-Merciful has a son. It is beneath the greatness of God that He would have a son (as reproduction and having offspring is the nature He created for humans, animals, and the likes: His creation). [The Qur'an, Chapter Maryam: 89-92]

As for the claim of those who say that Jesus is the son of God because he was born of no father, this is an erroneous deduction and, hence, a false claim; similarly, Adam (peace be upon him) had no father and even no mother, and he is not the son of God, the Exalted, either. So, the fact concerning this issue is that God, The One Who was able to create Adam (peace be upon him) with no father or mother, was likewise certainly able to create Jesus (peace be upon him) with no father. If it were correct to claim that Jesus is the son of God because he was born of a miraculous birth with no father, Adam (peace be upon him) would have even more right to be God's son, but he is not and the whole notion is completely incorrect. Therefore, we firmly hold that claiming that Jesus (peace be upon him) is the son of God is even further from the truth.

God, the Exalted, mentioned in the beneficent Qur'an that Jesus is similar to Adam:

“Indeed, the miraculous birth of Jesus is similar to the creation of Adam: He (God) created him from dust, then He said to him, ‘Be’ and he was.”

Surely, one might ask, “Then, why did God create Jesus with no father?” The answer is that He did so as a manifestation of His unlimited ability for all of mankind to witness: to emphasize that He is able to do all things, and that He does whatsoever He wants. Just as He created Adam (peace be upon him) with no father or mother, similarly, He created Jesus (peace be upon him) from a mother but no father.

Even Mary (peace be upon her) said, as mentioned in the beneficent Qur’an:

“She said: ‘O, my Lord. How can I give birth to a son while no man has even touched me?’ He (Gabriel¹) said: ‘As such, God creates whatever He wills. When He decrees the existence of an affair, He merely says, ‘Be’, and it is.”

Q7: What is Islam’s position concerning Mary, may peace be upon her?

Islam’s position regarding Mary (peace be upon her) is that she is among the best of all women who will ever live: She is the only woman after whom an entire chapter of the beneficent Qur’an was named. In addition, her name was mentioned verbatim 11 times in the Qur’an; it was only mentioned 11 times in the entirety of the Bible. Likewise, the third chapter of

¹ The great angel, Gabriel.

the Qur'an is named after her family, The Family of Imran, to which Mary, the best of all women, belongs. God, the Exalted, said:

“And when the angels said, “Mary! Indeed, Allah has chosen and purified you (from polytheism and disbelief); He has preferred you over all women.”[The Qur'an, Chapter Aali Imran: 42]

Furthermore, out of admiration for Mary, many Muslims name their daughters “Maryam” (Arabic for Mary). On the same note, Muslim women are by far the largest group of women in the world who cover themselves in the manner in which Mary (peace be upon her) did.

Q8: What is Islam's position concerning divine messengers and prophets?

Islam calls people to true belief in all of the prophets and messengers, whom God, the Exalted, sent for the guidance of mankind, and to save them from the various types of darkness in disbelief, delivering them into the light of faith – to save them from a life of misery, and guide them to a life of true and eternal happiness. Islam does not discriminate with regards to the messengers of God, rather it invites to faith in all of them, such as: Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad (peace be upon them all). This is because they are all messengers between God and His slaves,

and because disbelieving in one of them is disbelief in them all --which is ultimately disbelief in God.

Therefore, Islam invites people to love all of the messengers and to follow their way: that obeying them, in essence, is obedience to God. However, it is not allowed for anyone to take any of the messengers as a god, who should then be worshipped: Rather, as slaves (of God), they should not to be worshipped; and as messengers of God, they should not be rejected.

Q9: What is Islam's position concerning belief in the Last Day (the Day of Judgment)?

Islam calls people to belief in the Last Day, which is to hold an unwavering conviction that God, the Exalted, is fully able to bring people back to life after death, raising them from their graves for ultimate judgment and recompense for the things they have done in this world: So, whosoever was a believer in God and was committed to His obedience will enter Paradise; whereas, whosoever disbelieved in God and was committed to disobeying God's commands will enter the Hellfire.

Q10: What are the “5 Primary Necessities” which Islam protects and preserves?

