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(SIDDIQ SKENDER)

(Basic Information about **Islam, Christianity** and **Judaism**)

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Chapter One: (General Information)

First: Important Notices and some Common Acronyms

1-Important Notices:

1) In Islam, the name “**Allah**” means “The **One God**” in the English language.

2) According to the tradition in Islam, the following phrases are mentioned for respect after reading or hearing the Name “Allah’.

Muslims say for Respect any one of the followings phrases:

First: Some Muslims say “**Allah Ta’ala**” (Allah Ta-‘aaLaa), which means “**God the High**”.

Second: Some other Muslims say “**Subhanahu wa Ta’ala**” (Sub-haa-na-hoo-wa-Ta-‘aaLaa), (SWT), which means “**Glory to God the High**”.

Third: Or say “**Jalla Jalalahu**” (JaL-Laa JaLaa-La-hoo), which means “**Great is His Majesty**”.

Fourth: Or some Muslims say “**’Azza wa Jall**” (’Az-zaa wa-jaLL), which means “**Great and Majestic**”.

3) Verse 56 of Surah 33 (Koran 33:56), mentions saying respect for the Prophet:

“Verily, God and His Angels bless the Prophet: [hence,] O you who have faith, bless and salute (say peace be upon him) him.”

According to the tradition in Islam, Muslims say for Respect after hearing or reading the name of the Prophet Muhammad any one of the following:

First: Some Muslims say it in English as “**Peace be upon him (PBUH)**”.

Second: Some other Muslims Say “**’Alaehes Salaatu Wass-Salaam** (‘Alae-hes Salaatu Was-Salaam)”, which literally means “Blessings and Peace be upon him”.

Third: And many Muslims say “**Sallal-lahu ’Alaihi wa Sallam**” (SaL-LaL-Laahu ‘Alae-hee-Wa-SaL-Lam), which literally means “May Allah’s Blessings and Peace be upon him”.

4) According to the tradition in Islam, Muslims say for Respect “**’Alaehes-Salaam** (Alae-hes Salaam)”; It means “**Peace be upon him**” (PBUH) after hearing the name of any Prophet and any Angel of Allah.

While Muslims say for a group of Prophets or Angels “**’Alaehemes Salaam** (‘Alai-hemes Salaam)” which means “Peace be Upon Them”, after the name of Prophets or Angels.

Notice: Some Muslims prefer to say “**Peace and Blessings be upon him**” after the name of any Prophet or any Angel of God

5) The Prophet Muhammad was mostly mentioned or referred to him in this book as “The **Prophet**” instead of repeating his name, as it is the tradition in Islam, and as he was mostly mentioned in the Koran by the title **The Prophet or The Messenger**.

2-The Meaning of some Common Acronyms

First: A.H

It means “**After Hijrah**”, which means after the first year of the Prophet Muhammad’s **Hijrah** (Migration) from the city of Makkah (Mecca) to the city of Madinah (Medina) in the year 622 C.E. (A.D.)

In the English language, the Islamic term **Hijrah** (Hejra) is written as **Hegira**. Also in the English language, the Islamic phrase “**After Hijrah**” is written as **Anno- Hejirae**.

Anno Hejirae is a Latin phrase which means “in the year of the Hegira.”

Second: B.C. or B.C.E

It means as follow:

1) It is the time **before** the birth of the prophet ‘**Esa** (Eesa) or Jesus Christ, in the Christian Calendar, which is used to indicate a date that is a specified number of years before the birth of Jesus Christ.

2) It means the time **Before Christian Era**, which is called in the modern times as “**Before Common Era** (B.C.E.)”.

In the modern time, many scholars are using the acronym B.C.E. instead of just **B.C.** (Before Christ).

Third: A.D. or C.E:

In the Christian Calendar, the acronym A.D. is from the Latin phrase “Anno Domini”, which literally means “In the year of our Lord (Jesus Christ)”, which also means the time after the birth of Jesus Christ.

In the modern time, many scholars are using the acronym **C.E.** which means **Common Era** (C.E.), instead of A.D.

So, the Christian era is being called as **Common Era** (C.E.).

Notice: The Christian calendar dating system that uses A.D. and B.C. started in the six century A.D.

Fourth: AL

AL means “**The**”

Second: (The Meaning of some Islamic and other Terms)

The following Terms were not organized according to Alphabetical order, but they are organized according to similar subjects, which mean that each several terms are connected to each other.

Notice: Many of the following Important **Words** (Terms or Names) in the Koran were originally either from the **Hebrew** or **Aramaic** Languages, and both like the **Arabic** language are considered as a **Semitic Languages**.

The Hebrew was the Language of the Prophet Moses and the **Torah**, while the Aramaic was the Language of the Prophet 'Esa (Jesus) and the original Aural **Gospel**. Also the Arabic Language was the Language of the Prophet Muhammad and the **Koran**.

Allah (Allaah): It means 'The One God'
It is the proper name of God in the Arabic Language.

ELah (ELaah) or Ilah: It means as follow:

- 1) Elah or Eloah or Eloh is an Aramaic word, which literally means **Master**. Elah later became Alah, and then **Allah** (God).
- 2) Elah means Divine; Heavenly; Godlike,
- 3) Elah also means god as an Idol.
Elah means having the nature of being a deity
In Arabic, plural of ELah is "Aalihah" which means gods or Idols.

Yahweh (Yaa-wa or Yaa-way): Also written as **Yahveh, Jahveh, Jehweh** and **Jehoveh**.

It is the name of God in Judaism in the Hebrew language, which means:
"I am who I am".

In the English Bible, the name of Allah or Yahweh is written as "Lord" and "God". Also the ancient Jews called God by the name " **EL**", which means "The High (God)", and is considered as one of the attributes of God.

Elohim: The ancient Jews also called God by the name "**Elohim**".

Rabb: Rabb is a Hebrew word, which means as follow:

- 1) It means "Lord or God"
- 2) Also it means Master; like master of the house or work.
The word Rabbi originated from Rabb. Rabbi means my master.

Notice: In Christianity, Jesus is also called as "Lord"

Divine: In general, the meaning of the term Divine means as follow:

- 1) God.
- 2) Heavenly.
- 3) Having Godlike nature: Having the nature of being a deity; being God or a god.
- 4) Relating to God: Connected with, coming from, or caused by God or a god or goddess.

As-Samaa' (as-Samaa): It means Heaven or Sky.

Throne: It means as follow:

- 1) It means the Domain and sovereignty of God over the Seven Heavens and the Earth and what are between them.
- 2) Throne also means the Seat of Power of God in the Seventh Heaven, and from there He controls all His Creation.

Aayat (Verse) **al-Kursi** (Kursee): It means as follow:

- 1) The word Kursi Literally means Chair, which means "Throne".
- 2) It means "Verse of the Throne"
- 3) A single famous verse of the Koran (2:255) of more than average length.
- 4) It is one of the principal verses of refuge and protection, known as Aayat Al-hifz (protection)
- 5) It is considered as the most important verse in the Koran.

Tawhid (Taw-heed): It means "Monotheism (Mon-o-thee-iz-im) (or One God)"

Shirk: It means "Polytheism (Pol-i-thee-izm) (Association or sharing)", which means to associate somebody with God or to believe that somebody is sharing God with His rule or His powers, which is considered as a big sin in Islam.

Kufr: It means just one, or some or all of the following:

- 1) Literally means "**concealing (the Truth) by covering.**"
- 2) It means unbelieving, like denying the truth or the faith or religion.
- 3) Not believing in Allah (God).
- 4) It means not believing in Allah's powers or in some of Allah's powers, or even not believing in some verses of the Koran.
- 5) Infidelity; blasphemy
- 6) Also it means to speak about Allah (God) or sacred things in disrespect manner.
- 7) Ungratefulness or Unthankfulness.

Kafir (Kaafer): It means, just one, or some or all the following:

- 1) Kafir literally means "**he who conceals (the Truth) by covering**",
- 2) It means 'Unbeliever' (Plural: "Kaafirun").
- 3) In Islam the term Kafir mostly means an infidel who refuses or rejects the evidence of Divine revelation through the mission of the Prophet Muhammad or the Divine messengers before him.
- 4) The term Kafir is considered as an insulting or offensive word to people.
- 5) Ungrateful or Unthankful.
- 6) Atheist

Malak: It means "Angel" (Plural "Mala-ekah-Angels")

The name Malak was originated from the Hebrew word "**Malaak**", which means "**Messenger**".

The word Angel was originated from the Greek word **Angelos**, which means **Messenger**.

Jibril (Jebreel): It is the name of the Arch-Angel Gabriel (the Angel of revelations)

. According to many Muslim scholars, Gabriel was also called in the Qur'an as the **Spirit** or the **Holy Spirit**.

Also in Islam, he was called as Jibrail (Jebraeel).

Ruh (Rooh): It means “Soul or Spirit”

Jinni: It means “Genie” (Jeeni)

Jinn or Jinns: It means “Genies”; it is plural of Jinni (Genie).

They are unseen or invisible beings or creatures or spirits.

They constitute a whole race like Mankind.

Shaytan (Shaytaan): Shaytan is a Hebrew word means Satan or any devil.

Al-Akhirah (al-Aa-khira): It means “Life after death’, or the Last Day.”

Yawm al-Qiyamah (Yawm al-Qiyaama): It means “The Day of Resurrection.”

Yawm ad-Din (Yawm ad-Deen): It means “The Day of Judgment.”

Jannatu ‘Adn (Garden of Eden): It means as follow:

1) Jannatu or Janna means Garden, while ‘Adn means Eden, so it means the **Garden of Eden**.

The word ‘**Adn** was derived from the Hebrew word ‘Eden (‘Eedeen)

2) Eden means a delightful place or a place of happiness.

3) Also it means Paradise and Firdaws.

4) In Christianity, Jannah is also called as Heaven.

5) It is a permanent place for the people who followed the guidance of God during their lifetime.

Some scholars believe that this Garden has many tall and shadowing trees, which makes some parts of it enclosed.

6) The first home of Adam and Eve before they sinned.

Jahannam (Gehannum): It means as follow:

1) The word Jahannam was originated from the Aramaic word “**Gehennam**” which in turn was originated from the Hebrew word “Gehenn”.

2) Gehennam was called for a place outside of Jerusalem, was used by the city to dump their garbage and burned it there.

3) It means Hell; it is a place of punishment and misery for some sinners in the Life Hereafter. It is a place of separation from God.

4) According to Islam, Jahannam is considered as a temporary place of punishment for some sinners and a permanent place of punishment for some others.

Khalifah (Khaleefa or Kaleefa): It means as follow:

1) Caliph (successor) or vicegerent.

According to the Koran, the term Khalifah started with **Adam** who was considered as the first human Khalifah of Allah (God) on earth.

2) A successor to the Prophet Muhammad in leading the Islamic faith

3) Someone who rules, or bears responsibility, on behalf of the Prophet, and beyond him, on behalf of Allah

Nabi (Nabee): It means “**Prophet**”.

Prophet is one who speaks by divine inspiration or as the interpreter through whom The Will of God is expressed.

A Prophet usually carries a mission that lies within the framework of an existing religion.

Not every Prophet is also a Messenger.

Rasul (Rasool): It means “**Messenger**”

The term Messenger means a Prophet who brings a new religion or major new revelation.

Every Messenger is also called Prophet.

Wahi (Wa’hy) or **Tanzil** (Tanzeel): It means as follow:

1) Revelation from God; to inspire; to introduce a thought or feeling into a person (chosen men and women).

2) Wahy and Tanzil are called ‘Direct revelation from God.’

3) The Wahy implies a divine source that is beyond the world and beyond the recipient.

4) The Tanzil means ‘sending down’, it is used particularly for the revelation of the Koran or other direct revelation as the descent of a form from heaven.

Mu‘jizah (Moo-jiza): It means as follow:

1) Miracle

2) An event that appears to be contrary to or breaks the laws of nature in order to bring about some amazing event and is regarded as an act of God.

3) Something admired as a marvelous creation or example of a particular type of science or skill.

Al-Quds: It means ‘Jerusalem’, which is an ancient city located in present day Israel and Palestine.

Al-Jaahiliyyah (al-Jaahiliyya): It means “Age of Ignorance”. It was the time before Islam in the Arabian Peninsula when the people worshipped the Idols.

Din (Deen): It means “Religion”, which in turn means lifestyle or way of life

Ehsan (Eh’saan) or Ihsan: It means ‘The highest stage of Iman when a believer obeys Allah’s commands as if he is seeing Allah, and though he does not see Allah, he knows Allah Sees him all the time’.

Ummah (Om-ma): It means “Community or nation or people.”

It is usually applied to the Muslim-Brotherhood.

Islam (Eslaam): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means Submitting or Submission.
- 2) Submission to the will or guidance of Allah (God) in worship and in everything that the Muslims do in their daily life. They gain peace with their surroundings by willing to submit to God's Divine guidance.

3) Islam is the religion of all the prophets of God, confirmed finally by the mission of the Prophet Muhammad as the last Messenger and Prophet of Islam.

4) Islam is considered as a universal religion.

Islam is considered as the Religion of all the Prophets of God including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and finally Muhammad.

Since all the Prophets Self-Submitted to God, so they all considered as Muslims.

Muslim (Maz-lim or Mas-lim):

Also it is called Moslem (Maz-lim or Mas-lim).

And it is called Mussulman (Maz-ulman) or Mussalman (Mas-ulman).

It means as follow:

- 1) The term Muslim, originated from the Arabic word Aslama, which in turn originated from the Aramaic word Ashlem which means "to Submit or to surrender".
- 2) Believer in Allah as one God, and following the Prophet Muhammad as the last Prophet of Islam.
- 3) Any person who submits to the will of God.

Al-Qur'an (al-Qur-aan or The Qur'an); **Koran**: It means as follow:

- 1) It is the Holy Book of Islam.
- 2) Qur'an literally means: Reading or Recitation.
- 3) In English, it is written as **Koran** (Ko-ran).

Juzu (plural: Ajzaa'): It means "Section" (It is in the Koran). The Koran has 30 Juzus or Ajzaa'.

Surah (Soora) or **Surat** (Soorat), plural "Suwar or Surahs": Literally means "gate"; it is the name for a **chapter** in the Koran. The Koran has 114 Surahs (Chapters).

Aayah (Aaya): It means 'Verse', (In the Koran); also it is written as **Ayah**.

Plural "**Ayahs** or **Aayat** (Aayaat)": It means 'Verses'. The Koran has **6236** Aayahs.

Ayah literally means Sign, Miracle, Proof, Evidence, Lesson or Revelation.

Esra' (Esraa) & **Mi'raaj** (Meeraaj): It means "The Night Journey of The Prophet Muhammad to Heavens". The term Esra' also written as Isra'

Esra': It means 'The Journey of the **Prophet** from Mecca to Jerusalem'

Mi'raaj: It means 'The Ascension or Journey of the **Prophet** from Jerusalem to Heavens'

Worship: In general, the meaning of the term Worship is as follow:

- 1) To give God respect, praise, honor, ardent devotion, adoration, thankfulness.
- 2) The ceremonies, prayers or other religious forms by which this love is expressed.
- 3) The reverent love and devotion accorded a deity, an idol, or a sacred object.

Prayer: In general, the meaning of the term Prayer is as follow:

- 1) A reverent petition made to God or to another object of worship; or the act of making such a reverent petition.
- 2) An act of communion with one worshiped, as in devotion or thanksgiving.
- 3) Especially worded form of address used in worship.
- 4) A religious observance in which praying predominates.
- 5) A fervent request or the thing requested.

Arkan (Arkaan) al-Islam: The term **Arkan** means Supports or Fundamentals or **Pillars** (called the five pillars of Islam)

It is called Arkan or Pillars of Islam, because Islam resembles a house with Pillars, and that these five principles of Islam is like Five Pillars of a house, so, if somebody does not perform or apply anyone of them if it applies to him or her, then he or she is not considered as a sincere Muslim.

The Five Pillars are Shahadah, Salah (or Salat) Zakah (or Zakat), Sawm and Hajj.

Shahadah (Shahaada) (In Islam): It means as follow:

- 1) Shahadah is from the verb Shahida, which means ‘to observe, to witness or testify’
- 2) So Shahadah means **to bear witness** that there is no god but God and Muhammad is the servant and Messenger of Allah, which also means that “there is no (no true) deity worthy of worship but (except) Allah (God) and that the Prophet Muhammad is the servant and Messenger of Allah”.
- 3) Shahadah is also means **Declaration or Testimony of faith.**
- 4) Shahadah is the affirmation and formal statement or confession of faith that is fundamental to Islam and is the first and most important of the five pillars of Islam.

Notice: Shahadah is considered as the official beginning of any converts to Islam.

Saying shahadah by non Muslims without the intention of willing to convert to Islam does not convert any body to Islam.

Wudu (Wudoo): It means “Ablution”, by washing the hands to the wrist, face (including mouth and nose), arms to the elbow, wiping the head and ears, and washing the feet to the ankles, or sometimes just wiping on top of the feet if necessary, and each step of washing or wiping can be performed one time or two times or three times, which is usually done before prayers (Salah or Salat) to achieve a ritually pure state.
. The washing is not main purpose of Wudu, but becoming ritually purified before Salat is the main purpose of Wudu.

Qiblah (Qebla): It means as follow:

- 1) Direction of prayer (Salah)
- 2) Ka’bah (Kaaba)

Salat (Salaat) or **Salah** (Salaa): It means as follow:

- 1) Prayer
- 2) Salah literally means **Connection**.
The Salah is the connection to God.
- 3) Salah also means to bless, to praise, to revere, to thank, to honor, to commune, to devote and to adore.

Ruku’ (Ru-koo): It means ‘a bow or bowing down’

Sujud (Su-jood): It means ‘Prostration’

The Five Daily Prayers in Islam:

- 1) **Fajr** (Faj-r) or Subh (Morning or dawn): It is the time from the beginning of dawn until before sunrise
- 2) **Zuhr** (Zuh-r) (Noon): It is the time from past noon until mid afternoon
- 3) **‘Asr** (Asr) (Mid afternoon): It is the time from mid afternoon until before sunset
- 4) **Maghrib** (Magrib) (Sunset): It is the time from right after sunset until daylight ends or until dark
- 5) **‘Esha’** (Eeshaa or Isha) or ‘Isha (Night)’: It is the time from dark until before dawn

Ta’awwudh or Ta’aw-wuz (taking of Refuge or protection):

It is the expression “A-oozo beL-laahee men-ash-shaytaan-er-rajeem”, which means “I take refuge or protection in God from the Shaytan (Satan or any devil) the outcast”, often shortened “A-oozu bel-laah” (I take refuge in God).
Usually precedes the basmalah before ritual actions and the recitation of the Koran.

The following verses from the Koran about Ta’aw-wuz:

“If a provocation from the Shaytan (devil) should provoke you, seek refuge or protection in God; He is All-hearing, All-seeing. The God-fearing (believers), when a visitation of Shaytan troubles them, they remember (Remembering God and saying Ta’awwuz), and then they see clearly. (Koran 7: 199-200).

Also there are two short Surahs (Chapters) in the Koran (113 and 114) are called the two Surahs of Refuge or protection.

Bismillah al-Rahman al-Rahim (Besmel-laah-her Rahmaan-ner Raheem): It means as follow:

- 1) It is called “Basmalah”.
- 2) It means in the name of Allah (God), the Compassionate, the Merciful.
- 3) The phrase with which Muslims begin all actions and to make an attempt, such as eating, drinking or starting a journey
- 4) It is also the preface of every Surah of the Koran except the 9th.

