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Islam at a Glance

Islam is the same religion that God revealed through His messengers (peace be upon them) to all people. Islam is a complete way of life. It impacts every part of life, from eating and sleeping to working and playing. It is not only a personal religion, but also a social one.

Muslims are supposed to live in accordance with God's laws. By doing so, they strive to obtain nearness to God and victory over temporary trials and temptations in this world. All aspects of their practice including prayer, fasting, charity, and pilgrimage are intended to help meet this goal.

Muslims believe in Allah¹, the Supreme and Eternal, Infinite and Mighty, Merciful and Compassionate, the Creator and the Provider, He begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none equal or comparable unto Him.

Muslims believe in all Messengers of Allah without any discrimination among them, as every known nation has a Warner or messenger from Allah. They were chosen by God to teach humanity and deliver His Divine message. The Qur'an mentions the names of some of

them including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Elias, Jonah, John the Baptist, and Jesus (peace be upon them all).

Muslims also believe in another prophet named Muhammad, who is a direct descendant of Abraham through his first-born son, Ishmael. Mohammad stands as the last messenger and the crowning glory of the foundation of prophet hood.

Muslims believe in all original scriptures and revelations of Allah, accepting them as the guiding light that the messengers received to show their respective people the right path to Him. However, some of these books and revelations had been lost or corrupted before the revelation of the Qur'an. The only authentic and complete book of Allah in existence today is the Qur'an, which has been preserved, as it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad through Angel Gabriel in its pristine, pure form.

The Qur'an contains many stories that are familiar to Christians and Jews. It contains no scientific fallacies or internal contra-

dictions. In fact, it contains much scientific knowledge discovered by scientists only in this century. The Qur'an is an unparalleled Arabic literary masterpiece.

People living in the West and throughout the world should learn more about Islam and Muslims so they will have an informed perspective about the true religion and beliefs of Islam. For example, there are ten million Muslims living in the United States out of the 1.2 billion in the world. Only 18% of Muslims live in the Arab world. Demographers say that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the U.S. and the world. Islam is the second largest religion in America, France, Great Britain and many more, surpassing Judaism, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witness, and other religions.

(1) Allah is the name of God in arabic.

The Scientifical Signs in the Quran

Quran on Mountains

A book entitled “Earth” is a basic reference textbook in many universities around the world. One of its two authors is Professor Emeritus Frank Press. He was the Science Advisor to former US President Jimmy Carter, and for 12 years was the President of the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, DC. His book says that mountains have underlying roots. These roots are deeply embedded in the ground, thus, mountains have a shape

that it would not shake with you...} (Qur'an, 16:15) Likewise, the modern theory of plate tectonics holds that mountains work as stabilizers for the earth. This knowledge about the role of mountains as stabilizers for the earth has just begun to be understood in the framework of plate tectonics since the late 1960's.

Could anyone during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) have known of the true shape of mountains? Could anyone imagine that the solid massive mountain which he sees before him actually extends deep into the earth and has a root, as scientists assert? A large number of books of geology, when discussing

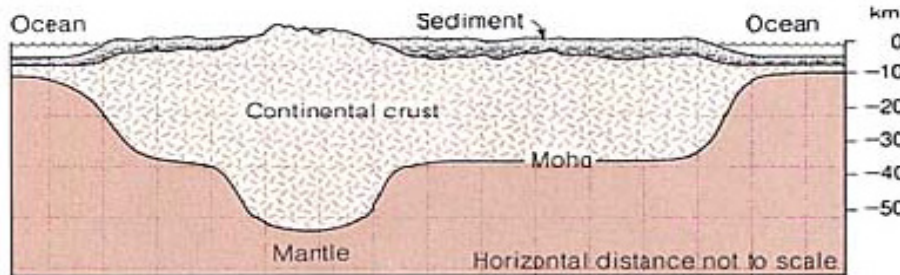


Figure 1: Mountains have deep roots under the surface of the ground. (Earth, Press and Siever, p. 413.)

like a peg (see figure 1). The Quran had described mountains in the same way almost 14 centuries ago. God has said in the Quran:

{ Have We not made the earth as a bed, and the mountains as pegs? } (Qur'an, 78:6-7)

Modern earth sciences have proven that mountains have deep roots under the surface of the ground (see figure 2) and that these roots can reach several times their elevations above the surface of the ground. So the most suitable word to describe mountains on the basis of this information is the word 'peg,' since most of a properly set peg is hidden under the surface of the ground.

The history of science tells us that the theory of mountains having deep roots was introduced only in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Mountains also play an important role in stabilizing the crust of the earth. They hinder the shaking of the earth. God has said in the Quran:

{ And He has set firm mountains in the earth so

mountains, only describe that part which is above the surface of the earth. This is because these books were not written by specialists in geology. However, modern geology has confirmed the truth of the Qur'anic verses.

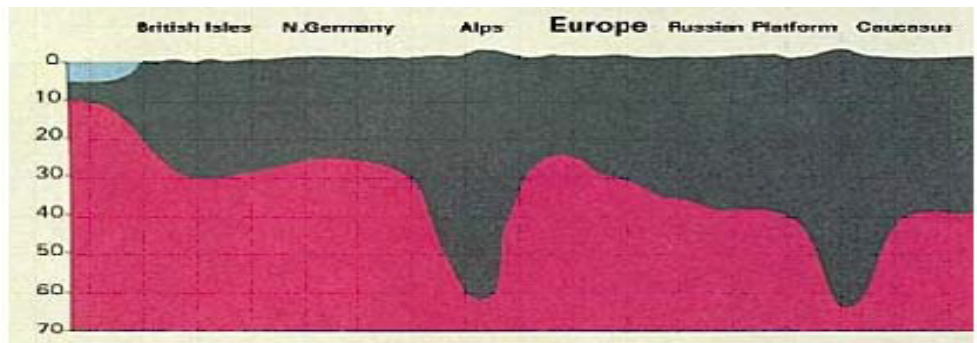


Figure 2: Schematic section. The mountains, like pegs, have deep roots embedded in the ground. (Anatomy of the Earth, Cailleux, p. 220.)