“The Five Fundamental Necessities” or “The Five Primary Affairs” which Islam protects and preserves first and foremost are:

1. Preserving Religion:

What is meant here is the preservation of peoples’ faith in God and strengthening our connection with Him. This involves adherence to worshipping Him alone, associating no partners with Him – because this is the cause of true happiness for people in this life and in the next life.

2. Preserving Life:

What is intended here is promoting and upholding the utmost respect for and diligent preservation of precious, human life-- the lives of Muslims and non-Muslims. This involves punishing those who transgress upon others without right. For this reason, Islam has clearly defined the grave dangers of crimes which involve killing and terrorism, and it has clearly outlined severe punishments for such crimes.

3. Preserving the Intellect:

That which is intended here is that Islam emphasizes the respect and preservation of the human intellect which ultimately distinguishes

us from animals; hence, Islam prohibits people from doing drugs and drinking alcohol – it prohibits all intoxicants – for the sake of protecting and preserving mankind, and preventing people from falling into improper behavior or transgressing upon others due to the altered state of mind which intoxicants bring about.

4. Preserving Honor:

That which is intended in this point is that Islam has come to preserve human society from all crimes including armed robbery, as well as indecent, harmful sexual relationships which lead to various dangerous illnesses, and an abundance of unprotected, illegitimate, lost children with no biological family to claim them. It is for this very reason that Islam strongly encourages marriage, and building families upon a solid, healthy foundation. It likewise prohibits fornication and illegal intimate relationships.

5. Preserving Personal and Public Wealth:

This refers to the fact that Islam has come to preserve wealth as well, since it is so vital to human life. Therefore, Islam has allowed all methods of gaining wealth which are upright and just, and has prohibited all methods which are incorrect and unjust such as: theft, interest and the related forms of unjust financial transactions, deceiving sales

practices, and all transactions and methods which involve consuming the wealth of others unjustly.

Q11: In what ways can Islam serve to bring about happiness and overall success for people?

Islam has come to bring about true and eternal happiness for mankind: for their lives to be lives filled with good. This is made even clearer in the following points:

1. Islam aims to rectify one's religious life as well as one's non-religious aspirations and past times; it balances between non-religious activities and religious activities, through which one seeks reward in the Hereafter. Furthermore, Islam's laws and rules are suitable for any time period and any place.
2. Islam takes great care of the specific needs of both the soul and the physical body. This is because the human being is made up of those two intrinsic aspects -- a soul, and a physical body; hence, it has both spiritual and physical needs.
3. Islam focuses on developing and preserving all that is truly for the betterment of mankind. Therefore, there is nothing which is actually for the betterment of mankind except that Islam supports it, nor is there anything ultimately harmful for mankind

except that Islam prohibits it and demands that it is abandoned.

4. The religion of Islam is built upon: a very sound and rewarding system of beliefs; the highest standards of character and manners, spiritually and intellectually; strategic practices which rectify problematic personal and societal conditions; clear proofs and evidences for its foundational principles as well as for its secondary rules and laws.
5. There does not exist in the rules or laws of Islam anything which contradicts sound intellect. On the contrary, those of sound intellect testify to the truthfulness, the benefit, and the wholesome nature of Islam's rules and laws.
6. The primary resource for Islamic legislation is the beneficent Qur'an; all its commands and prohibitions are fair – completely void of any injustice. This is because the Qur'an was sent down from God Himself, the Exalted, and no alterations have occurred to its text -- no changes made by man, unlike that which has happened to the Gospel; for Allah decreed special protection for the Qur'an. God, the Exalted, said:

“Indeed, We have sent down the Reminder (the Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah) and we will surely preserve it.” [The Qur'an, Chapter Al-Hijr: 9]

7. Islam calls people to beliefs and practices which ultimately lead to happiness and success for the world, as a whole; it prohibits beliefs and practices which will bring about misery and corruption for people.
8. Islam calls to justice, security, and fulfilling agreements and oaths; it rejects oppression, deceit and trickery; and it completely disapproves of the acts of terrorism, which some people do and wrongfully attribute their acts to Islam.
9. Islam promotes communal cooperation and peace amongst people; hence, the famous greeting of Muslims, which is repeated day in and day out—“assalaamu alaikum” (peace be unto you).
10. Islam calls to the preservation of the rights of parents, offspring, relatives, neighbors, women, small children, laborers, and to the rights of each spouse over one other. Furthermore, it invites calls to and promotes the preservation of animals’ rights.
11. Islam calls to good behavior and dealings, in general, offering special help to the elderly, small children, orphans, the physically challenged, those in extreme poverty as well as those of low-income.