Al-Fatihah (al-Faateha): It means as follow:

1) Literally means “The Opener” or “the opening” chapter.
But it is not the first Surah of the Koran that was revealed to the prophet.
The first surah of the Koran that was revealed to the prophet in cave Hir’raa’ outside Mecca was surah number 96 in the Koran.

2) Also it means ‘The Opening Surah of the Qur’an (Koran)’ and is recited in each standing station or Rak’ah of the canonical or regular prayer (salah).

3) Al-Fatihah is called “Umm al-Ketab”, which means the Mother of the Book (Koran) or the Essence of the Divine Book.

4) It is also called Surat al-Hamd, which means the Surah of Praise. It is also called Asas al-Qur’an (The Foundation of the Qur’an).

5) The Fatihah is also called in the Koran as “the seven often repeated verses”.

6) It is a hymn of praise to Allah, and a prayer for guidance on the right path.

7) Apart from its central place in the canonical, or ritual prayer, the Fatihah is frequently recited as part of a du‘aa’, or individual and spontaneous prayer.

It is also recited individually or in a group upon marriage, on visiting a holy place, at a funeral, or during many circumstances in which a du‘aa’ prayer is appropriate. The fatihah is always concluded by saying Aamin (Amen).

8) It is the most important Surah in the Koran, which was referred to by the Prophet as the most important thing that was given to him by God (Allah).

The Prophet Muhammad said that Allah gave every prophet something special and different from other Prophets and I was given the Surah of al-Faatihah.

Amin (Aameen): It means:

1) In English it is written as **Amen**, which was originated from the Hebrew word “Aameen”.

2) “**Accept** our or my **prayer**, O Allah (God)”; this word said after recitation or reading of Suratul Faatihah or any Du‘aa’ to Allah.

3) Also it means “**so be it**”.

4) Used at the end of a Prayer or a statement to express approval, or agreement to a proposal.

At-Tahiyyat (at-Ta-hee-yaat) (Greetings), also called **at-Tashah'hud**: It means as follow:

- 1) Greetings, which are recited during Salah or prayer
- 2) It is the last formula that the worshipers complete before finishing Salah (prayer).
- 3) It includes Greetings, Shahadah and darud on the Prophets Muhammad and Ebraheem.
- 4) Sometimes all the at-Tahiyyat is called at-Tashah'hud, and also the first half of at-Tahiyyat is also called as:

at-Tashah'hud (at-Ta-shah-hud), which starts with the words at-Taheyyaatu leL-laahee was Salawaatu wal Tayyebaatu and end with Shahadah, while the second half of at-Tahiyyat is called as:

Darud (Da-rood), which starts with saying Allaahuma Sallee Alaa Muhammeden wa-Alaa Aale Muhammad, Kamaa Sal-laeta Alaa Ebraaheema Wa Alaa Aalee Ebraheem, which means asking Allah to bless our prophet and his family as He blessed Ebraheem and his family before.

Du'a' or Dua (Du-aa): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means a "call" or "plea". It is a Personal or private prayer.
- 2) Du'a means **supplication** or **personal requests** to God by making a humble earnest petition or begging.
- 3) It is asking Allah (God) for favor, blessing and mercy.
The Du'aa' is different from the ritual, or canonical prayer (salah), which is a non-individual prayer performed five times a day according to traditionally established form, and which obligatory. The Salah is a kind of a prescribed form of prayer and an act of worship.
- 4) Dua is an individual prayer, which may be voluntary or happening without external cause, with personal petitions, or created or written individual prayer.
- 5) The regular Salah is usually followed by Du'aa'.
Although there is always a non-obligatory du'aa' following the Salah, a du'aa' may be made at any time.
- 6) The Du'aa' itself, which consists of the individual's petitions of God, is voiced inwardly and silently.
- 7) The Du'aa', whether in a group or alone, is performed with the palms of the hands open to heaven in front of us; at the end after asking for whatever we wish, the words al-hamdu lel-Laah (praise to God) are said or just the word Amin (Aameen) is said and the palms are drawn or passed over the face; or also continue passing the palms down, crossing over the shoulders, as if one were anointing oneself with a Divine blessing.
. We ask for God's blessings with open hands and then wash God's grace over our faces.
- 8) The special prayer for occasions of distress or pain, like saying "Ya Allah" (O Allah), is also another kind of **Dua**.
- 9) The Christian prayers mostly resemble what is called Du'aa' in Islam.
Notice: Also the Dua can be done without opening the palms of the hands.

Nafilah (Naafela): It means "optional prayer"

Masjid or Jaa'mi' (Jaa-mee) (Mosque): It means as follow:

- 1) The term Masjed means "a place of prostrations", and the term **Jaa'mi'** means: "a place of gathering".
- 2) Both terms means Mosque, a place of worship
- 3) The early mosques, in the first centuries of Islam, served as places of worship and education (Madrassa), and for gatherings of a social and political nature.
- 4) Also today some of the Mosques are used for prayers, education and as a place of assembly for the community.

Mimbar: It is the high place where the Imam stands for preaching the Friday sermon.

Manarah (Manaara):

It means 'Minaret', which is a tall tower, used for the call to prayer (Salat).

Adhan (Aadhaan) or **Azan** (Aazaan): It means 'the call to prayer'

Originally, Muslims were called to prayer by means of sounding clappers and it was in the second year of Hijrah (in 624 A.D.), that the calling was changed to word of mouth (Aazan) by the Muedhen or Muezzin (the caller to prayer).

Muadhhdhin (Mu-ad-den) or **Muazzin** (Mu-az-zin):

It is the title of "The caller to Prayer", it is also written as Muezzin.

Friday: It is the holy day of the Muslim week. Or the Muslim Sabbath, but the Muslims are allowed to work before and after the Friday Sermon at Noon.

Khutbah (Khutba): It means the Friday sermon

Misbahah (Mes'baha): It is a prayer beads used for recitation of the name of Allah.

Sadaqah (Sadaqa): It means Charity.

Zakat (Zakaat) or **Zakah** (Zakaa): It means as follow:

- 1) Almsgiving or support of the needy
- 2) To purify, cleanse and growth

Nisab (Nesaab): It means 'the amount of annual savings of a Muslim on which payment of Zakat is compulsory'

Mithkal (Meth-kaal): It means Weight (of Gold), which is about 4.5 grams.

Sawm: It means as follow:

- 1) Fasting (From dawn to sunset)
- 2) Sawm means not to do or to stay away (keep away) from something
- 3) Abstinence or self-denial
- 4) The practice of subjecting the human body to discipline, for the sake of the spiritual benefit
- 5) The purity and self-control is more important than the going without food.

Eftar (Eftaar) or Iftar: It means “Breaking the fast”

Suhur (Su-hoor): It means “the end of the night meal in Ramadan”

Laylat ul-Qadr (Laylat-ul-Qad-r): It means as follow:

1) It is called the Night of power in Ramadan, because on this night, the Prophet Muhammad received the first revelations in the cave of Mount Hir’raa’ (Hir-raa) outside of Mecca (Koran 97:1-5), and therefore it is considered as the most important night in Islam.

2) The date of this night is not certain

. According to the Hadith of the Prophet, the night can be observed on the last ten days of Ramadan, and is believed to be on any of the odd dates during the last Ten days of Ramadan.

3) The Koran says that this night is better than One Thousand Months.

4) It is frequently held on the 27th night of Ramadan.

The exact night is not known, but some Muslim scholars calculated the night of the 27th according to the Surah of al-Qadr, which is 30 words, and the word number 27 says ‘Heya’, which means ‘it is’ or ‘that is’, so they assumed that it was probably the night of the 27th.

So the night of the 27th is only a Symbolic Night for many Muslims who feel good about this night and want to worship more during all night including some who donate money to good causes during this blessed Night.

Notice: The night of the 27th usually starts from sunset on the day of the 26th of Ramadan.

. Many Muslims stay up all night reading the Koran and praying or spend the entire night at the mosque.

. Some Muslims spend the last 10 days at the mosque, in order not to miss the night of Laylat al-Qadr; and its exact date was not revealed, so that the Muslims also treat other nights of Ramadan equally in their devotion.

Tarawih (Taraa-weeh): It means as follow:

1) Special prayers in Ramadan

2) Prayer of pauses or rest

3) Extra prayers made on voluntary bases (it is a Sunnah) during the nights of the month of Ramadan.

. The Trawih prayers are consisting of as low as eight Rak‘ah to as high as twenty Rak‘ah, and can be done at home or at the Mosque.

Eed (Eed): It means “Feast” and it is the name for the Holy Day in Islam.

The term Eed is also written as **Eid**.

Fetr (Fet-r): It means ‘Breaking the Fast’. The word Fetr is also written as **Fitr**.

Fetrana (Fetraana): It means ‘Gift to the needy’, given to them before the start of Eed al-Fetr, at the end of Ramadan. The word Fetrana is also written as **Fitrana**.

Makkah (Mak-ka) or Mecca: It means as follow:

- 1) Mecca, is the city of the Hajj (Pilgrimage), located in present day Saudi Arabia.
- 2) Makkah literally means “**The House**”.
- 3) Makkah al-Mukarramah, which means Mecca the Blessed
- 4) Witten as “**Mecca**” means any place regarded as the center of an activity or interest; or any place visited by many people; or a goal to which adherents of a religion aspire.

Al-Ka’bah (The Kabah): It means as follow:

- 1) Kabah literally means “**Cube**”; it is a large Cube shaped stone structured house, covered with large black cloth, which stands in the center of the Grand mosque of Mecca.
- 2) It is the House of Allah (God).
Neither the Kabah nor the Black Stone are objects of worship; it is only a sanctuary consecrated to God since the time of Adam
- 3) The Kabah is composed of four walls and a ceiling.

The Black Stone: It means as follow:

- 1) It is called al-Hajar al-Aswad, which means the Black Stone.
- 2) The Stone was set in the southeast corner of the Kabah, about 1.5 yards from the ground.
- 3) The Black Stone is considered as a mark for the starting point for any person try to circle the Kabah, in this way the person knows that one circle was completed. Traditionally during the circumambulation of the Kabah, the worshipper either makes a gesture in the direction of the Black Stone after completing each circle or kisses the Stone; the vast majority of Pilgrims just make gesture. The Stone is in seven pieces after a Muslim cult (called the Seveners) in the 10th century A.D. broke it into seven pieces.
- 4) Its color is black with reddish color and yellow particles, of ovoid shape. Its size about 11 inches wide and 15 inches high, and set in a silver chasing.
- 5) Muslim tradition states that it came from Heaven; some scholars believe that probably was a meteorite. Also tradition says that Adam placed it in the original Kabah, then after Noah’s Great Flood an Angel gave it to Abraham to put it in its current location.

Hajj (Haj): It means as follow:

- 1) The greater Pilgrimage to Mecca in the month of Dhul-Hijjah
- 2) It is once in a lifetime for the Muslims who are able to do it physically and financially

Ehram (Ehraam): It means ‘Special dress worn by pilgrims during Hajj’, which prohibits the pilgrims from doing certain things and allows them to start the Hajj ceremonies. The term Ehram is also written as **Ihram**.

Hajji (Haj-jee), plural “Hajjaj”: It is the title of a Male Muslim Pilgrim, which is a title of great respect.

Hajjiyyah (Haj-jee-ya), plural “Hajjiyaat”: It is the title of a Female Muslim Pilgrim

Ad'ha (Ad-haa): It means 'Sacrifice', which means sacrificing Animals such as lamb, cow, goat or camel.

'Umrah (Um-ra): It means 'The lesser pilgrimage to al-Ka'bah in Makkah (Mecca) any time of the year'

Zamzam: Literally means "bubbling or abundance of water"

It is the name of the famous well near the Ka'bah in Makkah, discovered by Hajar (Haajar), the mother of the Prophet Esmael (Ishmael).

'Arafat (Arafaat): It is the plain 25 kilometers southeast of Makkah where the Hajjis (pilgrims) gather on the day of the 9th of Dhul-Hijjah during Hajj

Muzdalifah (Muzdalifa): It is the name of a place between 'Arafat and Mina, located 11.5 kilometers to the east of Makkah and the Pilgrims who are called Hajjaj (Haj-jaaj) or Hajjis (Haj-jees) are required to stay here on the night between the 9th and the 10th of Dhul Hijjah.

Mina (Meenaa): It is the name of a place situated 6.5 kilometers to the east of Makkah. The pilgrims stay in Mina for three nights during the Hajj, on the 11th, 12th and 13th days of Dhul-Hijjah.

Ramil-Jimar (Ramyel Jemaar): It means as follow:

1) It means 'The throwing of the stones at the three Pillars in Mina'

2) One of the rites of the pilgrimage is the throwing of stones (peddles) at three columns in Mina on the 10th, 11th and 12th days of Dhu-l-Hijjah
. The peddles are called Jimar, and gathered at Muzdalifah the night before, when the Pilgrims stop on their way from 'Arafat.

3) Failure to perform this rite during the Pilgrimage may be amended by fasting or sacrifice.

Notice: The reason for the throwing of the stones is because according to the tradition in Islam, the ritual commemorates the testing of the Prophet Ebraheem (Abraham), to see if he would be obedient to sacrifice his only son Esmail (Ishmael) as God tolled him in a dream.

The Shaytan (Satan) came to Abraham in the form of a stranger, and tried to persuade Abraham from sacrificing his son.

But Abraham drove the Shaytan away with peddles, but the Shaytan was insisting, then Abraham drove him away for the second and then for the third and final time with peddles.

Also Abraham's son agreed with his father about what God wants Him to do.

Maqam Ebraheem (Maqaam Ebraaheem): Literally means: "The standing place of the Prophet Ebrahim (Abraham)." at a spot few meters from the Black Stone corner of the Ka'bah

. At the Maqam Ebrahim, there is a footprint of Ebrahim impressed into a large rock.

. The Pilgrims pray two Rak'ahs around the vicinity during the Hajj season.

Hijrah (Hejraa): It means as follow:

- 1) Emigration. In English it is written as **Hegira** or Hijira.
- 2) Literally means exodus or going out, which was derived from Hajara (to migrate) and means leaving home and friends behind through flight or withdrawal from somewhere to escape danger.
- 3) Hijrah means the emigration or withdrawal of the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslims from Mecca to Medina to escape persecution.
- 4) Hijrah is considered as the beginning of the Islamic calendar, which is called in Islam as Hijri calendar.
After Hijrah (A.H.) is called as Anno Hegirae (A.H.) (He-jeeree or Hejjiree) in English, which means in the year of Hegira (Hijrah).

Muhajir (Muhaajer): The emigrant

Al-Madinah (al-Madeena): It means as follow:

- 1) City
- 2) In English it is written as ‘Medina’
- 3) The name Madinah (Medina) comes or derived from ‘Madinat an-Nabi’, which means city of the Prophet Muhammad.
- 4) The original name of Madinah was called “Yathrib” and the Prophet named it Madinah.
- 5) Also it means al-Madinah al-Munawwarah: The Enlightened city

As-Sirah an-Nabawiyah (as-Seera an-Naba-wey-ya):

It means Biography of the life of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions (Sahaabah).

Sunnah (Soon-na): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means: “A Form” from “Sanna”-to shape, form or establish.
- 2) It is the Saying, acting or permissions of the Messenger or Prophet Muhammad.
- 3) It is the Prophet’s example, or way of life, or his customs and traditions.
- 4) Everything the Prophet said, did, approved or condemned or his silent approval of actions done in his presence.
- 5) The customary practice of any person or group of people, but it has come to refer almost exclusively to the practice of the Prophet Muhammad.
- 6) The original principle was that those who followed the Prophet’s Sunnah would be rewarded for it, but there was no punishment or censure for those who did not.

Hadith (Hadeeth): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally: Speech, News, Report or account
- 2) Specifically, traditions relating to the deeds and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad as was narrated or related to his companions
- 3) Hadith is divided into two groups: First: Hadith Qudsi (Sacred Hadith), which is from God, and Second: Hadith Sharif (Noble Hadith), which is from the Prophet himself.

Madrasah: It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means School.
- 1) It is the Mosque School, for training Muslims in Islamic subjects, how to recite and understand the Koran, and the general principles of Islam.
- 2) Madrasah also means the Institution in which Islamic Knowledge is taught and acquired.

Shari‘ah (Sharee-aa): It means “Islamic Law; Way; path; or code of conduct”.

Fiqh (Feq-h): Literally means: “understanding”. The term refers to the science of Islamic law or jurisprudence.

Fiqh means understanding the application of the Islamic law and how to formulate new rulings.

Faqih: A person with a sound knowledge and understanding of fiqh.

Fatwa: Fatwa is the legal guidance of a pious and knowledgeable cleric scholar (Aalim) on any matter of Islamic Law, which is based on the Qur’an (Koran), the Sunnah and the Islamic Shari‘ah.

. Fatwa can be changed or overruled and not automatically binding on the community.

Mufti: It means as follow:

- 1) One who delivers, or is qualified to deliver a fatwa.
- 2) A specialist in Islamic law, usually a private person whose advice is sought by others owing to his scholarly reputation, devotion and reverence.
- 3) Each Muslim country has an official in the government who works as a Grand Mufti to the country.

Imam (Emaam): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means: model or exemplar.
- 2) Not a priest, but a respected person who leads the prayers.
- 3) Anyone who knows the prayer can lead it.
- 4) Also it means a religious leader.
- 5) In Shi‘ah Islam, it is the title of ‘Ali and his descendants.

Mulla (Mol-la): It means as follow:

- 1) From the Arabic word Mawla or Master, usually male.
- 2) It is a title accorded to religious scholars (Clerics) and dignitaries in Central Asia and in some parts of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran.
- 3) A Muslim religious leader or teacher
- 4) It corresponds roughly to the term Faqih or Sheikh (Sheik) which is used in some parts of the Islamic world like The Middle East.
- 5) Also the term is used in the above regions as title of respect for a Muslim man who thought to be very wise.

Ayatollah (Aayatol-La): It means as follow:

- 1) It is the title of a major or leading Shi‘a (or Shi’ite) cleric.
- 2) Lit. Means “sign of God”.

This title started since the beginning of the 20th century A.D.

Shaykh, (also spelled as Sheikh or Sheik): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means “Old man or elder”.
- 2) Among many parts of the Sunni world, it is the title given to religious scholars.
- 4) In the Arabic speaking areas, it is a title given to the head of a village, or of a whole tribe, usually elected.
- 5) It is a title given to a Sufi master or Sufi teacher.

Sharif (Sha-reef): It is the Title of the persons claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad.

Sayyed: It means as follow:

- 1) It means Master.
- 2) It also used as a title name for the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad.

Waly (Walee) or Wali (Saint): It means as follow:

- 1) Saint or Friend of Allah.
- 2) An extremely virtuous person
- 3) A member of a religion who after death is formally designated as having led a life of exceptional holiness
- 4) Wali is a particularly good or holy person, or one who is kind and patient in dealing with difficult people or situations

Amir or Emir (Ameer or Emeer): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means: “Commander’ from the root amara ‘to command”.
- 2) It is used to mean Prince or commander, or as a title for various rulers, or chiefs.
- 3) It means leader.

Sultan (Sultaan): It means as follow:

- 1) Name for the ruler of a Muslim state
- 2) The word Sultan was derived from the Arabic word “Sulta”, which means “authority”.

Wazeer: It means as follow: In English, it is called Vizier.

- 1) It is a title for an officer to whom a ruler delegated the administration of his kingdom.
- 2) Wazeer is also means Minister who is the head of one of the departments in a government.
- 2) Head of the imperial council in the Ottoman Empire.

Orientalist: In Arabic it means Mustashriq.