Adopted from:
A Brief Illustrated Guide to Understanding Islam

**Edward Gibbon
and Simon Ocklay
say:**



“It is not the propagation but the permanency of his religion that deserves our wonder, the same pure and perfect impression which he engraved at Meca and Medina is preserved, after the revolutions of twelve centuries by the Indian, the African and the Turkish proselytes of the Koran. . . The Mahometans¹ have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to a level with the senses and imagination of man. ‘I believe in One God and Mahomet the Apostle of God’ is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol; the honors of the prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue, and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reason and religion.”

Adopted from:
Edward Gibbon and Simon Ocklay, HISTORY OF THE SARACEN EMPIRE, London, 1870, p. 54.

Hadith² of this Month

Prophet Muhammad(may peace and blessing be upon him) said: You shall not enter Paradise so long as you do not affirm belief, and you will not believe as long as you do not love one another. Should I not direct you to a thing which, if you do, will foster love amongst you: (i.e.) give currency to (the practice of paying salutation to one another by saying) as-salamu alaikum³

(1) This is a common mistake people make, they call Muslims as Mahometans which could mean that Muslims worship Muhammad, and that is not true, Muslims are not Mahometans, they are just Muslims, which means: Submitters to the will of God. Muhammad is the Messenger of God.

(2) Hadith is anything Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said.

(3) As-salamu alaikum is the islamic greeting and it means “peace be with you”.

Why am I here?

{Behold, thy Lord said to the angels: “I will create a vicegerent on earth.” They said: “Wilt Thou place therein one who will make mischief therein and shed blood? Whilst we do celebrate Thy praise and glorify Thy holy (name)?” He said: “I know what ye know not.”} Qur’an (2:30)

Whenever I read this verse, it refreshes my memory of the reason God created Man, and the mission he has to fulfill. The word “vicegerent” is the direct translation of the Arabic word “Khalifah” which means the representative. Your khalifah would be the one that represents you, and in this case Man is God’s Khalifah in this life.

With a closer look on the meaning of this word, we’ll notice that the khalifah is someone that would be given commands to obey, restrictions to follow and free will to use his own judgment in certain situations.

Another important characteristic of the Khalifah is that, in spite of the commands he would be given, he still can choose not to obey, and when the one he’s representing comes back to take the power from him, he’ll judge him for his behavior, reward him if he was obedient and punish him if he was not. This is exactly going on between God and man, except that God is watching us all the time. When we look at the creations of God, ponder about the universe and how everything in it functions in a perfect way, we realize that there must be a reason behind all this. This reason must be more than living, enjoying, collecting money, and getting married; all these things are of the means of getting to the goal.

When we look at, for example, the gravity between the stars and planets, forcing them to rotate in a specific path, keeping the earth at a certain distance from the sun, we realize how intricate and amazing the world was created. For example, if this distance decreases we’ll burn, and if it increases we’ll freeze; the amount of gravity we have is proper for the man to be able to fulfill his mission. If this gravity decreases we won’t be stable, and if it increases we’ll be stuck to the ground and won’t be able to move.

Man himself is given a lot of distinguished characteristics over everything around him. He’s given a mind to think and the proper body to perform

things. The way, for example, the human hand functions is amazing in itself.

By pondering about all this and what we mentioned is very little, we realize that God didn't create Man and the Universe in vain.

{Did ye then think that We had created you in jest, and that ye would not be brought back to Us (for account)?” (115) therefore exalted be God, the King, the Reality; there is no god but He, the Lord of the Throne of Honor! (116)}

Qur'an (23:115,116)

So, He did create us for a reason, to be His Khali-fah on earth, which means we'll need guidance about what His commands and restrictions are, and about where we're given the initiative to process things our way.

Even though He's watching us, we're still given the free will to obey or disobey, and after the end of this life, judgment will be based on our degree of obedience.

But, what is this mission we're talking about?

God says in the Qur'an,

{I have only created Jinns¹ and men, that they may worship Me.}*Qur'an (51:56)*

Some people would think that “may worship Me” means to pray, fast, and give to the needy only; these kinds of worships are essential to feed the soul, just like we feed our bodies, to be able to face all the obstacles that face us on our way to construct life as God wants it.

But what the verse means by “worship Me” is the full submission to the will of God, to spread some of His attributes on earth, like mercy, to spread justice and peace among all nations, and to lift the human's interest beyond the materialistic benefits. Again, “may worship Me” means to submit to the will of God in every single thing we do; when we're happy or sad, when we're serious or having fun, when we're eating, drinking, working ...etc.

(1) Jinns is the name of the whole category that includes the devils or the demons.

A Jinn could be Muslim, Christian, Jew, Atheist ...etc, just like human being; and they are going to be judged just like we do.

To submit to His will in the way we treat our husbands and wives, our parents and kids, our relatives and neighbors.

God wants us to do all that, and He must have sent us the guidance to do so, so the question would be, where is this guidance?

To answer this question, we first owe ourselves to find out the truth about God, otherwise our beliefs would be in vain, our worships would be for someone who can't help us because he's not God, and this goal of creation won't be applied on earth.

We owe ourselves to answer these questions, in order to solve all humanity problems and stop all the tragedies many nations are going through, and in order to succeed in the hereafter.

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<http://www.ohiou.edu/~muslimst>

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