Q12: What is Islam's position concerning personal hygiene and public health?

Islam calls to both internal and external cleanliness, as well as general public health; as for internal cleanliness, this refers to the wholesome state of mind, spirit and soul which is attained through abstaining from corrupt beliefs, evil intentions, deviant thoughts, ill will towards others and jealousy. Regarding external cleanliness, it refers to personal hygiene and involves serious dedication to maintaining public health and the cleanliness of one's body; a clear example of this is in how Islam demands that one cleans the private parts, from which urine and defecation exit the body, with water [every time one relieves himself / herself, when possible].

Islam also calls married couples to wash their entire bodies, both husband and wife, after sexual intercourse. Even in cases in which sexual penetration is not made, but excretion of the sexual ejaculate occurs, whichever spouse for whom that occurs must wash (or rinse) his/her body completely. In addition, women are required to wash their bodies completely once their periodic menstrual cycle ends, as well as when postpartum bleeding subsides.

Furthermore, in addition to the normal showering or bathing that one does, Islam adamantly encourages men to wash their entire body every week on the day

of Jumuah before going to Jumuah Prayer, which is considered one of the most important prayers.

Islam also teaches that the armpit hairs should be shaved regularly, as well as pubic hairs. It teaches that the fingernails and toenails should be trimmed regularly, and it promotes the usage of pleasant body fragrances such as perfumes and colognes. Islam teaches constant brushing and cleansing of the teeth with toothpaste and a toothbrush or with “siwak” (a small stick from a particular kind of tree), a known method for cleaning the teeth traditionally used by many Muslims.

Likewise, Islam calls to cleanliness with regards to one’s under clothes as well as the external wear. It demands that care is taken to prevent the clothes from being dirtied by unclean elements such as urine and defecation.

Q13: What are the most important acts of worship in Islam and what are their benefits?

The most important acts of worship in Islam are: **Prayer**, **Zakah** (a particular tax collected and designated for those in need), **Fasting** and **the Pilgrimage** to Makkah.

As for **Prayer**: It is the greatest of all obligatory actions in Islam and it is required 5 times per day at designated times: It strengthens one’s connection with

God, the Exalted, and it wipes away sins; it clears and opens the chest and brings comfort to the soul; it removes anxiety and worry, and generally prevents people from saying and doing evil actions, and it protects people from harmful and dangerous affairs. Prayer is a practice which helps people most with successfully accomplishing their religious responsibilities, goals and aspirations as well as their more temporary and worldly ambitions.

Similarly, of the primary obligatory acts of worship in Islam is **Zakah**: It is the mandatory annual payment of a portion of one's wealth, for those held responsible for doing so in Islamic law, ultimately to support the needy. Of the many benefits of Zakah is that it effectively provides a means of social support and cooperation; it creates a relationship of love between the rich and those in need, and it serves to prevent people from being selfish and miserly.

In addition, one of the most important obligations is the **fasting** of an entire month annually, the month of **Ramadan**. Fasting has many benefits such as: cultivating the spirit and soul, supporting healthy development of the body; it trains people to be patient and forbearing, and reminds them of the great need that poor people have for food and drink – ultimately, it promotes being beneficent with the poor. Other benefits of fasting are: maintaining good physical health, as well as one's overall energy and liveliness;

it also helps detox the body and rid it of poisonous elements, effectively delaying some of the common ailments of old age.

Another one of the most important acts of worship in Islam is **Hajj** (pilgrimage) to the sacred House of Allah in Makkah. This is an annual religious endeavor; however, it is only mandatory upon an individual one time in life. For Hajj, Muslims come together from all corners of the world to one place, at a specific time, wearing the same type of white garments (white designated specifically for men) – not distinguishing between the rich and poor, or the white and black, or the Arab and non-Arab. It is for this reason that we say – Hajj is an extraordinary religious endeavor, a grand gathering of Muslims which incites mutual love, cultural understanding and exchange, along with general compassion.

Q14: What are the advantages of Islamic Economics?