This term used to describe western Christian and Jewish scholars who made the study of Islam and / or Eastern culture, as their vocation in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Scholar (Skol-er), (Aalim, plural ‘Ulema): It means as follow:

- 1) A learned person.
- 2) A specialist in a specified or one area branch of knowledge

Fundamentalist: In Arabic it is called Usuly (O’sooly).

It means that any person who gets back to the basic fundamental principles of his or her faith, and wants to apply it to his or her daily life, whether the person is a Muslim, Christian, Jew or follower of any one of other religions.

Al-Azhar (al-Az-har): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally means: “to shine brightly”.
- 2) The most famous university in the Islamic world, in Cairo, Egypt
- 3) The Fatimid dynasty founded al-Az’har in 969 A.D. (C.E.).
- 4) During the Ayyubid dynasty in Egypt, al-Azhar became a Sunni university at the time of the rule of Salahaddin (Saladin) in 1171-1193 A.D. (C.E.).
- 5) Al-Azhar acquired great prestige and a reputation for authority in religious domains, which it has kept to the present day.
 - . The wearing of black gowns, divisions into undergraduate and graduate faculties, and some other things were derived from al-Az’har

Theology: 1) It is the study of the nature of God and religious truth.

2) Also it means a system or a school of opinions or thought or system of belief concerning God and religious questions.

Theologian: One who learned or specialized in the study of the nature of God and religious truth.

Religion: It means as follow:

- 1) It is the people’s beliefs and opinions concerning the existence, nature and worship of a deity or deities, and divine involvement in the universe and human life.
- 2) It is the Belief in and reverence for a supernatural power or powers regarded as creator and governor of the universe.
- 3) Also it means a set of strongly held beliefs, values, practices and attitude that somebody lives by or based on the teachings of spiritual leader.

Sect: It means as follow:

- 1) A religious group with beliefs and practices at various with those of a more established Main Group.
- 2) A denomination of a larger religious group
- 3) A group of people forming a distinct unit within a larger group by virtue of certain Refinement or distinctions of belief or practice
- 4) A religious body, especially one that has separated from a larger denomination

The reason people believe in Religions:

According to scholars, the people accept religion because it is the only way for them to answer questions about the mysterious things in life, like why we are created, and what happens to us after we die, who created us and the universe; and many other questions like these.

So believing in a higher power like God or gods is one way of making sense of the world.

Religions also help guide people’s lives. Different religions have different beliefs.

Ritual (rich-oo-al) or **Rite:** In general, it means as follow:

- 1) The established and prescribed pattern or order of observance of a religious ceremony
- 2) The performance of actions or procedures in a set, ordered, and ceremonial way.
- 3) A formalized pattern of actions or words followed regularly and precisely.
- 4) The body of ceremonies or rites used in a place of worship
- 5) A detailed method of procedure faithfully or regularly followed.

Ruqyya (Ro-qee-ya or Rukee-ya): It means as follow:

- 1) Recitation of verses of the Koran for the treatment of, and protection against illness or other emotional and psychological problems.
- 2) For example of doing Ruqyya is to recite Surat al-Fatihah or any other Surah (Surat) of the Koran and then to blow one's breath or touch with saliva the affected part of a sick person.
- 3) This kind of treatment is mostly intended to give the peace of mind to the affected people, so that they have the feeling of Godly presence, which have major psychological effect on the sick, frightened children and adult and the hopeless people, especially after they have exhausted all kinds of treatments with doctors and other specialists.
- 4) This practice was widely used in Islam in the past, but in the modern time to a lesser extent. Also there are many Muslims who do not practice it or against doing it.

Muslim Flags: The Prophet Muhammad used **Black** and **White** flags as his symbols. Common alternatives are **Green** flags with the Muslim creed written on them.

An-Najm (An-Najem): It means as follow:

- 1) Star
- 2) **The five points star symbolizes the five pillars of Islam.**

Al-Qamar: It means 'Moon'

Al-Badr (al-Bad-r): It means 'the full Moon'

Al-Hilal: It means **The Crescent.**

- The Crescent, new or half moon is the symbol of Islam, which is frequently found on the domes and minarets of the Mosques, to show the direction of Mecca (Qiblah).
- . The Crescent is the symbol of the Islamic calendar, which signals the start and finish of Ramadan and other Islamic Hijrah months.
- . The Crescent and the Five-pointed Star were not part of the Islamic heritage or the symbol of Islam in the early centuries of Islam.
- . Usually the Crescent in the Islamic heritage is found accompanied with a star in the middle of it.

(Calculating the days of the months of the Lunar Year)

The Starts of the Islamic day, begins at sunset on the evening of the day before and end on the second sunset. So, the full Islamic Lunar day is from sunset to sunset.

Like modern calculations, the practice of calculating the beginning of the Lunar Months on the bases of astronomical calculation for the new moon, not for its sighting, started in Cairo in the first year of the University of Al-Azhar in 969 C.E.(A.D.) during the Fatimid dynasty.

Although in principle a month runs from the sighting of one new moon until the next; but in practice, sighting or adjustments for sighting are no longer made in the modern time; and calendar days run according to astronomical calculations of the moon's motion.

Until recently, an exception was still made for the announcement of Ramadan and the month of Pilgrimage, which because of their ritual importance.

Now, however, with the almost universal abandonment of the traditional point of view, most countries have apparently made a choice to date Ramadan and the religious feasts simply according to astronomical calculation of the new moon without allowing corrections dependent upon actual sighting.

Thus it is not unusual for countries to announce Ramadan when physical sighting of the moon would be possible in their territories only one day later, or even before a real sighting could have been made anywhere in the world.

The Formula for converting Hegirian (Hijri) to Gregory (Milaadi) and vice versa, as follow:

A simple conversion formula to determine in which year the New Year's Day of a year of the other calendar took place, also to find the correct dates between the Gregorian and Hegirian calendars and to convert the dates between them, and is done as follow:

$$\text{Gregorian year} = \text{Hegirian year} + 622 - \text{Hegirian} / 33$$

$$\text{Hegirian year} = \text{Gregorian year} - 622 + (\text{Gregorian} - 622) / 32.$$

For Example, to find the **Hegirian** year for the year **2008 A.D** of the Gregorian year

$$\text{Hegirian year} = 2008 - 622 + (2008 - 622) / 32$$

$$\text{Hegirian year} = 1386 + 1386 / 32 = 1386 + 43 = \mathbf{1429 A.H.}$$

Also to find the **Gregorian** year for the year **1429 A.H.** of the Hegirian year, as follow:

$$\text{Gregorian year} = 1429 + 622 - 1429 / 33$$

$$\text{Gregorian year} = 2151 - 43 = \mathbf{2008 A.D.}$$

Some Common English words originated from the Arabic language:

There are an estimated 10,000 (Ten thousands) originally Arabic words in the English language; for example:

Admiral-- which was originated from-- Amir al-bahr	Orange----Naranj
Adobe----Al-Tub	Chemistry—Al-Kemeya
Alchemy----Al-Kemeya	Check—Sakk
	Rice----Ruzz
Alcohol—from--Alquhal	Cotton—Qutun
Alcove----Al-Qubba	Gazelle----Gazaal
Algebra----Al-Jabr	Giraffee----Zurrafa
	Safari----Safara
Almanac—Almanakh	Jasmine----Yasmin
Artichoke----Al-Kharshuf	Lemon—Laymun
Atlas----Atlas	Magazine—Makhazen
	Sugar—Sukkar
Carat—Qirat	Syrup----Sharab, shurab
Cable----Habl	Tambour----Taburak
Camel----Jamal	
Candy—Qandy	Mascara—Maskharah
	Mask----Maskharah
	Monsoon----Mawsem
	Nadir----Nazir
	Tariff—Ta' riffah
	Zero—Sifr

The term Coffee was originated from the Italian term Café and the term Café was originated from the Arabic term Qahwa.

Notice: Also there are nearly 8,000 (eight thousands) originally Arabic words in the Spanish language.

(The Islamic Months)

1) Muharram: It means the Sacred Month.

On the 10th of this month, the Shi'ah mourns the anniversary of the martyrdom of Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad.

2) Safar: It means the month which is void.

3) Rabi' (Rabee) al-Awwal: It means the First Spring.

The birthday of the Prophet is on the 12th of this month.

The Birthday of the Prophet is only a Symbolic day, because the exact day of his birth is not known. Also the Birthday of all other Prophet of God is not known.

4) Rabi' ath-Thani (Thaanee): It means the Second Spring.

5) Jumada'al Ula (Oolaa): It means the first month of dryness.

6) Jumada al-Thaniyah: It means the second month of dryness.

7) Rajab: It means the Revered month.

The Night Journey to Heaven, called (Esra' and Meraaj), happened on the 27th of Rajab.

The exact date of the Night Journey to Heaven is not known, and the 27th of Rajab is only a Symbolic night, so that many Muslims who want to worship more on this night can do it on the 27th of Rajab.

8) Sha'ban: It means the month of division.

According to the Tradition in Islam, the Night of 14th of Sha'ban is called as "Laylat al-Baraa-aa", which means as "the Night of Blessing or Night of the Decree or published command."

On this night the Angels receive their instructions about what will happen to every human in the coming year, including who will live and who will die, and who will be rich and who will be poor, and who will discover or invent something and who is not, and who will gain power and who is not; also about sustenance (Rizq), like rain and agriculture, and many other things.

Some Muslims celebrate this night by staying up, praying and reading the Koran, and then on the 15th some Muslims visit the graves of the departed loved ones, to pray for their Souls. The exact night of the Night of Decree is not known; the Night of the 14th is only a Symbolic night for many Muslims who want to worship more on this night.

9) Ramadan: Literally means the month of great heat. It is the month of Fasting.

The Night of the 27th (Laylat al-Qadr or Night of Power) is considered as the most likely night of revealing the Koran for the first time.

Secular festivities are prohibited during this month.

The exact night of Laylat al-Qadr is not known; and the night of the 27th is only a Symbolic night for those Muslims who want to worship all night, and even some of them donate money to good causes on this night.

10) Shawwal: It means the month of hunting; and its first three days are called the Feast or Eed of al-Fetr (feast of Fast-breaking).

11) Dhul Qi'dah (Dool-Kee-da): It means the month of Rest.

12) Dhul-Hijjah (Dool-Hij-ja): It means the month of Pilgrimage.

On the 10th through the 13th of this month is the Feast of Eed al-Ad-ha (feast of Sacrifice).

Also the Pilgrimage to Mecca is done on the days of the 8th, 9th and 10th of this month.

Some of the Lunar months are 30 days and some others are 29 days for a total of 354 days.

The days of the week:

- 1) Saturday:** It is called “Yawm as-**Sabt**”, which means the Day of **Rest**.
The word Sabt also refers to the Jewish term Sabbath.
Sabt is an Aramaic (Syriac and Chaldean) term, which was used in Judaism and in Islam.
- 2) Sunday:** It is called “Yawm al-**A’had**”, which means the **First** Day.
- 3) Monday:** It is called “Yawm al-**Ethnayn**, which means the **Second** Day.
- 4) Tuesday:** It is called “Yawm ath-**Thalathaa**, which means the **Third** Day.
- 5) Wednesday:** It is called “Yawm al-**Arbe’aa**”, which means the **Fourth** Day.
- 6) Thursday:** It is called “Yawm al-**Khamees**”, which means the **Fifth** Day.
- 7) Friday:** It is called “Yawm al-**Jum’aa**”, which means the Day of **Congregation**.

Notice: The word **Yawm** means **Day**, and the acronym **Al** means “**The**”.

(The Beard)

Islamic tradition tells the Muslims that they should be different or distinct from the non-Muslims, so that in general the Muslims do not resemble them in their un-Islamic character. . There is a Hadith of the Prophet, which mentions that the Muslim should trim the Moustache and grow the beard, so that the Muslim becomes different or distinct from the non-Muslims.

In the modern times, some Muslim scholars just recommend the beard for men and do not consider it as obligatory, because they say it is a Sunnah (which means not obligatory). . The original principle was that those who followed the Prophet’s Sunnah would be rewarded for it, but there was no punishment or censure for those who did not. . The Koran did not mention the beard.

Notice: When the rulers of Al-Yemen who were Persians came to the Prophet to accept Islam, they had only thick moustache with no beard as was the custom with the Persians at that time, but the Prophet did not ask them to also have a beard.

Also the Persians of al-Yemen were the first people who entered the “shaking of hands” into Islam, when they came to the Prophet in Medina in 628 A.D. to accept Islam and shook hands with the Prophet and other Muslims.
The custom of Islam was to embrace each other; and the Persians added the Shaking of Hands to Islam.

(Eating lawful Meat in Islam)

First: The Food (including Meat) of the People of the Book (the Christians and Jews) are lawful to the Muslims, which means that the animal which was slaughtered by the People of the Book without saying the Divine Name over the animal is still lawful to the Muslims, as in Koran (5:5):

“**The food of those who have received the Book (the Bible) is lawful for you (to the Muslims), and your food is lawful for them.**”

Then the Muslim just say the Name of Allah (God) before eating by saying Bismillah (Besmellaah), which means by the name of God.

Second: But if the Muslims slaughter an animal, they must say the Divine name over the animal.

After the Muslim says the intention (niyyah) of performing ritual slaughter, then the Divine name (to consecrates its death) is pronounced over the animal, by saying “Bismil-Laah: Allahu Akbar (in the name of God; God in Most Great), without adding the names of mercy to Bismil-laah. The Verse (5:5) is as follow:

“(O Muslim Believers) Eat not of that (meat) on which Allah’s Name has not been pronounced (at the time of slaughtering of the animal), for sure it is a sin.”

Notice: This Verse (5:5) was the reason that many Muslims got confused about eating the Food of the People of the Book; but all the major scholars of Islam were not confused about this Verse, and they clearly support the above explanations about both Verses.

Game in Islam:

In Islam, the animals, with the exception of game, must be ritually slaughtered to be legally acceptable (halal) food.

Game can be used for food; For Example, while firing a shot, the Formula of consecration used in slaughter should be recited either aloud or mentally.

The blood of the slaughtered animal must be drained as completely as possible.

(The Islamic and Christian Calendars)

The **Islamic calendar** is called Hijri or Hijrah (Hegira) calendar.

The Islamic calendar is a lunar year about **354** days.

The acronym for Hijrah Calendar is A.H., which means After Hijrah (in English it is called **Anno Hegirae**); **Hijrah** means **Migration**.

While the Solar Calendar year or Christian calendar is **365** days, and is called by many names, like **Gregorian** or **Common Era** (or **Christian Era**) **C.E.** Calendar, but in Arabic it is called **Miladi** (Milaady) Calendar.

Miladi Calendar means a Calendar is based on the birth of Jesus by using the acronyms B.C. or B.C.E. for the dates that happened before the birth of Jesus; and by using the acronyms C.E. or A.D for the dates after the birth of Jesus Christ.

(Some Words that is common in the Arabic, Aramaic and Hebrew Languages)

The following Words are listed in the Koran (Arabic Language), but they were also listed in the Aramaic Language (before Islam) and some of them were also listed in the Hebrew Language:

Kaahin—Priest. / Masih—Christ. / Qissis—Priest. / Din—Religion.
Mathal—Parable. / Furqan—Salvation. / Taghut—Infidelity, Errors.
Rabb—Lord /Qurban---Sacrifice. /Qiyama—Resurrection.

Malakut---Kingdom of Heaven. /Janna---The Garden, Heaven.
Malaak or Malak---Angel. /Nafs---The Spiritual Soul.
Ruh al-Qudus---The Holy Spirit. /Waqqara---Glorify God. /Aya---Sign, Verse.

Allah (God)--from the Aramaic word Eloh or Elah (Alah).
Salat---Prayer. /Sawm---Fasting. /Tajalla---To Reveal Oneself (Said of God).
Khati'a---Sin. /Kufr---Denying the Faith. /Dhabaha---Sacrificed.

Sabbaha---Glorified God. /Toobaa---Blessed be, Beatitude.
Qaddasa---Glorified God. /Nur---Light. /Jamal---Camel.
Tufan---Flood. /Mawt---Death. /Hayat---Life. /Salaba---Crucified.

Manna---Special Food. /Salwa---Quail. /Asbaat---Tribes.
Rasul---Apostle. /Kalima---Word (of God). /Jahannam---Hell.
Quran---Koran. /Husbaan---Numbering. /Muhaymin---Faithful.

Nun---Fish. /Tur---Mountain. /Shaani'a---Hater.
Bariyya---Creation. /Hanan---Grace. /Misk---Musk.
Maqaalid---Keys. /Istabraq---Silk brocade.

Notice: Since the Arabic, Aramaic and Hebrew Languages are considered as a Semitic Languages, so, there are many other words in the Arabic Language that either are common with other words in the Hebrew and Aramaic Languages or those Arabic words were originated from the Hebrew and Aramaic Languages.

(Summery of Islam)

. Islam (Eslaam) is the name of God's Guidance for Mankind Revealed through all the Prophets, the last of whom was the Prophet Muhammad.

Islam is a Monotheistic religion with explicit links to Judaism and Christianity.

1) Islam, Submission, and Peace:

Islam means **Self-Submission** (obedience) to the will or Guidance (teaching) of God (Allah) who is One, which God has revealed to his Prophet Muhammad.

A broader meaning of the word "Islam" is to achieve peace by submitting to the will or Guidance of God.

. **Peace** means that the people to be at peace with themselves and their surroundings when they submit to God. So, Islam becomes as "complete way of life".

2) Who is a Muslim?

The word Muslim means the one who **Self-Submits** to the will or guidance of God.

3) The name of the Prophet of Islam is **Muhammad**.

He was born in 570 A.D. in Mecca.

4) Islam started in **610 A.D.** in the city of Mecca (located in present day Saudi Arabia).

5) The Holy Book of Islam is called The **Qur'an** (al-Qur-aan) and in English it is called The **Koran** (The Ko-ran).

6) **Belief or Eman (Emaan or Iman) in Islam:** Belief or Eman in Islam is to believe in the Six Pillars of Faith.

The **Six Pillars of Iman (Faith)** in Islam are:

To believe in the following:

1-**Allah** (as one God)

2-Allah's **Angels**

3-Allah's **Books** (Revelations or Scriptures)

4-Allah's **Messengers**

5-**Life after death** (Resurrection Day) and the **Day of Judgment**

6-**Al-Qadr** (The power or will of Allah); to believe that every thing, whether good or bad are from the creation of God or are decided by God, according to our actions.

7) **Practice in Islam:** Practice in Islam is to practice the Five Pillars of Islam.

The Five Pillars (Arkan) of Islam:

A Muslim's relations with God are regulated by the Five Pillars of Islam.

In Arabic, it is called Arkan ad-din (Arkaan ad-deen), which literally means Supports or fundamentals or Pillars of the religion. Also it is called Arkan ul Islam (Arkaan ul-Islaam).

In contrast to many other religions, the basic practice of Islam is simplicity itself. The believer worship God directly without the intercession of priests or clergy or saints.

The Five Pillars (Arkan) of Islam are:

1. Shahadah (Testimony of Faith): Saying the Shahadah (which is-there is no deity worthy of worship but or except Allah (God), and that Muhammad is the servant and Messenger of Allah).

2. Salah or Salaat (Prayer or worship): To pray five times a day.
We offer Prayer to remember Allah.

3. Zakah or Zakaat (Almsgiving or Charity): To give money to the poor and needy.

Zakah teaches us to pay part of our savings for welfare and other good causes.

4. Sawm: To fast (sawm) in the Holy Month of Ramadan.

5. Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca or Makkah): To go to Makkah for Hajj once in a life time, if the Muslims can afford it financially and able to do it physically.

8) The Two Major Islamic Festivals (Holy Days):

1) Eed al-Fetr: Eed means Feast or Holy Day.

This Eed marks the end of fasting in the month of Ramadan and is celebrated with public prayers, feasts and exchange of gifts.

. This Eed has been celebrated for Three Days.

. This Eed starts on the First day of the month of Shawwal.

The term Eed is also written as Eid.

2) Eed al-Ad'ha (Eed ul-Ad-haa):

This Eed marks the end of the Hajj or the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

. After Eed al-Ad'ha public prayers, those who can afford, sacrifice a healthy animal like a camel, cow, lamb or a goat to signify Prophet Abraham's obedience to God, shown by his readiness to sacrifice his only son Esmaeel, or as written is English as Ishmael (Ish-mee-al or Ish-may-al).

. Eed al-Ad'ha is Four Days.

. This Eed starts on the 10th day of the twelfth month of Dhul-Hijjah and ends on the 13th day of the same month.

9) There are Three Major Holy Places in Islam:

1-The Grand Sacred Mosque (al-Masjid al-Haram) in Mecca is considered as the Holiest place in Islam.

2-The Prophets' Mosque in the city of Madinah

3- The Aqsa (Al-Aqsa) al-Haram ash-Sharif (the Farthest Noble Sanctuary) in Al-Quds (Jerusalem).

AL-Aqsa actually composed of two mosques, one mosque with silver dome called al-Aqsa Mosque (the Farthest Mosque) and the second mosque called the Dome of the Rock Mosque (with golden Dome).

10) There are Two Major Groups in Islam, they are the **Sunni** (Soon-nee) and the **Shi'ah** (Shee-aa) or **Shi'ites**.

The Sunnis are the Majority and the Shi'ahs are the Minority.

11) The Six Great and well-known Prophets of Allah:

- 1) Adam. 2) Nuh (Noah). 3) Ebraheem (Abraham)
4) Musa (Moses). 5) ‘Esa (Jesus). 6) Muhammad
(Peace and Blessing be upon them)

12) The Four well-known Archangels of Allah (God):

- 1) Jibrail or Jibril (Jebreel) (Gabriel) 2) Mikail (Michael)
3) Esrafil (Esraa-feel) 4) ‘Ezrail (Ezraa-eel)
(Peace and Blessings be upon them)

13) The principal weekly worship is on Friday at midday; also Friday is the Holiday of Muslims.

14) Islam is the **Second** Largest Religion in the World after Christianity.

15) The Muslim Population in the World in the year 2005 is more than **1.4 Billion** people.
. The Christian Populations in the World are about **2 Billion** people.

16) Today there are more than **50 Countries** in the World with a Muslim **Majority**, but there are Muslims in more than **185 countries**.

17) The Total Population of the Muslims in the U.S.:

There are about **Seven** million Muslims in the U.S. in the year 2005.

Fifth: (Some Islamic Manners)

The Islamic Manners:

There are many Islamic manners, but these are the most important:

- 1) Before or at the start of **doing** something: Say **Bismil-laah** (Besmel-laah) [in the name of God (Allah)].
- 2) To **greet** when meeting a Muslim: Say **As-salaamu ‘Alaekum** (peace be on you)
- 3) In **reply** to the greeting: Say **Wa‘alae-kumus Salaam** (peace be on you too).
- 4) When **hoping** to do something: Say **Inshaa’ Allaah** (If God wishes)
- 5) To **praise** someone: Say **Subhaana-Allaah** (Glory to God).
- 6) In **appreciation**: Say **Maa shaa Allaah** (What God likes).
- 7) When **seeing** someone off: Say **Fee Amaanel-laah** (in the protection of God).
- 8) To **thank** someone: Say **Jazaaka-Allaahu Khaeran** (or Kay-ran) (May God gives you the best reward).
- 9) To start **solving** a problem or to start new business or travel: Say **Tawak-kaltu ‘Alal-laah** (I rely on God).
- 10) When **getting up** in the morning: Say **Laa Elaahaa EL-LaL-Laah** (there is no deity worthy of worship but or except God (Allah)).
- 11) When you **sneeze** or after **eating** or **drinking** or after finishing something: Say **Alhamdu LiL-Laah** (praise be to God).
- 12) When you **hear** someone **sneeze**: Say **Yarhamuka-Allaah** (may God bless you).
- 13) When joining a **Du‘aa’**: Say **Amin (Aameen)**, which means “(O God) accept our prayer or Dua.”
- 14) When in **pain** or **distress**: Say **Yaa Allaah** (O God).
- 15) To be **sorry** for a bad action: Say **Astagh-feru-Allaah** (Astagh-feru-Allah), which means O God Forgive me.
- 16) To show your **dislike**: Say **Na‘udhu-bellaah** (Na‘udu or Na‘uzu bellaah), which means we seek refuge with God.
- 17) When you hear about the **death** of a Muslim: Say **Enna lel-laah wa Enna elaehee Raaje‘oon** (We are of God and to Him we return).

Chapter Two:

Allah (God), Angels, Jinn and Life Hereafter

First: **(Allah) –Allaah**
(Sub-haa-nahu-wa-Ta‘aala)
(The One God)

Notice: According to the tradition in Islam, Muslims say for respect after hearing or reading the name of Allah (God) any one of the followings: Saying: “Allah Taala (God the High)”; or “Subhanahu Wa Taala (Glory to God the High)”; Or “Jalla Jalalahu (Great is His Majesty)”; or saying: “ ‘Azza Wajall (Great and Majestic)”.

Who is Allah (God)?

Since God created us and gave us all the knowledge that we have, so we do not know anything about Him more than what He tells us about Himself.

. The most common question about God, which comes to the people’s mind naturally or through the whispering of the devils (who try to create suspicion in believing in God), is the question of who created God; and the best way of solving this question is to stop thinking about it, and believe in what God tells us about Himself; because as we mentioned above, all the knowledge that we have is from God Himself and we can not go beyond what God tells us about Himself.

Since our brains were created by God, so any information in our brains is from the creation and knowledge of God.

. In Islam, to solve the above question, Muslims believe in what God (Allah) tells them about Himself in the Koran, as follow:

First: In Surah 112, and in it, God describes himself as follow:

“Say: He is the One God.

God is Eternal (Was not Created, and he is the Creator of everything).

He begets not, nor was He begotten.”

And there is nothing that could be compared with Him.”

(It means nothing looks-like or resembles Him at all).

(Surah of **Ikhlaas 112** (Ikhlaas means **Purity** or **Sincerity**)).

. Also in the Koran, God describes himself as the beginning and the end and that He has no partner, and no children.

Second: In the second Surah, in the **Verse** of the **Throne** (Aayat al-**Kursi** or **Korsi**) as follow:

“Allah (God)! There is no deity (god) worthy of worship but He, The living, The Self-Subsisting, Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep.

His are all things in the heavens and on earth.

Who is there that can intercede in His presence except as He permits?

He knows what before (Present time) or after (Future time) or behind (Past time) them.

(It means that Allah knows everything about his creatures including their past, present and future.)

Nor shall they grasp even a little of His knowledge except what He will.

His Throne (Domain or Sovereignty) extend over the heavens and the earth

And He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them for He is the Most High, The Supreme.” (Koran 2:255).

Notice: Many Muslims recite the Verse of the Throne at bedtime, so that they feel the presence of Godly protection against the evil Jinn (devils), during sleep.

- . The name **Allah** in Arabic means “**The One God.**”
- . Allah is the **Supreme Name** (al-esm al-a’zam) of God.
- . Allah does not command evil, but forbids it; that he commands Good, and has no pleasure in evil, though He wills it or creates it.

The **Origin** of the Name **ALLAH** (ALLAAH)

Notice: The name of God as Allah was known before the beginning of Islam, for example the father of the Prophet Muhammad was called Abdullah (Abd-Allah), which means the servant of Allah; also the Eastern Christians (in present day Middle-East) were using the name Alaha since the Fifth Century A.D. (or C.E.), and they are still using it today.

Origin of the Name Allah (God):

According to the majority of scholars, the following explanation is the most likely origin of the name Allah and Alaha, as follow:

The Jews used the following Terms from the Aramaic language of Babylonia after their forced exile to Babylonia in the 6th century B.C. (in the year 586 B.C.):

The Jews used the Terms: **Eloh**, **Eloha**, **Elohi**, **Eloahim** or **Elohim** (Elohem)

. So the Jews in Babylonia who used to call God by the **Hebrew** Language, as “**Yahweh** (Yaa-wa or Yaa-way)” which means “**I am who I am**”, they began calling God by the following names:

First: They called **God** by the names “**Eloh**” or “**Eloha**”.

Second: They used the names “**Elohi**” and “**Elohim** (or Eloahim)” to mean **My God**.

Later the Term **Eloh** became **Elah** and then became **Alah**; and the Term **Eloha** became **Elaha** and then became **Alaha**; and the Term **Elohi** became **Elahi** (**Elaahee**); and the Term **Elohim** became as **Allahuma** (Allaahumma).

So, before Islam the **Eastern Christians** used the name **Alaha** for **God**.

And before Islam, the Arabs used the name **Allah** from **Alah** to mean **God**.

Also before Islam, the Arabs used the Term **Elahi** and **Allahuma** to mean **My God**.

The Terms **Eloh** or **Eloha** or **Elah** means **Master**.

Notice: The reason that the Jews used the names **Eloh**, **Eloha** and **Elohi** and **Elohim** was probably because they wanted another name for God to call Him with or mention that name any time they wanted in their daily life, because they were afraid or restricted from using the name **Yahweh** in their daily talk (except for religious rites like prayers), since they were not allowed to do that when they were in Judea (Palestine).

One of the orders of the Ten Commandments, orders the Jewish people not to misuse the name of God (Yahweh), so the Jewish people were afraid of that.

Also the ancient Jews sometimes called God by the name “**‘EL**”, which means “The High (God)”.

Notice: During Jesus' time, the term "**Elohi** or **Elahi**" from the Aramaic Language was used to mean "**My God**".

According to the Bible, the last words of Jesus on the Cross were "**Eloi** (My God), **Eloi** (My God) Lema Sabachthani (Why have you forsaken me)?" or "Eli, Eli, Lema Sabachthani?"

Eloi and Eli were originally written as Elohi, but later were shortened.

Some scholars believe that the term "Elohim" was probably a Hebrew word originated from the Aramaic word Elohi.

Many words in the Hebrew and Aramaic Languages were similar, because both were considered as a Semitic Languages.

(Some Modern Western Scholars Opinion about the Origin of the Name Allah)

There are some Western scholars who believe that the origin of the name Allah was probably originated from the term **Al-Elah** (Al-Elaah) or AL-Ilah, as explained here:

Elah (or Eloh) literally means "Master"; and AL-Elah means "The Master".

They believed that the name **Allah**, probably originated from a two part word, the article **AL**, which means **The**, and **ELAH** (Divinity).

. The term **Elah** (Elaah) was used in the Aramaic language to mean god (with small g) or Idol of worship, and also Elah was used to mean God the Creator (with capital G).

. They believed that later before Islam, the article AL was added to the term Elah to become as AL-Elah (Alelah), to mean "God (Allah) the Creator", so that the people can distinguish the name of the Creator from the name of the Idols.

Also they believed that later the term AL-ELAH was shortened (by omitting the letter **E** from elah) to become as **ALLAH** in the Arabic language.

. So, some Modern Western Scholars believe that the term ALLAH is probably the contraction of AL-ELAH.

(The Ninety-Nine Names or Attributes of God)

In Islam, Allah (God) has a total of **Ninety-Nine** names or attributes.

Some of those names or attributes of God (Allah) are:

- . The first, the Last, the One, the Truth, the Wise, the Judge, the Praiseworthy
- . The Living, the Creator, the Gentle, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Provider
- . The Guide, the Vigilant, the Peace, the Hearer, the Grateful

- . The Witness, the Eternal, the afflicter, the Just, the Mighty, the Great
- . The Pardoner, the Knowing, the High One, the Forgiver, the Rich, the Capable, the Holy
- . The Victorious, the Strong, the Generous and the Noble, the Gracious, the Superb

- . The Firm, the Founder, the Responsive, the Glorious, the Giver of Life
- . The Maintainer, the King, the Possessor of the Kingdom, the Helper, the Light, the Unique
- . The Loving, the Protector, the Self-Exalted

God of all Creations:

Allah is not God of Muslims only; **He is God** of all **Creations**, because He is their creator and Sustainer.

. All the prophets of Allah (God), including Abraham the father of monotheism, asserted this truth, which is that God is One. Islam is a Religion based upon the surrender to God who is One.

Muslims believe in Allah (God) as One, unique, incomparable God, who has no children, no partner and none has the right to be worshipped but him alone.

God has created many things on earth and many other things in the sky like the sun and the moon for the service of mankind.

Every person will understand and appreciate that God has made many of His Creation beneficial for him or her, when they follow God's guidance.

God as a Witness:

God is the witness of everything that we do, through His knowledge, Hearing, Seeing and countless of other means and sources including His Angels.

God is also aware of all our thoughts.

God says in the Koran that He is with us wherever we may be, and Sees clearly all that we do.

We know very little of God's knowledge; our knowledge compared to God's knowledge is just like a drop of water compared to all the seas. Our knowledge is like the drop of water and Allah's knowledge is like the water of the seas.

Some questions and answers:

1) Is Allah (God) One?

Yes, God is one. **God** controls all the Seven Heavens and the Earth and what are in between them through His knowledge.

2) How do people know God?

People know Him by His signs and creation like the day and night, the sun and moon, the heaven and the earth, and all that is there in and between them.

We the Humans know very little of God's knowledge just like a drop of water comparing it to the Sea. God can See and Hear everything through His knowledge.

3) Why God made Mankind?

God made Mankind to worship and obey Him.

Worship has several meanings:

The first meaning is to pray to God.

The second meaning is to apply Islam to daily life in behavior and in dealing with the people, and this makes any regular daily activities that Muslim do as another kind of worship to God.

4) What are the people to God?

The People are God's servants.

5) Where is God; and is He with people (in Person)?

According to Islam, God's Mighty Throne is raised over the Seventh Heaven, and God is settled above or over His Mighty Throne; also the Throne is carried by very enormous Giant Angels.

The Throne is God's Seat of Power, and also His Domain over the Seven Heavens, the Earth and what is in between them.

God is with people through His knowledge, Hearing, Seeing, His Angels and countless other means unknown to us; as He said: "Fear not! I am with you both Hearing and Seeing (Koran 20:46).

6) Who are the Friends of God?

The friends of God are those people who are pious and righteous, fear Him much, abstain from all kinds of sins and perform all kinds of good, according to the Qur'an and Sunnah.

7) Why did God send Messengers?

God has sent Messengers so that they call the people to worship Him alone, not ascribing any partner with Him, and in order that mankind should have no excuse against Allah on the Day of Judgment

8) What is the Meaning of "There is no deity (or one worthy of worship) but Allah (God)"?

In Arabic it means "Laa Ilaaha ellal-Laah", which means there is no true deity worthy of worship except Allah (God) alone, by denying all false gods (Idols and other associations to God) and affirming that Allah is the only true God.

9) What is Taw'hid or Monotheism (Allah as One God) in Islam?

Taw'hid or Monotheism means declaring that Allah to be the only God who deserves to be worshipped.

10) What is the greatest thing that God has forbidden in Islam?

The greatest thing that God has forbidden in Islam is shirk (polytheism).

11) What is Shirk or Polytheism (Association or Sharing) in Islam?

Shirk or Polytheism means to believe that there is one who shares God in his acts, like associating partners or setting up rivals to God in his rights.

. Also it means the division of the unity of God, or associating other beings with God, which means associating somebody with Him in His Rights or His Powers.

What are the other Idols?

Many people think that the terms shirk and association means to associate the Idols or Statues with God, but they do not know that these terms also mean worshipping the Saints and the Wealth and associating them with God.

The Money or Wealth:

According to Christianity and Islam, the people who are able financially but do not contribute money to other causes, are considered as Idol (Money) worshippers. The reason called Idol worshipping is because those people put their trust in their money and not in God.

Contributing money makes the people un-selfish.

Giving Charities or Alms are usually for the needy people (including some needy relatives), friends, neighbors, and for the sick and disable people or to the organizations that care for them, to places of learning, places of worship, for the community, non-profit organizations that care for the communities around the world, and many other good causes; also including helping organizations that care for the Environment and Wild Animals....etc.

Contributing food, clothing and other materials are also considered as part of charities. Those people who are financially not able to contribute money but physically able to contribute to serve the community in any way they are able, their services are also considered as equal to contributing money.

The Prayers and Charities are considered as the core of worship in almost all religions. Contributing money is considered as the Second most important thing in religion after Prayers.

Prayers usually between God and people, while contributing money is between people;

The **Prayer** means having normal relationship with God, to feel that he is watching us so that we have to behave in a normal way, and to ask Him for forgiveness when we sin, and also to worship Him as our Creator.

The **Charities** means having normal relationship between people; they help each other when it is necessary.

Second:

The Ruh (Rooh)-Soul or Spirit

God described the Spirit in Verse 85 of Surah 17 (Koran 17:85):

“They (people) ask you (O Muhammad) concerning the Spirit. Say: The Spirit is from the knowledge of my Lord (God), and you (Mankind) have been granted very little knowledge (to understand it).” (Koran 17:85).

This means that God gave us very little Knowledge to understand the knowledge of Spirit.

Spirit or Soul means as follow:

1) The Ruh is the Soul or Spirit, which never dies.

. In Islam, the Soul is far more important than the body, because Islam considers the Soul as the Real person.

. In Arabic, the Ruh is also called as **Nafs**.

Nafs is the Islamic term for the **self** or “**Id**”, the real you; your personality and character.

2) The human earthly body is temporary, while the Soul is permanent.

3) The Soul, considered as departing from a person’s body at death.

4) Soul is the vital principle or animating force within living beings

5) The Soul is the part nonphysical aspect of a person, and associated with the mind, which is the complex of human attributes that manifests as consciousness, thought, feeling, and will, regarded as distinct from the physical body.

Notice: Some Muslim scholars interpret some verses from the Koran to probably mean that the Human Spiritual Mind or Soul’s Intellect is located in the Human chest and has unseen or invisible Spiritual connection to the physical Human Intellect in the brain.

6) The Soul is like the concept of mind you cannot extract a mind from a body and examine it in the operating theatre.

7) Souls can leave the body while it still lives, and frequently do so during sleep (Koran 32:16; 10:44).

. So, according to the Koran, any Human Soul or Spirit, sometimes travels or wanders in space during sleep (the body is still alive and the Soul is attached to the body remotely).

According to Koran (32:16), God sends the wandering souls to its bodies but takes or keeps the Souls that their attached bodies expired or died.

8) After a person dies, the soul goes to a place called Barzakh, where it stays there until the day of Resurrection. Only Allah knows where the place of Barzakh is located.

9) Also the Spirit as a supernatural being is just like an Angel or Jinn (Genies, including devils and demons). The Angels as a Spirit is invisible to the Humans and to the Jinn.

The Spirit is also called as Ghost.

10) According to Islam, the Arch-Angel **Gabriel** (Jibril) sometimes has been called Spirit (Ruh) or sometimes called as Holy Spirit in the Koran. The Angels are considered as Spirits, and also as Holy-Spirits, because they never disobey God. The Angels also guide, help and comfort the believers on earth. Muslims believe that God's connection to the Muslim believers is mostly through the Angels (for example: the Guardian Angels).

11) God does not consider the believers who were martyred as dead but **alive** and **near** Him, because God always talk about the permanent parts of the believers, which are considered as the souls or Spirits.