The Islamic economical system is a balanced, middle course between socialism and capitalism: So, it allows that individuals have ownership of their belongings. It does not prohibit personal ownership as does socialism. On the other hand, it calls people to earn their wealth through trade and the other legal, just methods of gaining wealth which are built upon justice and fair-play; it does not allow absolute freedom

which would permit cheating others and consuming their wealth unjustly as does capitalism.

A recent testimony to the effectiveness of the Islamic economic system is that the Vatican and several expert economists have begun to encourage implementation of the Islamic economic system after the global financial recession of 2008 and the collapse of many banks.

Q15: What is Islam's unique position concerning women?

Islam has graced women with a very honorable status and has given them their rights in full; this was not the case in various societies of old.

In Greek society, women had neither freedom let alone a status of honor and were generally looked down upon with disdain. Therefore, people looked down upon the birth of a female: they hated when girls were born. They primarily used women for sex and related sexual pleasures -- as a mere object of their lewd behavior.

In Roman society, the status of women was even lower than that of being merely used for pleasures involving nakedness and lewdness!

In Hinduism, in some areas within India, when the husband dies, the wife no longer has the right to live; rather, she must die the same day her husband dies, and be burned after his body is burned – and sometimes even before his remains are burned.

In some Jewish factions, women were degraded and despised; girls were regarded as servants, and their fathers had full right to sell them even at a young age. Amongst these particular groups, women have no right to inheritance but are themselves inherited along with the rest of the deceased's belongings. During the reign of the English King Henry VIII, the English Parliament issued a ruling which prohibited women from reading the New Testament due to their impurity. In addition, up until the year 1805, it was an established English law that a man had the right to sell his wife and the "market" price for "a wife" was fixed at 9 pence (half a shilling).

In this day and age, women are exploited for advertisement campaigns; their honor is disgraced as companies photograph them next to cars or heavy duty equipment, for example, wearing shameless clothing -- for the purpose of promoting their products and attracting customers.

Arabs, before the revelation of the Qur'an, used to degrade and oppress women, prohibiting them from any rights to inheritance. Moreover, the majority of

the time, they would bury girls alive at birth. However, once the Qur'an was revealed, and people entered into the fold of Islam, such practices disappeared. This is because Islam is the religion of true justice and mercy; it raised the position of women and made their rank very high and noble. The Messenger of Islam, Muhammad (peace and special blessing be upon him) was one of the main reasons women of the world were given their due rights; he would always counsel men concerning women, ordering men to take great care of them as he would say, "Treat women well." Thereafter, women lived in the shade of Islamic teachings, honored, respected, and the primary care taker in the development of generations to come. The overall good state of a society became directly tied to the well-being of women, and the corruption of a society directly tied to her being neglected and/or corrupted. This is primarily because of the fact that she executes a vital aspect of human society right in her home; she rears and raises the very children who are such an essential part of society.

In closing, women in Islam are truly respected and honored -- mothers, sisters, wives and daughters alike. Islam's special respect for women is so great that an entire chapter of the Qur'an is dedicated to them called "Chapter: An-Nisa (The Women)" which comprises of various rules and laws concerning their rights, as well as a woman's relationship with her husband and her

children. These points are ample proof that Islam takes great care of women. Any Muslim society, group, family or individual that does not observe the firmly established tenants of Islam regarding the respect and honor, the rights and treatment of women, then Islam clearly denounces all oppression and mistreatment of women -- and such affairs cannot rightfully be attributed to Islam.

Q16: Has Islam oppressed women by mandating that they cover themselves with hijab?

Islam has made the hijab (specific garments worn by Muslim women to cover their beauty) incumbent upon women, because of their tremendous value and honor - - to protect them. Proper, Islamic covering of a woman's beauty is an important and effective means of protecting her from sexual harassment and even rape. Some studies have confirmed that nakedness and clothing which reveal the body increase the percentage of rape, whereas the proper Islamic covering of a woman's beauty deters men from bothering women and harassing them. Therefore, the purpose of Hijab in Islam is the protection of women and not, in any way, to demean their importance. For example, well wrapped sweets are protected from flies and insects -- the insects can't reach them; they can only reach sweets which are uncovered. When we cover sweets, our intention is to protect them from flies and bugs. If this is the case with sweets, then how much more so with women who are like precious cherished

diamonds, for whom we should provide the utmost protection.