12) The exact nature of the Soul or Spirit is not known by humans, and many people believe that the Soul do not **exists**

Notice: In the modern times the alcoholic **beverages** has been called spirit, especially distilled liquor

Third:

The Angels (Ayn-jels) of God (Allah)
(Peace and Blessings of God be upon them)
Malak (Ma-lak) (Angel)

The name **Malaa'ikah**, Sing. "**Mal'ak**", originated from the **Hebrew** word "**Malaak**", which means "**Messenger**".

Also the name "**Angel**" was originated from the Greek word Angelos, which means Messenger.

Some Verses about some Angels as Messengers:

1-God described some of the Angels as Messengers, as in (Koran 35:1):

"All praise is due to God, the Originator of the Heavens and the Earth, who causes the Angels to be (His) message-bearers, endowed with Wings, two, three, or four (pairs). He adds (increases) to (His) creation what He wills. Verily God has the power to do anything (He wills)."

According to many Muslim Scholars, the more Wings the Angels get or have, the more speed they get, so the Angels increase the number of their wings when they need more speed to reach certain destination.

The Angel Gabriel had Six Hundred Wings (three hundred pairs) on the Night Journey to Heavens with the Prophet Muhammad; because Angel Gabriel needed speed to reach the Seventh Heaven during the same night then come back to Earth.

2-And in Verse 75 of Surah 22 (Koran 22:75):

"God chooses from the Angels **Messengers**, and (also) from Mankind. Verily, God is All-Hearer, All-Seer." (Koran 22:75).

3-And in (Koran 16:2):

"He (God) Sends down the Angels with Divine Inspiration of His command (bestowed) upon whomever He wills of his servants (Saying): Warn all Mankind that there is no deity but Me (none has the right to be worshipped but Me), therefore, be conscious of Me (follow My Guidance)!" (Koran 16:2).

Some questions and answers:

First: Who are the Angels (Malaa-ekah)?

1) The Angels are Spirits.

According to Islam, God created the Angels from **light** called **Nur** (special pure white light). The Angels were created long before the creations of Adam and the Jinn.

2) The wings of the Angels are from special **pure white Light** called Nur, not from feather and meat.

3) They are special servants of God.

Since Allah did not give them the desire to be tempted by their surroundings, so, they do not disobey Him.

God said in the Koran that the Angels **never disobey** Him and they do what He ordered them to do.

4) They are in a hierarchy at the head of which stand the Archangels.

5) They are created in **different forms** and **different powers**.

The Angels can take **different forms** and **sizes**.

The real size of the well-known Angels and the Archangels are enormous with many wings. Archangel means Chief Angel.

6) They can see us, but we **can't see** them.

The Angels are **Celestial** (Heavenly) beings in the unseen world. Nobody can see the Angels' real forms (shape); some of the prophets were able to see the real forms of the Angels.

The Angels are spirits have the ability to **transform** themselves into a **human form**.

According to Islam, we can see the Angels only when they change into a human form; the Angels can transform themselves into a man's shape.

Also God gave them the ability to transform themselves into any form they wish to become, and to change their sizes from small to enormous sizes and vice versa.

According to Islam, the Angels never transform themselves into a woman's form.

7) The Angels have **no gender** and they are neither males nor females.

8) There are **too many** Angels in the Heavens and on the Earth and between them.

Second: What do the Angels do?

1) They **carry** out the **orders** of God.

They take care of God (Allah) work and plans for the Seven Heavens and what is between them including our Earth.

2) Some Angels carry **messages** from God to the **people**.

. The most significant duty of the Angels in the past was bringing Divine Revelations to God's **Prophets**.

When the Angels are sent with messages to the Humans, they may assume human shape with or without wings, but this is not their real form.

3) Some of the Angels are sent by God to help **guide** some of the Believers, who ask for help or guidance, according to God's plans for them.

4) There are Angels who write our **deeds**.

5) There are Angels who take care of the **rain**, mountains and many other things on Earth according to God's plans.

6) According to Koran, there are Angels who carry **God's Throne** (God's Seat of Power); these Angels are enormous in size. God's Throne is located on the Seventh Heaven, and from the Throne, He controls the Seven Heavens and what is between them.

7) Some of the Angels present themselves at **congregations** and **gatherings** where God's Name was pronounced, the Scriptures were recited and sermon delivered.

8) There are some Angels who are sent by God to **punish** certain unbelievers or some people or nations, according to God's commands.

9) There are Angels Named **Radhwan**, who help the people in Paradise, and there are Angels Named **Khaazin** and **Zabaaniyyah**, who punish the sinners in Hell.

10) According to Islam, the Angels functioning on the earth **take turns** by day and by night. The Angels report their daily activities to other superior Angels, and all the daily reports become known to Allah.

Third: Do the Angels have Free Will?

No, they have **no free will, or no free choice**.

. The Angels know right from wrong, but they never disobey God, because they have no Free Will to do that. Only the Humans and the Jinn (Genies) have the Free Will.

As explained in (Koran 66:6):

“They (Angels) don’t disobey God in that which He commands them, but do that which they are commanded.”

And in (Koran 21:27):

“They (Angels) don’t speak until He (God) has spoken, and they act by His command.”

The Names of some of the Well-Known or Archangels of Allah (God):

God has many Angels but there are **four** well-known Archangels. They are Jibril, Mikail, Izrail and Israfil. They are some of the closest Angels to God, and they are from the Mighty Angels.

God put each one of them in charge of certain things as follow:

1. Jibrail (Jebraaeel) or Jibril (Jebreel) (Gabriel):

The Angel Gabriel was mentioned in Islam with two different names, as Jibril and Jibrail (Jebraaeel). In the Koran, he was mentioned as Jibril.

He is an Archangel. He was the Angel who carried God’s messages (Revelations or scriptures) to the prophets and others.

Also he is the Top Angel who can get closer to God’s Throne more than any other Angel, and he can work between God and other Angels.

. On the Night Journey to Heavens with the Prophet, he had six hundred wings and he is enormous when he is in his real form.

. Jibril’s name was mentioned in the Koran.

2. Mikail (Mekaa-eel) (Michael):

He is believed to be the Archangel in charge of the Angels of rain, weather and Agriculture (Sustenance) for the Humans, according to God’s plans. Mikail was mentioned in the Koran.

3. Esrafil (Esraa-feel):

He is the Archangel who will blow the Trumpet signaling the end of the world, which makes every living creature on earth and the universe to die, except what Allah wishes.

. Years later Esrafil will blow the trumpet again for the resurrection of mankind, Jinn and other creatures in the universe for the start of Judgment Day, according to God’s command.

. Esrafil was mentioned in the Hadith but not in the Koran.

4. ‘Ezrail (Ezraa-eel):

In Islam, he is known as the Archangel of Death, who is in charge of other Angels of death.

. The Angels of Death are responsible for taking the souls of the humans and the Jinn at their death according to God’s command.

. ‘Ezrail was mentioned in the Hadith but not in the Koran.

(The Angels that are assigned to each Human being)

According to Islam, each human being has Two Angels with four different Tasks, as follow:

First: The Angels as a Recorders and Record Keepers:

These Angels are called **Kiraman Katibin** (Keraaman Kaatebeen) (The Noble Recorders or Scribes).

. They are the **writers** and **record keepers** of the human and Jinn actions in this life.
. There are **two Angels** for each human and each Jinni (the Angels are also unseen to the Jinn too).

- 1) **One** Angel on the **right side** of a person and writes down his or her **good deeds**.
 - 2) The **second** angel is on the **left side** of a person and writes down his or her **bad deeds**.
- . And they are **Witnesses** against us on the Day of Judgment.

The Verses of the Record Keepers are (Koran 82:10-12 & 10:21 & 43:80 & 50:17-18).

1) Verses 17-18 of Surah 50 (Koran 50:17-18) as follow:

“When two (Angels) appointed to learn (his or her doing and note them), one (Angel) sitting on the right and one (The Second Angel) on the left. Not a word does he (or she) utter, but there is a vigilant guardian (to note).”

2) And in (Koran 10:21):

“Say (O Muhammad): God is swifter in plotting (against the Hypocrites). Our Messengers (Angels) write down that which you (the Hypocrites) plot.”

3) And in (Koran 82:10-12) as explained below in the Guardian Angels.

Second: The Angels as a Friendly:

The **Record –Keeping** Angels are also commonly called as **friendly Angels**, Because of the followings:

. According to Islam, if a Muslim sin without knowing the consequences of his or her sin, then regret it when he or she learn from that mistake and ask Allah (God) for forgiveness sincerely and (try their best) not to repeat it again, and also seeks the forgiveness of the offended party, then the Friendly Angels erase that sin from their records.
. Also if a Muslim intend on doing good things but not acting on it, then the Angels count it as one good deed or one credit, and if a Muslim act on his or her good intention then the Friendly Angels count it as ten fold of good deeds or ten credits for his or her account or balance for the Day of Judgment.

Third: The Angels as a Guardian:

The Record Keepers are also commonly called as the **Guardian Angels**, because they are also our protectors from anything, whether Good or Bad, which was not intended (Not planned) by God for us and they also allow other things whether good or bad to reach us, which was intended or planned by God for us as in **(Koran 13:11) as follow:**

“For him (any male or female of Mankind) are Angels ranged before him and behind him, who **Guard him** by God’s Command.”

And in (Koran 82:10-12) as follow:

“And verily over you (are appointed Angels in charge of every male and female of Mankind) to **protect and watch you**, (they are) Noble (Kind and Honorable Angels), writing down (your deeds and aware of whatever you do).”

- . They work according to our own behavior and according to Allah's plans in our life.
 - . They are the human guides.
 - . Some Muslim scholars believe that the Human conscience is the one, which try to prevent the people from doing bad or evil. So the conscience is doing the opposite job of the devils.
 - . While the devils encourage the people to do bad or evil deeds and to be busy with the world and not be busy with worshipping Allah (God).
- . There are some scholars who believe that when people feel their conscience being stirred or have some intuition stopped them doing something, it may well be that they are picking up the desire of their Guardian Angels to keep them on track.

Fourth: The Angels as a Witness:

The Two Angels of Deeds Recording have another task on the Day of Resurrection. On that day those two Angels take the person who they were in charge with in the world, to the place of Judgment and there they become as a Witness against that person; they bring the file of that person, good and bad; one of the Angels has the file of good deeds, while the other Angel has the file of bad deeds.

Cherubim or Kerubim (Qarebeyyun):

In the Holy Bible, the Angels that are close or near to God, like the Angels of the Throne and the Archangels are called Cherubim or Kerubim (Qarebeyyun).

- . The name Cherub is for one Angel. The term Cherubim means those who are near to God.

The Two Angels Munker and Nakir (Nakeer), of the Dead people:

According to Islam, there are Angels, whose job is only to question the Souls or the Spirits of the dead people, right after their death.

- . Two Angels comes to the Soul of each dead person and ask him or her questions, about who is his or her creator, what is the name of their Holy Book, the name of their prophet and what is the name of their religion? These two Angels are called Munker and Nakir.

Al-Talqin (Talqeen):

Al-Talqin was practiced by the followers of the Sunni Shafi'i School of Law and they base their belief on a one weak hadith (less dependable).

While the other three Sunni Schools of law do not practice al-Talqin, because they believe that there is a verse in the Koran (35:22) which tell the Prophet that many of the unbelievers would not hear his message (believe him), because they are like the dead people who also can not hear his message.

Al-Talqin means to speak to the dead person on his or her grave immediately after the burial ceremonies, or in the first three days, by telling the dead person that when the two Angels Munker and Nakir comes to question you about your Creator, religion, prophet and the Holy Book, then you have to answer them by saying, my creator is Allah (God), my religion is Islam, my Prophet is Muhammad, and my Holy book is the Qur'an (Koran).

Fourth: The Jinn (Jenn) (Genies)
(Invisible beings)

The Term Jinn means “Invisible”.

In the English language the Jinn (Singular: Jinni) are called Genies (Singular Genie).

Also the term Genie was originated from the term Jinn.

The term **Fairies** or **Fairy-tales** was originated from the Jinn Stories, but in a fictional ways.

The reason for the creation of Jinn and Mankind, as in Verse 56 of Surah 51 (Koran 51:56):

“I (God) have not created the Jinn and Mankind for any other purpose except that they may [know and] worship Me.”

Worship means “Self-Submitting to the Guidance of God through His Messengers”, and then applying it to the daily life.

In the Koran (15:26-27), the creation of the Jinn was described like this:

“And, Indeed, We (God) created Mankind from dried (sounding) Clay, out of altered Mud. Whereas the Jinn (invisible beings), We (God) Created long before that (Before Adam) from the essential of smokeless flame of Fire.”

The Koran described the Jinn as follow:

1) In Verse 14 of Surah 72 (Koran 72:14):

“(Jinn said) There are among us some who have Self-Submitted to God, and there are some among us who are unjust.”

2) Also in (Koran 72:11):

“(Jinn said) There are among us, some that are righteous, and some far from that. We follow divergent paths.”

3) And in (Koran 46:30): (About Jinn who followed the Torah)

“They (Jinn) Said: O our people (calling other Jinn)! We have heard a Scripture (Koran) which has been revealed after Moses”.

Those Jinn were some of the believers in the Torah since the time of the Prophet and King Solomon (Sulayman), when God gave control of some of the Jinn to Solomon.

4) And in (Koran 27:17): (About Solomon and Jinn)

“And (one day) there were gathered (assembled) together before Solomon, his armies of the Jinn (in the form or shape of Humans) and Men (regular army), and of the birds and then they were led forth in orderly ranks (they were set in battle order marching forward).”

The job of the Birds was different from the regular army; for example: the birds were as a Messengers like sending letters, finding water for the army, watching or reporting to Solomon, the movement of the enemy’s army.

The Jinn that were mentioned in Solomon’s army were in the shape or form of Human body; God gave many of the Jinn (including the rebellious devils) the ability to appear in the shape of Humans, and also in some rare instances can appear in the shape of some animals including birds.

There are several verses in the Koran about Solomon and the Jinn.

Read about Solomon in this book under the Subject of Prophets.

Also there are some Jinn who follow the Gospel.

Almost each religion in the world has some of their followers from the invisible Jinn.

There are many different Kinds of Jinn, as follow:

1) The Big Foot:

Sometimes some of the Jinn make themselves visible to the Humans like the hairy creature commonly called Big Foot, or other hairy creatures similar to Big Foot.

They live all around the world but rarely show themselves, and some of them usually appear at night in the wilderness; they are in many cultures and their stories have been recorded throughout history; they have been reported that some of them got married to Humans and had mixed children or half hairy creatures.

In the past they used to be close to towns, but in the Modern Times they are far in the wilderness and appear at night.

The reason that they were called Big Foot, because they have big feet, which was discovered from their foot prints on the grounds.

Also they are strange hairy creatures, that have human-like face but very hairy, walk upright and the full-grown adult have a body size of up to 7 feet tall and weight up to 300 pounds or more, and have been seen in many places around the world; and they are considered as one kind of the Jinn.

2) Satan and his descendants:

Satan (Shaytan or Iblis) and his descendants (devils or demons) are one of the kinds of the Jinn.

3) Also there are some other kinds of Jinn.

Other descriptions of Jinn:

1) The Koran tells us that the Jinn like the humans have **Free Will**, which means that they have the ability of doing **good** or **bad**.

2) They were created from the chemical materials of Fire; and they are invisible to the human eye when they are in their original form.

According to Koran, they can see us, but we can not see them.

They can be seen when they appear in the form or shape of humans. God gave them the ability to appear in the shape of Humans.

3) They eat, drink, marry and also they die.

4) They live in the open lands in the wilderness, close to water sources like rivers, while the descendants of Satan live everywhere including houses.

5) Some kind of Jinn can fly in outer space, and some of them are very strong.

6) Like the humans, the Jinn will be judged in the Life-Hereafter for their actions in this world.

7) The Jinn like humans are belongs to all kinds of religions, like Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism.

8) Like humans, each group of Jinn has their own territories and has government for their group of Jinn.

9) The Ghosts and Jinn:

The stories of Ghosts that some people have reported seeing or felt are actually the Ghosts of some of the Malevolent Jinn and not of the dead people.

10) The UFO and Jinn:

Some of the **Flying Saucers**, which commonly known as “Unidentified Foreign Objects (UFO)” phenomenon are also from the work of some of the flying kind of Jinn (like flying demons and devils), who intentionally do this kind of things so that to confuse the people and make them think about the probability of the existence of Celestial Aliens.

Tempting through whispering:

According to Koran, Satan and his descendants tempt the humans through whispering to the mind, by the way of suggestions and then continuous encouragement for what they suggest for the humans until they succeed in their missions. They can not force any body to do bad things.

According to Islam, the only way to get protections from the whispers of the devils is to get closer to God by following His guidance sincerely to the best ability.

One of the Koran verses says: “whoever forgets or ignore God (His Guidance through His Messengers and His Guardian Angels), then God (Allah) will forget and ignore that person and then appoint one of the devils (Shaytan) to become his or her guide (instead of the Guardian Angels), who leads the person to the wrong path in this world and to hell in the Life-Hereafter”.

The Guardian Angels also show us right from wrong through whispering to our mind.

The Koran tells the believers to say: “**Aouthu (A-ouzu) bel-laahe menal shaytaanel rajeem**”, which means **I seek refuge with Allah from the outcast shaytan (devil)**.

The believers say this after he or she feels the whispers of the devils, so that to get the protection from Allah against the devils, but saying it without practicing the guidance of God is useless against the devils.

The Final Time before death and Saying Shahadah and the Malevolent Jinn:

There is a common tradition in Islam, which is if a person is about to die, or is in the final moments or final stage of death, then someone should tell the dying person to say the first part of Shahadah, which is “Laa Elaaha Elal-Laah”, which means there is no deity worthy of worship but (or except) Allah (God).

But many Muslim Scholars recommend that we should not ask or tell the dying person in the final moments to say Shahadah, because when a person is about to die, then the Shaytans (devils) appear to the dying person’s mind in the shape and voice of the person’s parents, relatives and friends and tell him or her to denounce God and Islam.

Or the devil tell the dying person that he (the devil) is God and or tell the dying person that if he or she prostrate for him (the devil) then he will heal him or heal her from suffering, but if the dying person was a believer in God and was practicing Islam then he or she would reject the devils by saying **No**.

But we do not know that the dying person is saying **No** to the devils, so we assume that the dying person is saying **No** to us when we tolled him or her to say Shahadah, which then make us believe that the dying person is dying as unbeliever, which is not true.

So, the Scholars recommend that we only say Shahadah loudly enough that the dying person can hear it without asking him or her to say it, but we say it only as a reminder to the dying person so that when he or she becomes aware of us saying Shahadah then he or she probably would also say it either silently or loudly if God had mercy on him or her.

Fifth: The Jinn and Magic or Sorcery (as-Sehr)

The meaning of real Magic or Sorcery: Magic means the practice of using charms, spells, rituals, or invoking the supernatural, to attempt to produce supernatural effects.

Notice: This subject is not about the magic of Sleight of hand or tricks as is been shown on T.V. in the Modern Times, but this subject about the real Magic which is also called Sorcery. First of all, nobody knows for sure how magic works, but there are some explanations in the Koran about the nature of magic.

The Koran describes the Magic as sometimes Illusion, while some other times as a harmful knowledge. So the Magic is considered as another kind of Knowledge, but supernatural kind of Knowledge and Science.

According to Koran, the Magic was taught to people through the Jinn and Angels, as in explained in this subject.

Some Koran Verses about Magic:

There are two Kinds of Sorcery (Real Magic not Sleight of Hand Magic), one is **Harmful** and one is **Illusionary**, and both happen as a result of the effect of Magical Spells, as explained in the Verses of Koran, which mention the Magic during time of the Prophet **Moses** and the time of King and Prophet **Solomon**, as follow:

First: The following verses are about Moses and the Pharaoh's Magicians

1) Also as in (Koran 7:116-117):

“He (Moses) said: You (Pharaoh's Magicians) throw (first)! And when they (Magicians) threw down (their staffs) they cast a spell (bewitched) upon the people's eyes, and struck terror into them, and they produced a great sorcery.”

And (then) We [God] inspired Moses, [saying]: “throw down your Staff (turned into big Python)! And behold! It swallowed up all their deceptions (swallowed up all the Magicians staffs in the form of Snakes.)”

2) And as in (Koran 20:66):

“He (Moses) answered: “Nay, you [Pharaoh's Magicians] throw [first].”

And lo! By virtue of their Sorcery (casting spell upon the people's eyes), their [Magic] ropes and staffs seemed to him to be moving fast (in the form of Snakes).”

3) Also in (Koran 20:69):

“And [now] throw that [Staff] which is in your (Moses) right hand! It will (as a large snake) swallow up all that which they (Pharaoh's Magicians) have made; for that which they have made is only a Magician's trick (Illusionary Magic), and the Magician will never be successful, to whatever amount [of skill] he may attain.”

Second: About Jinn, Angels and teaching Magic

As in Verse 102, Surah 2 (2:102):

“And they [Some of the people of Scripture] follow [instead] that which the devils (demons or any kind of evil or rebellious Jinn) used to practice during Solomon’s reign; for it was not Solomon who denied the truth, but those devils denied it by teaching people Sorcery. And (they also follow) that which has come down (Knowledge of Magic) through the two Angels in Babylon, Haarut and Maarut, although these two never taught (Magic) it to anyone without first declaring (to some people of Scripture and other Babylonians): “We are but a temptation to evil (for trial): do not, then, deny [God’s] truth (become disbeliever)!”

And they [also some people of the Scripture] learn from these two (Angels) how to create discord (separation) between a man and his wife; but whereas they can harm none thereby except by God’s leave (permission to allow Magic to happen); they acquire (learn) a knowledge (Magic Spells) that only harms themselves and does not benefit them, although they know, indeed, that he who acquires this [Knowledge of Magic] shall have no share in the good of the Life Hereafter.

And how bad indeed was that [Magic] for which they have sold their own selves [sold themselves to the devils by making contract with the devils or other kind of evil Jinn to teach them Sorcery], if they but knew it!” (**Koran 2:102**).

The Angels as God’s Messenger of Knowledge to Mankind and Jinn:

In this verse (2:102), the Koran mentions that the Jinn during the rule of Solomon taught Magic to some of the Israelites, and later in Babylon (after the Exile of the Israelites to Babylon), two Angels in Babylon taught some Magic to the people of the scriptures and to the Babylonians, but the Angels told the people that Magic was harmful to them.

The people at Babylon did not know that those two Magicians were in fact were Angels, and the Angels were in the form or shape of men; God sent the two Angels as a test to the people.

Also we know from history that the beginning of information about Astrology, Planets, Stars, and the beginning of Astronomy started from Babylonia and Mesopotamia; so probably some of the Knowledge was done through those Angels and part of it was done through the Jinn.

Usually, whenever God reveals some new information about Knowledge to Mankind (or even to Jinn), He sends it to us through His Angels to Scientists, writers and other means; For example, Information about Astronomy, Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Computers, Inventions, literature, even Magic, Music and Arts.

But up to Mankind to use these Knowledges for good purposes and then get rewarded for it , or use it in bad ways and get punished for it.

The Angels are considered as God’s Messengers to Mankind and Jinn throughout history and always they will be in the future.

Third: Verses about some kind of Jinn flies in outer space and spies on Angels

According to some Muslim scholars, in the past, before Islam, the flying Jinn were allowed to spy and get information for their human Magicians who were able to tell the people about certain things to happen in their future, but since the beginning of Islam the Jinn were not allowed anymore to spy on Angels to get information about human beings.

So, in these verses (72:8 & 37:6-10), the Jinn say that since the beginning of Islam, the Angels prevented them (Jinn) from spying on them (Angels) to get information for their magicians about certain things to happen in the Future of some people as was mentioned in the Koran, as follow:

1) As in (Koran 72:8)

“And we (Jinn) have sought to reach the heaven (Sky); but found it filled with stern guards (Angels) and flaming fires (against any intruders of Jinn who try to spy on the Angels).”

2) And in (37:6-10):

“ Behold, We (God) have adorned the sky nearest (Atmosphere) to the earth with the beauty of planets, and have made it secure against every rebellious Jinn (like devils), (so that) they (the Jinn who seek to learn the unknowable from the angels, especially about mankind) should not be able to over hear the host on high (Angels), but should be repelled from all sides (and) cast out; with lasting suffering in store for them (in the life to come); but if anyone (of Jinn) does succeed in snatching a glimpse (of such knowledge), he is (henceforth) pursued (by the Angels) by a Piercing Flame.”

(Probably the Angels shoot the Intruders of the flying Jinn with some Meteors, as the Meteors that enter the Earth’s Atmosphere are commonly called Shooting Stars).

Magic and the Malevolent Jinn:

Magic leads to the world of the invisible Spirits of the Malevolent Jinn, which include demons and devils, who are considered as the adversaries of God and the humans. Many of those people who tried Magic or Sorcery found themselves being trapped by the Malevolent Jinn, and no easy way out.

Islam is against the practicing of Magic, because it suggests that humans know in advance what befall them and that Sorcery has the power to alter their fate or fortune, which in turn leads to the falls belief that those objects of Sorcery has more power than God Himself, which is not true.

Also God says in the Koran that nobody can predict the future through magic.

These are some of the names of some of the methods of doing Magic or Sorcery in the Modern Time:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| 1) Fortune-Tellers | 2) Palm Reading | 3) Crystal Balls | 4) Spiritualism |
| 5) Occult | 6) Black Magic | 7) White Magic | 8) Witchcraft |
| 9) Voodoo | 10) Tarot Cards | 11) Talisman | 12) Magic Square |
| 13) Astrological Practices | 14) Horoscope | 15) Magic Boards (Ouija Boards) | |
| 16) Kabbalah (or Cabbalah) | 17) Mediums (Spirit Callers) | 18) Rune | |
| 19) Magical Science of Letters | 20) Mandala | | |

The reason some people turn to Magic (Sorcery):

1) Some people think of Magic as exciting, mysterious knowledge, which make them eager to learn it. But after getting involved with magic, the excitement disappears immediately once the person realize that he or she was trapped by the Invisible Malevolent Jinn, and losing privacy permanently and no easy solution for getting out of it. Even some people become insane or have some psychological problems when they face the invisible Jinn.

2) The Sorcery Books that has connections to the Jinn usually are authored by the malevolent (evil) Jinn and written mostly by those people (magicians) who made contract with the Jinn.

And in their books they make it look-like that whoever do certain spells can become rich, or heal certain health problems, or finding lost items, or discover what the future was hiding for them or talking to the Spirit of their relatives or any other spirit they want to speak to, which according to the Koran are not true and only traps the people with the Malevolent Jinn.

Notice: The Ghosts or Spirits that pretend to be as the spirit of some known people are actually the Ghosts or Spirits of the malevolent Jinn.

3) Magicians or Fortune-Tellers convince people that they know their future, and in this way those Magicians can make money by deceiving naïve people, by first revealing some personal information of the naïve person who went to them seeking some information about some of their problems (like future or present relationship or lost things).

The Magicians knows the personal information through their Medium Malevolent Jinn (Genie), like Demons or Devils. So the naïve person become surprised by the Magician's knowledge of his or her personal information, which in turn make the naïve person very easy prey and then lose large amount of his or her money just trying to learn about something which only God knows about it.

4) The Koran mentions that certain type of Magic is illusion, but some other type is actually creates harm in people, like making bad relationship between husband and wife, so there are some people who go to certain Magician to try to create bad relationship between some people, or even to create good relationship between others.

The Koran mentions that no Magic can harm anybody without the permission of God. Also there are some other Magicians who do counter or anti-Spells Magic for the people who were hit by Spells, or under a Spell.

In the modern time, very few Magicians do this kind of harmful Magic, because it creates problems between people.

Notice: Many of the Superstitious people believe that some of their problems were probably created by somebody who threw spell on them or by somebody with the Eye of Jealousy (or evil eye) or something with bad Omen.

Sixth:

(Life after death and the Day of Judgment) Yawm al-Qeyamah

One of the Six Pillars of Faith (Iman) is to believe in the Life after Death and the Day of Judgment.

Notice: In the Koran, there are many names for the Life after death. And these are some of them:

First: Al-Aakhirah (al-aa-khera): It means as follow:

- 1) Al-Aakhirah means **Life Hereafter**
- 2) Al-Aakhirah also called as **al-Yawm al-Aakhir**, which means **The Last Day**.

Second: Yawm al-Qiyamah (Yawm al-Qeyaama): It means as follow:

- 1) It means the **Day of Resurrection**.
- 2) Yawm al-Qiyamah is also called **Yawm al-Hashr** (the **Day of Gathering**).
- 3) Also it is called "Al-baa'the- baa'dal mawt" (**Life after Death**).

Third: Yawm ad-Din (Yawm-ad-deen): It means as follow:

- 1) Yawm ad-Din literally means the Day of Religion or Faith.
- 2) It means the **Day of Judgment**.
- 3) Yawm ad-Din (Deen) is also called "Yawm al-Hesaab" (the Day of Accounting).
- 4) It is also called "As-Saa'ah" (The Hour).
- 5) Also it is called "The Day of Reckoning or Doomsday".

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the Trumpet of the Last Day?

According to the Koran, on the Last Day, the world, Universe and the Heavens are rolled up like a scroll then rebuilt again from anew and the dead issue from their graves and are reunited with their bodies; the limbs testify to reveal the owner's good or evil deeds.

The Koran as the last revelation looks forward to the end; many passages speak of the final day, as in the following meaning of this Verse:

"And (on that day) the trumpet (of Judgment) will be sounded (will be blown), and all (creatures) that are in the Heavens and all that are on Earth will fall down (struck down) senseless (dead), unless they be such as God wills (to exempt). (Then years later) And then it (Trumpet blown again) will sound again and all the dead rise up again (for the Day of Judgment), looking on (waiting)." (Koran 39:68).

2) What is Life after Death or Life Hereafter?

It is Yawm al-Qiyamah (Yawm al-Qeyaama), or **Resurrection** day, which is the day when God brings us back to life again for the Judgment day to face our own deeds that we have done in this life.

3) What is the Day of Judgment?

God is Just and therefore, in order to exercise His justice, there has to be a system of accountability.

- . Those who do good have to be rewarded and those who do wrong have to be punished accordingly.
- . Therefore, He created Paradise and Hell and there are admission criteria for each one of them.
- . Muslims believe that the present life is a temporary one.
- . This life is a test and if we pass the test, we will be given a life of permanent pleasure in the company of good people in Paradise.

Islam believe that life on earth is meaningless if good actions are not rewarded and bad conduct are not punished; why attend school if bad behavior goes unpunished and there is nothing at the end to reward all our efforts?

- . In the same way life on earth is meaningless if we do not face the consequences of our actions after death, by standing in the Majesty court of Justice of Almighty God (Allah) on the Day of Judgment.
- . To prepare ourselves for this day, we need to follow the guidance given through the prophets.
- . There would have been no need for prophets if there were no Life after Death.

. On the scale of God's judgment, nothing is overlooked; an atom's weight of good is recorded by Angels, and an atom's weight of evil is recorded by Angels too.

- . According to Islam, the believers and non-believers equally, will be rewarded in this world for their good deeds, but the unbelievers (those who denied the truth) will not be rewarded on the Day of Judgment for their good deeds.
- . On the other hand those who follow the guidance of God will be rewarded not only in this world but also in the world hereafter.

However, and according to the Koran, the final Judgment in everything is up to God Himself.

According to Islam, each good deed that the believers do, "God multiplies the good deeds by Ten" to be credited for their account on the Day of Judgment; any kind of good deed that they do in their life, even when they say Salaam (Greetings to each other).

4) Who are the witnesses on the Day of Judgment?

There are two kinds of witnesses on the Day of Judgment, as follow:

First: The Angels as a witness:

The Angels of Record-keeping, will be as a witness for each person, for his or her good and bad deeds; as in (Koran 50:21):

"Verily, every person will come forward (on the Day of Judgment) along with an (Angel) to drive (him or her), and an (Angel) to bear witness."

Second: The Human limbs as a witness:

In addition to the Record-Keeping Angels as a witness against us on the Day of Judgment, God will also make the human limbs testify against themselves to reveal the owner's good or evil deeds, like the hands, legs, skins and other parts of the Humans and the Jinn bodies to speak on the Day of Judgment as a witness against the sins of the sinners who try to deny that they have committed certain sins in this world.

5) How the Sins are judged on the Day of Judgment?

The Day of Judgment is when Allah (God) rewards and punishes the humans and the Jinn.
. The Rewards and punishments are for our actions in our life in this world.

First: The Muslim Sins in this Life:

According to Islam, when a person becomes as a practicing Muslim (as a believer), then the previous mistakes or sins will be forgiven; but when the person commits sins (big or small) while he or she as practicing Muslim, then the Sinner has to ask God sincerely for forgiveness and not to repeat the sin again.

Second: The Muslim's Sins and the scale of the Day of Judgment according to the explanation of some Muslim Scholars:

1) On the Day of Judgment, the worldly deeds of the Muslim person will be put on the Scale of Judgment, and if the scale of the Good Deeds in obeying God (Allah) is higher or heavier than that of the bad deeds (as a Muslim, no Shirk or not to associate somebody with God), then the person will be saved and rewarded by paradise (al-Jannah) according to Allah's guidance.

2) If the good and bad deeds are almost equal, then the Muslim stays in a place between Paradise and Hell called "**Aaraaf**" as was mentioned in the Koran, and the person get another chance of being saved by the **Mercy of God** or the **Intercession** of the Prophet Muhammad or other Prophets or even the Intercession of some Angels after they get permission from God.

3) For those Muslims with heavier bad deeds (but no shirk involved) and who did not receive any forgiveness, then they will end up in hell and will stay there temporary.

4) For those Muslims who did not practice anything from their religion at all during their lifetime, then their fate are in the hand of God, either they end up in hell permanently, or temporary or whatever God planned for them.

6) What is As-Siraat?

As-Siraat (As-Seraat) literally means "Road"

. According to Islam, as-Siraat means the Bridge that is laid across Jahannam (Hell-Fire) for all the people to pass over on the Day of Judgment, in order to enter Paradise.

. On the Day of Judgment, each believer will receive a book, which contains his or her own deeds that he or she has done in the world. Usually they receive their books in their right hands. The unbelievers will receive their books in their left hands.

. Then after the result of the reward and punishment, every body will pass through the bridge of Hell.

. The bridge without walls and the believers will keep their balance and cross it very fast, because the bridge becomes very wide in their minds.

. While the unbelievers will loss their balance and fall in hell, because the bridge becomes very thin in their minds, as thin as a hair.

7) Why all the Humans will see their place in both Paradise and Hell?

First: The believers:

According to Islam, God will show the believers who end up in paradise, their place in Hell if they became unbelievers in the world, so that they believe in hell and forever appreciate God for saving them from Hell.

Second: The unbelievers:

God will show the unbelievers who end up in Hell their place in paradise if they became believers in the world, so that they believe in paradise and forever feel more regretful.

8) Is there any communications between the people of Paradise and Hell?

According to the Koran, there are some communications between the people Paradise and Hell, and vice versa, as follow:

First: Communications between Paradise and Hell:

There are verses in the Koran, which mentions a sample of would be future communications between the people of Paradise and the people of Hell.

. So, sometimes some of the people of paradise want to talk to a certain ignorant people who ended up in Hell, whom they knew before, but those ignorant people never listened to them during their lives in the world and were laughing at them for being believers in God and acting on His guidance and mocking them for believing in the life Hereafter and the Day of Judgment.

. So, with God's permission, they communicate remotely with those ignorant people who ended up in Hell. (For example: like watching and talking to live and large present day T.V. or computer monitors or large theatre screens).

. They ask them about the reasons that they ended up in hell.

Then these people of hell (the unbelievers) will answer them by telling them that they ended up in Hell because of the followings reasons:

- 1) "We never **prayed** to God (through Salat or any other kind of prayers)"
- 2) "And we never **helped** the **needy** (through Charities, Alms or Zakah and other means)"
- 3) "And we were careless and ignorant people"
- 4) "And we never believed in the existence of the **Life Hereafter** and the **Day of Judgment**, until we died."
- 5) Then God said "So no intercession of intercessors will be any use to them." (Koran 74:43-48).

Second: Communications between Hell and Paradise:

Then the people of Hell will communicate with the people of Paradise when the people of paradise started the communications as listed above, and ask the people of Paradise to send them some of the water and food of paradise, so that they can enjoy eating it instead of drinking boiled or very hot water and eating stinky and/ or stingy food in Hell. (Koran 7:50): "And the dwellers of the Fire, will call out unto the dwellers of paradise: Pour on us some water or some of the sustenance (of Paradise) which God has provided you with. They (people of Paradise) say: Verily God has denied both (water and sustenance) to those who have denied the Truth."

9) How Islam thinks about non-Muslims?

According to many Muslim Scholars, if non-Muslims knows about Islam (understand its teachings clearly) and does not accept Islam in his or her life, then the person is considered as denying the truth; but if the person does not know about Islam (or does not understand its teachings clearly), then the person's fate is known only to Allah (God), and only God knows what will happen to him or her on the Day of Judgment.

For the Christians and Jews, the Koran mentions that they will be treated like Muslims, as follow:

“Verily, those who believed (in the Koran), as well as those who follow the Jewish faith, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does righteous deeds, shall have their reward with their Lord (God); (and) on them shall be no fear , nor shall they grieve.” (Koran 2:62).

Also the Koran (Quran) mentions that God gave the Christians and Jewish people a **different law** and a **different Guidance**, and that they will be judged according to what they have in their Holy Books of Torah and Gospel. (Koran 5:48).

. The people are judged according to their deeds, and their belief; they are judged and their real nature revealed. Those who were faithful to the truth enter paradise, and those who did not, enter hell.

What is in Paradise or the Gardens of Eden (After the Day of Judgment)?

According to Islam, these are some of the many things that are in Paradise:

Verse 72 of Surah 9 (Koran 9:72) about the best thing in Paradise:

“God has promised the believers, both Men and Women, gardens through which running water flow, to dwell therein forever, and goodly dwellings in gardens of perpetual bliss: but God’s **goodly acceptance** is the **greatest** [bliss of all], for this, this is the supreme triumph!”

1) Allah (God) says in the Koran (Qur’an) and also the Prophet mentioned in a common Hadith, that in Paradise there are a lot of things that **no Human ever Heard, Saw or even Thought of it.**

2) The people will be **Immortals** in Paradise.

. According to Islamic tradition, the age of the people men and women will be permanent at the age of 30 or 33 years old. And their looks are in the Best Color

3) There is abundance of all kinds of foods and drinks with easy access.

4) The Weather is Mild, and there is no Sickness or Fatigue.

5) There are Rivers everywhere. According to Koran (47:15):

“In Paradise, there are Rivers of **Water** unpolluted, and Rivers of **Milk** unchanged in flavor, and Rivers of **Wine** –a delight to the drinkers, and Rivers of **Honey** purified.”

. The wine in paradise is with great taste and does not make the people drunk.