Q17: Is Islam a religion of terrorism?

Islam prohibits killing innocent people – murder – and in the beneficent Qur'an it is stated that whosoever kills even one person unjustly, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, then it is as if he has killed all of mankind; God, the Exalted, said:

“... It is for this reason that we have ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone kills a person, and it is not ruled as legal retaliation for murder or as having stopped someone from committing dreadful crimes, then it is as if he has killed all of mankind; and whosoever saves someone, it is as if he has saved all of mankind. Our messengers have surely come to them with proofs which make all things clear, yet after all this, indeed many of them obstinately behave in disobedience to Allah and His messenger.” [Qur'an, Chapter Al-Maidah: 32]

This is clear proof that Islam is the religion of true justice, mercy and compassion.

As for non-Muslims who enter Muslim countries, it is absolutely prohibited that they be violated concerning their personal well-being, their wealth and honor. Furthermore, Islam issues great punishment to

whosoever kills a non-Muslim who has entered a Muslim country in safety, as he should; the prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said: “Whoever kills a non-Muslim who is not in open war with us, will not even smell the fragrance of Paradise.” The meaning of this is that any Muslim who kills an innocent non-Muslim, who is supposed to be safe from such crimes, then his punishment is that he will not enter Paradise, because he has committed a grave sin.

Q18: Are Muslims terrorists?

Terrorism has no true religion: it can be committed by a Muslim, a Christian, a Jew, secularists, etc. Muslims who commit acts of terrorism do not represent Islam -- not one iota; on the contrary, they represent their wretched selves, and they have opposed the teachings of this compassionate religion called Islam. So, if a Christian were to say that Islam is a religion of terrorism because there are Muslim terrorists such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, then on the same false premise, it could also be argued that Christianity is a religion of terrorism due to occurrences such as the Crusades, the English Inquisition, the massacre of Bosnian and Herzegovinian Muslims at the hands of the Serbs; or due to the rise of the terrorist organization known as the Klu Klux Klan (KKK), which is a racist group in the United States of America that claims to be built upon the cross, service of Christ (peace be upon him) and the murder and torture of any descendants of

Africa -- which has even involved burning them on the cross.

Furthermore, would Christians accept that we say that Christianity is a religion of terrorism due to what some extremist Christians did in the streets of London when they intentionally ambushed Muslims plowing over them with their car while these Muslims were leaving the mosque in which they had just finished praying during the holy month of Ramadan, June 2017? The anti-terrorist police considered the ambush car attack an act of terrorism.

Therefore, we assert that terrorism has no religion, and that terrorists do not represent the religion which they may adhere to -- they represent themselves.

Regarding the reason for which this phrase has been created and repeated “Muslims are terrorists” or “Islam is a religion of terrorism”, the cause is two-fold: Firstly, foolish individuals who happen to be Muslim, or at least claim to be, who commit acts of terrorism; secondly, the exploitation of these acts done by particular media organizations, holding all Muslims in contempt and attributing the acts to Islam in order to damage its reputation and turn people away from it. However, Islam openly rejects and opposes such evil, criminal acts; if anyone were to research the truth concerning Islam, he would come to know that it is the religion of true mercy and justice, the religion of peace which rejects every form of criminal violence and

terrorism, crimes of which Muslims themselves have suffered the greatest body count over all other religions and groups of people.

Q19: What is Islam's position concerning violence?

Islam has come and primarily aims to eradicate and warn against all forms of violence; it clarifies for mankind the evil consequences of violence. In fact, Islam implores mankind to continuously practice gentleness in dealings and to encourage others to do the same. For this reason, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and special blessings be upon him) said that God is Compassionate, He loves gentleness. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and special blessings be upon him) continuously urged people to be gentle with others. A prime example of this is the practice of being gentle with women and abstaining from being harsh with them, as in the statement of the Prophet (peace and special blessings be upon him), “Be gentle with *al-qawareer* (women)¹.” So, here, he likened woman to glass which requires that she be dealt with using extreme gentleness so that she isn't “broken” or even “scratched”. Violence and harshness against women is in complete opposition to the teachings of Islam. Islam has demanded an honorable status for women and that they are given their due rights: that they are

¹ Al-qawareer: literally means fragile glass containers, but here it is referring to women. Women are likened to fragile glass due to their natural, more-sensitive nature.

enabled to live a noble, pleasant life, be they mothers, sisters, wives or daughters.