6) There is no Foul-Language, Idle Talk, Jealousy or any kind of Bad Behavior, and the Greeting between the people is **Salam** (Peace).

. Sometimes the people will be upon Coaches, set Face to Face.

7) Some of the people’s clothing is from **Green Silk**.

“a lot of Silver and Gold and other Jewelry, and there are Great Palaces.

8) There are Immortal and Good-Looking Youths, who will serve the people in paradise.

9) The Women of Paradise are called “Hu-riyya; plural: Huriyahs.” (Houris; Plural Houris), which means a Fair Maidens (Virgins) with Big Lustrous Eyes.

. According to the most common and trusted Hadiths; in Paradise each man has **Two Wives** called Huriyyahs (Houris), who were created separately from the Humans.

The Koran did not mention the number of wives, but the Koran mentions that the Wives of the believers who end up in paradise will join their husbands; and a Hadith of the Prophet mentions that the worldly wives of the believers who end up in paradise will be in their Best Look just like a Houris.

. According to some Muslim scholars, each woman believer who either was not married during her life in the world or that her husband did not end up in Paradise, then she either becomes the wife of one of the believers or that she will get all the Satisfaction in Paradise, through other means and ways, and those women believers will Look Like a Houris.

The size of the Garden or Paradise of the Life Hereafter:

In the Qur'an (Koran), Allah (God) described paradise of the Life Hereafter as enormous and extremely large.

Notice: The Christians call Paradise by the name “**Heaven**”.

First of all, no body (except God) knows for sure the size of Paradise, but according to two sources we can get closer picture or some idea of the size of Paradise, as follow:

First: The Koran:

Since the Koran does not use a measuring system to compare things beyond the understanding of people in the ancient time, so the Koran compare the size of Paradise to the size of the earth in addition to the size of some distances in the skies or heaven that surround the earth.

There are two Verses in the Koran which mention that the Garden or Paradise is very large, and comparing it to the size of the earth and the skies surrounding or closer to the earth as follow:

1-“and a Garden (Paradise), its width as (resemble as vast as or very large place) are the Heavens and the Earth, prepared for the Pious (those who believe or God-conscious).” (3:133).

2-“and a Garden (Paradise), its width as are (resemble as vast as) the width of the Heaven and the Earth, prepared for those who believe in God and His messengers” (57:21).

In Verse 50, Surah 38 (Koran 38:50), mentions the Gates of Paradise:

“Gardens of Eternity (perpetual bliss), with **Gates** wide-open to them (believers)”

Also in Verse 73, Surah 39 (Koran 39:73):

“When they (believers) reach it (Paradise), they shall find its gates wide-open.”

Second: The Hadith of the Prophet:

There is a famous Hadith of the Prophet that mentions that “the Garden (Paradise) has **Eight Gates** (main entrances), and the distance between each two Gates equal to the distance of travel for Forty years by a Camel Caravan.”, which then means that the distance between the Eight Gates equal to 320 years travel by a Camel Caravan.

The Camel Caravan travels an average of Forty Kilometers a day; then multiplying 40 by 365, which equal to 14,600 kilometers a year, then multiplying 14,600 by 320 years, which equal to 4,672,000 kilometers or nearly 3,000,000 miles, which is larger than the Circumference of our Sun.

The Sun's Circumference is about 2,716,000 miles (or about 4,379,000 kilometers).

And according to Scientists, the Sun's Surface area size equals to nearly 12,000 times the size of the surface area of our Earth (The total Surface area of the Earth about 197 Million Square Miles or nearly 510 Million Square Kilometers).

Since the above circumference of 3,000,000 is larger than the Sun's Circumference, so it means that the total Surface area of the 3 million miles of circumference is a lot more than 12,000 times the size of the surface area of our Earth.

So according to the above Hadith, the Garden or Paradise is bigger than the size of the surface area of the Sun; which means that **Paradise's surface area equals** to a lot more than **12,000 times** the **size of the surface area of our Earth**. But as we said above, only God knows the size of Paradise, and only God knows the meaning of the above two verses (3:133 & 57:21) of the Koran (Quran).

Chapter Three: The Koran and the Hadith

First: **Al-Qur'an (The Koran) (Ko-ran)** (Islam's Holy Book)

Muslims follow the Holy Book of the Qur'an.

Al-Qur'an (al-Qur-aan) is considered as one of the Miracles of Allah (God).

The Koran (Qur'an) has many names as follow:

1) **Al-Qur'an al-Karim** (Kareem): In formal speech, the Koran commonly called Al-Qur'an al-Karim, which means the Noble Koran.

2) **Al-Qur'an al Majid** (Majeed): Also this name is used in formal speeches, which means the Glorious Koran.

3) **Al-Mus'haf** (al-Mos-haf): The Koran is also commonly called the Mus'haf, which means collection of pages or Scripture).

4) **Al-Furqan** (al-For-kaan), literally means the Discriminator, which means it discriminate between the Truth and Unreality.

5) **Al-Kitab** (al-Ketaab), which means the Book.

6) **Adh-Dhikr** (ad-dek-r or Az-Zekr), which means the remembrance.

. The Koran is considered as a primary revelation or God himself speaking, while the present Christian Gospels were written after Jesus and is about the life of Jesus..

. The Koran is considered as the foundation and primary source of Doctrine in Islam, followed by the Hadith and the Sunnah (the Prophet's example, customs and traditions).

Major Themes of the Koran:

The Koran has Three Major Themes, as follow:

1) The Absolute Authority of God.

2) The Accountability of Humans for their deeds.

3) The Impermanence of this Life.

Each theme is expressed in a forceful way using simple stories that illustrates moral or religious lessons; for examples, references to past people or Prophets, and logic.

. Fully one third of the verses of the Koran relate to issues concerning the next life and what people will find after death. Another third of the verses deal with Prophets, interfaith issues, and the Human experience

. While the final third cover subjects ranging from law to personal and social obligations.

All of these different themes appear at different places throughout the whole scripture.

There are many Verses in the Koran that only God knows its meanings, as in (Koran 3:7), as follow: "It is He (God) who has sent down to you (Prophet Muhammad) the Book (Koran). In it are (the meanings of) Verses that are entirely clear by themselves, they are the foundations (or essence) of the Book (like commandments, duties, laws), and others not entirely clear. So as for those (some people) in whose hearts there is a deviation (from the truth) they go after that part (of some Verses) which is not entirely clear thereof, seeking out (what is bound to create) confusion and seeking (to arrive at) its final meanings (or hidden meanings) (based on individual judgment), but none knows its hidden meanings except God. And those who are firmly grounded (rooted) in knowledge say: "We believe in it: the whole of it (clear and unclear Verses) are from our Lord." And none receive admonition except men of understanding."

Some of the descriptions of the Koran (Quran):

1) Main source of Law:

The Qur'an is a unique book. It is the Sacred Book and main **source** of **law** in Islam.

2) Actual literal Words of God:

According to Islam, the Qur'an is the **actual literal words** of God revealed by Him through the Archangel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad.

Islam considers the Koran as God's final and complete unchanged Book (Revelations) of guidance for all mankind.

3) Also the Koran has the followings:

First: 30 Sections

The Koran is divided into **30 sections**, each section called **Juzu**, plural: Ajzaa', and each Juzu was divided into two sections, and each section is called Hizb (Plural: Ahzab)

Second: 114 Chapters

The Koran contains **114 chapters called Surahs or Suwar** (singular: Surat or Surah).

Third: Also the Koran has **over 6,236 verses** (Plural: **Aayaat** or Aayahs; singular: Aayat or Aayah).

Fourth: And it has **77,437** words.

Fifth: The Book of Koran is about **six hundred** pages.

Notice: Surah (Sura) is pronounced as Soora; and Aayah is pronounced as Aaya.

4) From longest to Shortest Chapters:

The Koran was arranged starting from the **longest** Surat al-Baqarah, which has 286 verses, in the beginning of the Koran, to the **shortest** Surah, which is Surat al-Kawthar, which has only 3 verses at the end of the Koran, except Surat al-Fatihah, which is in the beginning of the Koran before Surat al-Baqarah (Chapter of the Cow).

5) Makki and Madani:

Chapters revealed when the prophet was living in Makkah are known as **Makki** (Makkan) and those revealed in Madinah are called **Madani** (Madinan).

6) The Koran was written by Muslim writers (the Prophet Muhammad was illiterate) at the time of revelations during the presence of the Prophet; but the written scriptures were collected right after the death of the Prophet during the rule of Caliph Abu Bakr; and the Koran in its present form was completed several years later during the rule of Caliph 'Uthman.

7) Before reading the Koran (Qur'an), we must do the following:

Muslims who uses the Holy Book of the Koran must have Wudu (Ablution) before touching the Koran; but if the person is not a Muslim, then he or she must be clean, with clean clothes.

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the Main Name of Islam's Holy Book?

The main name of Islam's Holy Book is The **Qur'an** (The **Koran**).

. The Koran literally means The Reading or The Recitation.

2) In what Language, the Qur'an has been written?

The Qur'an has been written in Arabic language. It has been translated into more than one hundred languages in the world, but it is recited in the Arabic Language only.

Notice: There are many words in the Koran and the Arabic Language, which originated from the Hebrew Language (The language of the ancient people of Israel) and the Aramaic Language, which is an Ancient Language of Syria and Mesopotamia, which was also used in Palestine, even during the Prophet 'Esa's (Jesus) time and still being used by the Christians in Syria, Iraq, Iran, East Turkey and Lebanon, and currently called Syriac Language.

3) Why the Arabic Language is very important for the Koran?

The Arabic Language as the language of the Koran is considered as a living, dynamic and very rich language.

Because of the Superb Style in which God said His revealed words in the Koran, which were very strong, organized and in influential way; and because many of the most difficult words of the Arabic language were used in away, which is considered very short (summarized way) but with a lot of meanings or still unknown meaning or mysterious meaning for some verses (some verses were recently understood by Muslim scholars concerning modern science as has been explained in this book in the subject Science in the Koran).

Also the verses were revealed in away to have a big influence on the listeners, which also cannot be done in the same manner in other languages as it does in Arabic.

So, for the above reasons and probably some other reasons, the Koran translation in any other language cannot have the same or exact Spiritual effect or influence and also cannot have the exact grammar meaning on the reader's or listener's mind as it does in the Arabic Language.

Also for the same reasons, most of the main Islamic rituals as in Salah and some other rituals must be done in Arabic.

But translations of the Qur'an have been produced in many languages.

These explanations and interpretations are called Tafseer, which help us to understand the Qur'an.

4) What are the names of the three famous books of Allah (God), their prophets and the name of the religions?

They are the following:

First: The Book of the **Qur'an** (Qur-aan) (**Koran**), which was revealed to the Prophet **Muhammad** and the name of this religion is **Islam**.

Islam considers the Qur'an as the Last Book of Allah (God).

Second: The Book of **Enjeel (Gospel)**, which was revealed to the prophet **'Esa (Jesus)** and the name of this religion is **Christianity**. The Gospel is part of the Christian Bible and included in the books of the New Testament.

In Islam, he term **Enjeel** is also written as **Injil**.

Third: The Book of **Tawrat** (Taw-raat) (**Torah**), which was revealed to the prophet **Musa (Moses)** and the name of this religion is **Judaism**.

- . The Torah is part of the Hebrew (Jewish) Bible and included as part of the first five books of the Old Testament. The Hebrew Bible is also called as “Tanakh or Tanach”.
- . The Hebrew Bible does not have the Christian New Testament.
- . There are some differences in the Old Testament between the Christian and Hebrew Bibles.

5) How long did it take to reveal all of the Qur’an?

It took almost **22** (twenty-two) years and **six** months to reveal all of the Qur’an.

Notice: Many Verses of the Koran were not explained during the Prophet’s time, which later (after the death of the Prophet) led to many different explanations and interpretations of the Koran by Muslim and non-Muslim scholars throughout the centuries until present day.

6) When the Koran was gathered and organized?

According to Islam, the Qur’an (Koran) has never been changed after the Prophet Muhammad.

. Allah (God) said in the Qur’an that “Verily, it is We (Allah) ourselves who have sent down the Reminder (Qur’an) and behold, We shall guard it (from any corruption)”. (Koran 15:9)

. The Qur’an was written down or inscribed during the **Prophet’s** prophethood on Chance Surfaces that was available at the time of Revelations, and those Surfaces were Pieces of Papyrus, Flat Stones, Palm Leaves, Shoulder Blades of Camels, Pieces of Leather, Wooden Boards, and the Hearts (memory) of Men.

. According to Islamic tradition, the written scriptures of the Koran was collected right after the death of the Prophet during the Caliph Abu Bakr, and the Koran was completed in its Current form Fifteen Years later during the Rule of the Caliph ‘Uthman.

. The collection of the scriptures of the Koran was done by some of the companions of the **Prophet** who were some of the same people who wrote it down at the time of Revelations; also helped in collecting the Koran, many of the Companions who memorized the Koran during the Prophet’s time.

Notice: Some of the words of some of the verses of the Koran during the Prophet’s time were written in several different Arabic Accents of some other tribes other than the tribe of Quraish of Mecca, then during the rule of ‘Uthman those words of different accents were organized mostly in the Quraish accent so that it does not create any confusion in the reading of Koran.

The meaning of the words did not change, only some of the words with different accents were **organized**, and some of those words were **written in the Quraish accent**.

After the Koran was organized, then ‘Uthman ordered the burning of all the copies that contained the un-organized Accents, and which were with some of the Companions of the Prophet.

During the Prophet’s time, the Koran was mostly written in the Quraish accent.

Notice: Papyrus is tall Aquatic Plant made into papers by ancient Egyptians, and was also used by the Greeks and Romans.

Second:

The Hadith (Hadeeth)

Islam views the actions of a Divine Messenger as happened through Divine intervention and unlimited in their inner nature. Therefore it is with authority of the Koran, which states: “You have a noble example in God’s Messenger” (33: 21), that Islam bases its Sunnah upon the Hadith in addition to the Koran.

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the meaning of Hadith?

Hadith: Literally means **News, Report Speech or Account**.

Plural of the Arabic term Hadith is “Ahaadith”,

Hadiths or Ahaadith are the Sayings and Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, which are considered as the Second Source of Information after the Koran.

Hadiths are what everything the **Prophet** said or did and was carefully noted and remembered.

It is traditions relating to the deeds and saying of the **Prophet** as recounted or Narrated by his Companions (Sahaabah).

Hadith is about the right way to live.

2) What are the other descriptions of Hadith?

Hadith may pronounce or declare doctrine or provide a commentary upon it. They deal with the contents of the Koran, social and religious life, and everyday conduct.

The Hadith is considered as the basis second only to the Koran, for Islamic law (Shar‘iah).

3) What are the two kinds of Hadith?

Hadith are divided into **Two** Groups:

First: Hadith **Qudsi** (Qudsee) , which means Sacred Hadith:

Hadith Qudsi means that God Himself is speaking in, as it were, a completing revelation through the Prophet.

Second: Hadith **Sharif** (Noble Hadith):

Hadith Sharif (Shareef) means that the **Prophet’s** own acts and utterances.

4) When the Hadith was collected?

All the Hadiths were collected later after the Prophet.

Many Hadiths were written right after the death of the Prophet and through two hundred years period, but were not collected in its present form until the third century of Islam.

In the Third century of Islam some Muslim Scholars found interest in collecting Hadiths from its many other Muslims sources who were believed to have collected them from other earlier Muslim Scholars, who in turn were believed to have collected the Hadiths from the followers of the Companions of the Prophet or from the Companions of the Prophet.

So the Hadiths were collected in its present form during the Third century of Islam. Needless to say, in a very short time these Reports run into Tens of Thousands.

The Shi’ah collection of Hadiths was done in the fourth and fifth centuries of Islam. For Shi’ah, the authenticity of a Hadith is guaranteed not by an Isnad (Chain of Transmission) which begin with the companions, but by its Transmission through ‘Ali and his descendants of the Imams of Shi’ah.

5) Who are the most famous collectors of Hadith?

The most famous collections of Hadith are the Sahih (the Authentic) of Imam (or Shaykh) **al-Bukhari** (died in the year 256 Hijri or A.H.) and Sahih (the Authentic) of Imam (or Shaykh) **Muslim** (d. 261 Hijri).

6) Which collections of Hadith are considered as the most trusted after the Koran?

Al-Bukhari's Collection of Hadiths is considered by all Sunnis as the most Authentic after the Koran, than all of the other collections of Hadiths.

7) What is the meaning of Isnad?

The Companions chain of transmission of Hadith is called "Isnad".

8) How the Hadith was evaluated or judged as authentic, good, weak or fabricated?

The method of collecting Hadith was based on the assumption that it was unthinkable for God-fearing men to lie about matters which they held sacred.

. Each human link in the chain of Transmission warrants the others as safe. If there were persons in the Isnad (chain of transmission) whose integrity could be doubted for any reason, however small, the Authenticity of the Hadith was to that extent Weakened

. On the contrary, if there existed, several distinct accounts and varied chains of transmission (Hadith Mutawater or Common) for a single Hadith, its Authenticity was to that extent Strengthened.

9) What is the meaning of Authentic Hadith?

The meaning of Authentic or fully Authentic Hadith does not prove that a Hadith was actually belongs to the Prophet or that the Hadith was narrated or transmitted correctly.

Authentic means that al-Bukhari investigated the history of the people that were in the Isnad or Transmission of a Hadith, and he only proved that the people in the Transmission did actually meet each other during their lifetime and those people were with good reputation. Al-Bukhari was able to investigate the life of some early Muslims in only 2,800 Hadiths.

10) Who are the other well-known collectors of Hadith?

Other well-known Collectors of Hadiths are as follow:

1) Abu Dawud. 2) Tirmidhi 3) Ibn Majah 4) An-Nasai

Also there are collections of Ibn Hanbal called "Musnad".

There are many other collectors of Hadiths.

The Reliability of some Hadiths:

The Prophet discouraged his companions during his life from writing his sayings, because he did not want the people to mix the verses of the Koran with his Hadiths, which later confuse the Muslims after his death. Also the Caliph 'Umar forbade the people from writing any Hadith that was not already known to everybody.

So, later many people wrote the Hadiths in a big way.

Usually the total collected Hadiths without different variations are probably more than thirty Thousands Hadiths.

While many Hadiths are reliable, unfortunately some Hadiths are not reliable, because some of them were remembered wrongly, misquoted, or even deliberately invented.

Pious (good intentions) or even bad intentions in inventing or fabricating some Hadiths have created many contradictory Hadiths, which caused much confusion for Muslims.

Some of the reasons that some Muslims in the early centuries of Islam fabricated some Hadiths, as follow:

- 1) To serve the Islamic cause, like describing Paradise in a fabricating way (for example, fabricating the number of Wives in Paradise for each man) so that to give more encouragement to non-Muslims to become Muslims or to encourage the Muslims to fight in a battle for the Islamic cause.
- 2) To serve the political purposes of the State, or the religious teachings of certain groups of Muslims, or even just make money by selling good book about new and popular fabricated Hadiths.

First: Islam

1-Islam (Eslaam) and the Muslims

The Arabic word “**Islam**” means “**Submission or Self-Submission**”, which was originated from the word “**aslama** (to Self-Submit or to surrender)”.

Also aslama was originated from the Aramaic (Syriac) word “**ashlem**”, which also means “to submit or to surrender”.

The broader meaning of the word “Islam” is that people achieve peace with themselves and their surroundings when they submit to the will or Guidance of God; and Islam becomes as a complete way of life.