Likewise, Islam has urged that gentleness be observed when dealing with small children. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and special blessings be upon him) dealt with small children in gentleness and kindness. He would joke with them and pass his hand over their heads. When he would pass by children, he would stop and greet them. He urged people to demonstrate mercy with them; so, of his sayings was, “Those who are not merciful with our little ones are not truly of us”.

Islam also implores people to be gentle with animals, to implement the most humane practices when dealing with them. This was established in Islam long before the current organizations which promote good treatment of animals, by well over a thousand years. As for violence and harshness towards animals, or starving them, Islam staunchly prohibits this. Proof of this is when the Prophet mentioned a woman who is doomed to the hellfire as a result of her trapping a cat until it died; he mentioned that she didn't feed it or give it anything to drink, nor did she even let it out to eat scraps which it would have been able to find on the ground.

In addition to this, Islam has prohibited the harsh methods and torturous tactics often implemented for the slaughter of animals whose meat humans eat such as: electrical shock, plucking all of the feathers of

chickens and other birds while they are still living, or immersing them into extremely hot water. Instead, Islam has special instructions for slaughtering such animals which are simple and more merciful towards the animals.

Q20: What is Islam's position concerning racism?

Before the advent of Islam, mankind was in disharmony; hatred between different groups of people was rampant; people were extremely biased to their own kind, color or tribe. This racism became the primary cause of the onset of wars and killing amongst many. Then, when Islam came, and people embraced it, racism subsided. People began to love one another and they drew near; they became as kin working together, not distinguishing between an Arab and a non-Arab, nor between a black person and a white person, nor between a rich person and a poor person, except by the upright, God-fearing behavior of an individual – which is the only fair scale by which anyone can rightfully be deemed greater than another person. This is in adherence to the principle which is taught in the beneficent Qur'an in His, the Exalted's, statement:

“O mankind! Indeed we have created you from a man and a woman, and we have made you various nations and tribes in order for you to get to know and learn from one another. Surely, the more

honorable of you with God are those who have the most *taqwa* (piety and the utmost commitment to pleasing God, upon His guidance). Indeed, God is All-Knowing, Well-Aware of all things.” [Qur’an, Chapter Al-Hujarat: 13]

The Prophet used to adamantly fight against racism with all of his strength. An example of this is in his saying, “There is nothing which makes an Arab better than a non-Arab or a non-Arab better than an Arab; nor a white person better than a black person or a black person better than a white person except *taqwa* (piety and the utmost commitment to pleasing God, upon His guidance). All people are from Adam and Adam is created from soil.”

Q21: How does one enter into the religion of Islam?

One of the most beautiful aspects of Islam is that the connection between a person and his Lord is free from any mediators. Also, of its most beautiful aspects is that entering into the religion cannot be a result of compulsion; rather, it should only be after one comes to understand it and is convinced that it is the truth. Whenever an individual has decided to embrace Islam as a religion, there is no need for any complicated procedures nor the approval of particular people; becoming Muslim is an act that anyone can do even if he/she were in the middle of the desert or trapped in a room. All the person must do is utter the

“shahadatayn” (the two foundational testimonies: 1- that there is nothing worthy of worship other than God, 2- that Muhammad is the messenger of God.); one must utter it knowing its meaning, having full belief and certainty concerning it, and being committed to acting according to what it entails. The proper way to pronounce the two foundational testimonies is, “Ash-Hadu an la ilaaha illa-Allah, wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan rasool-Ullah”.

As for the meaning of “Ash-Hadu an la ilaahaila-Allah” it means: “I testify and confirm that there is nothing deserving of worship other than God.”

While the meaning of “wa ash-hadu anna Muhammadan rasool-Ullah” is: “I also testify and confirm that Muhammad is the messenger of God sent to all of mankind and that he is the final prophet and messenger.

When an individual utters the two testimonies, he/she becomes Muslim right then and there. Thereafter, the person must uphold the other pillars of Islam such as: prayer, zakah, fasting Ramadan, and hajj; the person must learn how to perform these pillars from trusted Islamic centers and sound Islamic books.