So, Islam means to obey or submit to the Guidance of God (Allah) as One Creator as He revealed it to people through the Prophet Muhammad and other biblical Prophets (like Jesus, David, Moses, Abraham, Noah, Adam and other Prophets) before him.

All the Prophets since Adam are considered as Muslims, because they all submitted to the guidance of God as One Creator.

The Koran considers the Prophet Muhammad as the last of a line of Prophets including Abraham, Moses and Jesus. The Koran’s narrative includes stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus and some other Prophets.

. Islam is the religion of tolerance, and respects and appreciates other religions as was mentioned in many verses of the Koran in this book, in the chapter of Islam and other religions.

Muslims believe that there is no other deity (god) worthy of worship except Allah, the One God; and that Muhammad is the Prophet and Messenger of Allah (God).

Also Muslims pray five times a day, fast during the month of Ramadan, give money to the needy, and once during their life (adults) make a pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia (Hajj) if they can financially afford it and physically able to do it.

Some questions and answers:

1) What is a follower of Islam called?

A follower of Islam is called Muslim.

2) Who is a Muslim?

The word “Muslim” means one who submits to the Guidance of God and this is done by first declaring the Shahadah (to bear witness) or Testimony of Faith which is “there is no deity that worthy of worship but or except God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.”

. In a broader sense, anyone who is willingly Self-Submits to the will of God is a Muslim.

3) What is the Muslims’ Religion (Deen)?

The Muslims’ religion is Islam, which is submission and obedience to the order of God and his Messenger with love and hope (for God’s Mercy and a reward in Paradise) and fear (from God’s punishment in hell).

4) What are the Three Fundamentals that Muslims must learn?

The three fundamentals are:

First: Knowing their Rabb (the Lord, the Creator, the Sustainer, and the One in whose Hand is the disposal of all affairs).

Second: Knowing their religion (Islam).

Third: Knowing their Prophet Muhammad.

5) Does Islam consider all the Prophets of Allah (God) as Muslims?

Yes, all the prophets preceding the Prophet Muhammad including **Abraham** were Muslims, because all of them **Self-Submitted** to the will (Guidance) of God.

6) What is the purpose of worship in Islam?

The purpose of worship in Islam is to be God conscious.

Thus the worship, whether it is prayer, fasting, or charity, is a means to an end and the end is the pleasure of God so that when one becomes conscious of God, in thought and in action, he is in a better position to receive His bounties both in this world and the hereafter.

7) What is the meaning of applying Islam to daily Life?

In Islam, in order to be a Muslim, one should not only be practicing the five pillars of Islam but should also have the highest possible character for being a good human being, by practicing Islam's moral codes such as **honesty, truthfulness, dependability, reliability** and many other human moral qualities.

One cannot judge Islam by looking at those individuals who have a Muslim name, but in their actions, they are not living or behaving as a Muslims.

8) What are the Moral teachings of Islam?

Islam called for generosity, Justice, Chastity, telling the truth, honesty, patience, pardon, mercy, humility, sincerity, kindness, hard work and Peace.

Islam condemned injustice, debauchery, lying, cheating, stealing, impatience, revenge, cruelty, haughtiness, arrogance, hypocrisy, ruthlessness, negligence and aggression.

9) Does Islam appreciate Human Intellect?

Islam **honors** man and woman. Recognizes their dignity and appreciates their **intellectual** capacity.

It encourages free enquiry and creative thought. It highly esteems good manners and calls for virtuous conduct.

The **Qur'an** frequently calls for praises, thoughtfulness and careful consideration in decision or action or study.

Also the Qur'an criticizes the ignorant, the negligent and scorn at those who fail to make of this mental gift.

Therefore, the Holy Qur'an estimates the pursuit of **science** very highly.

In this context, science is not confined to a certain branch of knowledge.

The Arts, architecture and technology flourished in the Golden Age of Islam, in the early centuries of Islam; and Islamic learning and culture was responsible for the transmission of much of classical philosophy and science to the West.

2-The Two Major Muslim Groups

Muslims have fewer religious groups, denominations or sects than Christians.

In Islam there are two major groups:

First: The **Sunni** (Soon-nee), also called as the **Sunnah**, which is the majority, and the **Shi'ah** (Shee-aa) also written as **Shi'ites** (Shee-aayts), which is the minority.

Both groups believe in the five pillars of Islam with some minor differences, but there are some differences in some other Islamic religious matters, as will be explained in this subject.

First: The Sunni (Soon-nee)

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the meaning of Sunni?

It means those who follow the **Prophet's** Sunnah (customs and traditions of the **Prophet**), and his companions.

The word **Sunni** or Sunnis is adjective from the Arabic word **Sunnah**.

2) What is the meaning of Sunnah?

It means Customs and Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad as contained in his Hadiths or sayings, including his actions and silent approval of actions done in his presence.

3) What is the percentage of the Sunnis in Islam?

The Sunnis comprise between 85-89 % of the Muslim population.

4) Why the Sunnis are also called the Orthodox Islam?

The Sunnis are also known as “the **Orthodox** Islam”, because they recognize the first four Orthodox Khalifahs (Caliphs) as a legal successor to the Prophet Muhammad, and the four Caliphs are: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali, while the Shi'ah do not recognize the first three caliphs as a legal successors to the Prophet Muhammad.

5) What are the Four Sunni Schools of Law?

The Sunni adhere to one of the four Orthodox or Sunnite schools of law, which are the schools of the following Sunni scholars:

1-Imam **Abu Hanifah (Abu Haneefa)**

2-Imam **Malik bin (ben) Anas**

3-Imam **Shafi'i (Shafe'ee)**

4-Imam **Ibn (ebn) Hanbal**

Each School of Law is called as “Madh'hab (Maz-hab).”

The Term Madh'hab means Direction or Trend.

In the first three centuries of Islam, there were many Muslim Schools of Law, but only Four of them were chosen in the third century of Islam by the Great Muslim Scholar “at-Tabari” and some other Muslim Scholars and they regarded the four as authoritative or representing the Sunni Muslims and called them as “the Four Madhaa'heb or Four Sunni Schools of Law.”

Notice: Sunni Muslims may choose which of their opinions (Madh'hab or School of Law) they agree with, or even not belong to a "School" at all.

6) Are there any major differences between the Four Sunni Schools of Law?

The Four Sunni Schools of Law have no differences in the basic principle doctrine of the original teaching of Islam; the difference between them is only in the interpretation of the Islamic Shari'ah (Law).

Among the Sunnis, each School regards the others as Orthodox.

7) How the Sunnis regard the Descendants of Ali?

The Sunni attribute no special religious or political function to the descendants of the **Prophet's** son in law 'Ali (the fourth Caliph), while the Shi'ah attribute special religious and political function to the descendants of 'Ali.

The Four Sunni Schools of Law:

First: The Hanafi (Hanafee) School of Law:

1) This School of Law was founded by Imam (Emaam) al-Nu'man ibn Thabit Abu Hanifah [81-150 A.H. (After Hijrah)].

2) He placed his emphasis on broad interpretations based on **individual reasoning** and **analogy**.

3) The Hanafi School is the most **lenient** of the Four Sunni Schools, partly because of its use of Juristic preference (Istihsan) to moderate harsh rulings.

4) The Hanafi has the **largest** following among the Muslim community especially in Turkey, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and some parts of Central Asia.

5) The Hanafite School was the **official School** of both the Abbasid and Ottoman Empires.

6) Abu Hanifah was a Persian (His Grandfather was from the city of Kabul). He was born in Kufah in Iraq, and died in prison in Baghdad.

Second: The Maliki (Maalekee) School of Law:

1) This School of Law was founded by Imam Malik (Maalek) ibn Anas (94-179 A.H.).

2) Malik taught that the **ways** of the **elders** (religiously and socially) of **Madinah** should be uncorrupted by new converts or Modern (of his time) influence.

So, he relied on the **customary usages** of **Medina** as resemblance to the time of the Prophet and considered any Hadith that contradicted with the religious and social life of the elders of Medina as being undependable or fabricated Hadith in the name of the Prophet, because he considered the elderly of Medina as following the correct Sunna of the Prophet.

3) His approach to Canon Law relied heavily on the customary usages (a'mal) of Medina, and used Ijmaa' (**consensus**) and Ra'y (**opinion**) secondarily.

4) Also he utilized Istilah (**consideration of public good**).

5) His book called al-**Muwatta** (the path made smooth) is considered as the **First Book of Law** in Islam.

6) This School is dominant in the Arab West, West Africa, Southern Egypt, Sudan, Kuwait and Bahrain. He was born and died in Medina.

Third: The Shafi'i (Shaaf'e'e) School of Law:

1) This School was founded by the followers of Imam Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (150-205 A.H.).

2) He was considered as the **architect** of Systematic **Islamic Law**.

3) He brought **greater clarity** to the bases of making legal decisions, using general principles as well as specific Qur'anic (Koranic) commands.

4) He also used Qiyas (**analogy**), and then used Ijma (**Consensus**) as the legitimizing bases of Law.

5) **Koran, Hadith and Sunnah, Qiyas and Ijmaa'** thus jointly became known as "Usul al-Fiqh (the Roots of Jurisprudence)" that is called the Systematic Bases of Law.

6) He **rejected** the **customary usages** (Sunnah) of the **Medina** community upon which Malik ibn Anas drew to make the Law more powerful (unless confirmed by written Hadiths).

He considered the Prophet's practice, as was recorded in Hadiths, even weak (less dependable or uncommon) Hadiths, he considered as more important than the practices of various communities in Medina.

7) Also he was **against** the **deductions** and **speculations** of the Hanafi School use of Juristic preference.

8) This School is dominant in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, some parts of Egypt, some parts of Central Asia, the Caucuses, some parts of East Africa, and the Kurds.

9) He was born in Palestine, raised in Mecca, and was originally from the tribe of Quraish in Mecca, but died in Cairo in Egypt.

The meaning of some terms:

Consensus: It means a general agreement or an opinion or position reached by a group of people as a whole.

Analogy: It means similarity in some respects between things that otherwise dissimilar.

Fourth: The Hanbali (Hanbalee) School of Law:

1) This School was originated by Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (164-241 A.H.), and was established by his disciples.

2) This School is the **most Conservative** of the Four Schools.

3) The School says that the Prophet's tradition may not be used to abrogate a Verse in the Koran.

4) He went further than Shafii in **limiting** both **reason** and **analogy**, but his use of "Iba'ha" (**permissibility**) made the Hanbalite position more flexible than other Schools in some cases.

5) He studied in Baghdad and received instructions from ash-Shafii.

6) Also he was the compiler of a large collection of Hadiths called "**Musnad**".

7) He developed al-Shafii thought, and emphasized methods of choosing Hadiths carefully, but he preferred **even weak Hadiths** to strong Analogies.

8) This School is dominant in Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Second: The Shi'ah

The Shi'ah or Shi'ism is a branch of Islam with doctrines significantly different from those of the Orthodox Sunni majority.

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the meaning of Shi'ah (Shee-aa)?

The word **Shi'ah** literally means **The Party** or **The Faction**.

The word Shi'ah also means a **Partisan**, which came from the phrase **Shi'at 'Ali** ("the party of 'Ali"). So the term **Shi'ah** means **the party of 'Ali** (Alee).

The Shi'ites do not recognize the first three Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman).

The Shi'ahs are those who supported the claim to the Khilafah (Caliphate) of **'Ali ibn (abn) Abi (Abee) Talib** ('Ali the son of Abi Talib) and his descendants as the only legitimate successors to the **Prophet**.

2) What is the Shi'ah School of Law?

The Shi'ahs have their own school of law called **Ja'fari** (Ja'faree).

3) What is the Shi'ah Jafari School of Law?

The Shi'ah developed their own System of Law and moral from their Sixth Imam, Jafar al-Sadiq (died in 148 A.H.).

Abu Hanifah and Malik ibn Anas, both studied with Ja'far as-Sadiq in Medina, as well as studied with some other teachers elsewhere.

4) What is the percentage of Shi'ah in Islam?

The Shi'ah is the largest minority in Islam, comprising between 11-15 % of the total of all Muslims

5) What is the role of the Clergy in Shi'ism?

The Shi'ah emphasizes the Authoritative role of Religious Leaders and their Teachings.

6) Does the Shi'ah attribute special role for the descendants of Ali?

The Shi'ah attributes Special Religious and Political function to the Descendants of 'Ali and they consider their Tombs as Sacred and are much visited by them (places of Pilgrimage).

7) Why the Shi'ah supported Ali to be the Successor of the Prophet?

The Shi'ahs believe that they supported 'Ali to the successorship of the **Prophet**, because 'Ali and his descendants received a special mandate from the **Prophet** to become his successor (Caliph).

The Shi'ah believes that 'Ali was appointed Successor at the gathering of Ghadir (Gadeer) al-Khumm (the pool of Khumm, which is an oasis between Mecca and Madinah).

'Ali then nominated his son Hassan to follow him (become his successor as a Caliph) when he was fatally injured at the end of his rule as a Caliph.

The Shi'ites nominations remained in the **Prophet's** family for the next ten generations, and they hold that the last of the Twelve Imams disappeared but would appear before the end of the world.

The Shi'ah celebrate the day of Ghadir al-Khumm annually on the 18th of Dhul-Hijjah (Zul-Hejja).

8) What is the Sunnis answer to the claim of Shi'ah about Ali?

The Sunnis interpreted the Prophet's words at Ghadir al-Khumm, as an acknowledgement of 'Ali's merit rather than a definite political appointment.

The Sunnis believe that they have accepted the Succession of Abu Bakr as the first Caliph, because that what the Prophet intended indirectly. 'Umar followed Abu Bakr as the second Caliph then 'Uthman as the third Caliph and 'Ali finally became the fourth Caliph ('Uthman and 'Ali were chosen by a high Muslim Commission called Shura).

So the basic difference between the Sunni and Shi'ites stems from this origin, which is the Shi'ites believe that 'Ali and his descendants have received a special mandate from the Prophet to become his successors, which means that the Shi'ites believe that 'Ali and his descendants become as the only legal Successors to the Prophet Muhammad. While the Sunnis dispute the Shi'ites argument according to the above explanations.

(The Twelve Imam Shi'ah)

The Twelve Imam Shi'ah is called the "Twelvers", and they are considered as the largest group of Shi'ah by far.

The Twelvers is the official religion of Iran since the time of the Safavid Dynasty in 1501 C.E. (or A.D.)

They are also a majority in Iraq, which makes up to 60% of the population of Iraq; they are also a majority in Bahrain; but they are a minority in Lebanon, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, as well as in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia and some Gulf States.

The Two main groups of Twelve Imam Shi'ah are the **Usulis** and the **Akhbaris**.

First: Usulis

1) The Usulis are the Majority and the dominant School of Shi'ah theology consisting of those who **favor speculation** from the information that is already available on the basis of Principles (Usul) of religious matters.

2) The Usulis, by permitting speculation, made possible a tremendous growth in the power of the **religious authorities**.

3) They accept **Ijtihad**, which means independent thought of reasoning, investigation and very sincere attempt to understand (and create legal opinion) for something which does not have an answer from the Koran and Hadith; they even accept **conjecture** (Zann).

4) The Usulis accept as authoritative only the Shi'ah's **Four Books** of Hadith.

5) The Usulis also accept **consensus** (Ijmaa') and **Intellect** (aql).

Second: Akhbaris

1) They are around the Persian Gulf region and in India; and their Spiritual Leader resides in the city of Basra in Iraq.

2) They are minority between the Twelvers and are considered as the **Traditionalist** Shi'ahs.

3) They **do not allow speculation** on religious matters and they restrict the sources of religious authority to the Koran and Sunna, and insist, moreover, that the Koran must be interpreted through the inspired traditions of Imams.

4) They are called **Akhbari** because they call the **Hadith** of the Prophet by the name Akhbar (news or information); and they also allow traditions from Sunni sources.

5) They do not accept **Consensus**, **Intellect** and **Ijtihad**.

Also there is the Zaydi Shi'ah:

The Zaydis are also called “Fivers”, because they followed Zayd, the son of the fourth Imam of Shi'ah instead of his brother Muhammad al-Baqir, because Zayd resisted the Umayyads. They are closer to Sunnis in their teachings. They have their own School of Law. They are found in the Yemen, where they make up about 40% of the population.

Some other differences between the Twelvers Shi'ah and the Sunni:

- 1) The Shi'ah Clergy generally have **more authority** to interpret and speculate on Islamic Law and observances than in Sunni Islam.
- 2) The Sunnis do not have **priesthood** or identifiable religious structure as the Shi'ah have, which are as follow: first regular clergy, then Hojattul-Islam, then Ayatollah and Grand Ayatollah.
- 3) Some of the Twelve Imam Shi'ah scourges themselves on the anniversary of the tragic death of **Husayn**, the grandson of the Prophet.
- 4) The Shi'ah unlike the Sunnis, accept **temporary marriage** (Mutah), which was done during the Prophet's time; while the Sunnis believe that the temporary marriage was done during expeditions only and was temporary.
- 5) The Twelve Imam Shi'ah considers the Twelve Imams as **intermediary** between man and God; which means that the Imams can intercede on behalf of the Shi'ah believers on the Day of Judgment; and for these reasons the Tomb of the Imams became a place of Pilgrimage.
- 6) They believe that the “**Twelfth Imam**” is alive and will return as “the **Mahdi**” (the Guided One),
They also call al-Mahdi as the “Hidden Imam”, and they believe that he can hear prayers and intercedes in the affairs of the world.

The Sunnis also believe in al-Mahdi, who will arrive before the end of the world, to restore righteousness in Islam, before the arrival of Jesus Christ.

The Sunnis believe that the Mahdi is not from the descendants of Husayn as the Mahdi of Shi'ah is, but from the descendants of his brother Hassan; also the Sunnis do not believe that the Twelfth Imam Shi'ah is al-Mahdi, but they believe that al-Mahdi is somebody else from the descendants of Hassan who will live before the end of the World.

Notice: The Koran did not mention Al-Mahdi, but was mentioned in a Hadith of the Prophet; and the Hadith was interpreted differently by each group of Muslims. Also, the authentic collections of Hadiths by al-Bukhari and Muslim do not include any Hadith about al-Mahdi.

The names of the Twelve Imam Shiah: They were chosen later after their death as the Twelve Imam of Shi'ah. They died between 40 A.H (661 C.E. or A.D.) and the year 260 A.H. (881 C.E.).

- 1) Ali (son of Abi Talib). 2) Hasan (son of Ali). 3) Husayn (son of Ali).
- 4) Ali Zayn al-Aabideen (Son of Husayn) 5) Muhammad al-Baqir (Son of Ali Zayn al-Aabideen) 6) Jafar al-Sadiq (Son of Muhammad al-Baqir). 7) Musa al-Kazim (Son of Jafar al-Sadiq). 8) Ali al-Rida (Ali Reza); son of Musa al-Kazim. 9) Muhammad al-Taqi (Son of Ali al-Rida). 10) Ali al-Hadi or al-Naqi (Son of Muhammad al-Taqi). 11) Hasan al-Askari (Son of Ali al-Hadi). 12) Muhammad al-Mahdi al-Muntazar (son of Ali al-Askari).

3-Sufism

Sufism was not part of the Original Teachings of Islam, but was the creation of some Pious Muslims in the Second and Third Centuries of Islam.

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the meaning of the term Sufi?

The Arabic word Sufi means “**Woolen**”, because of the Sufi’s woolen garments.

2) What is the meaning of Sufism?

Sufism means the practice of Mysticism.

Mysticism is a system of thought and practice supposed to lead to a direct experience of God.

Sufism means the science of direct knowledge of God by mostly the use of **silently chanting** of the name of **God** through **Dhikr** (Zekr) as in the Naqshabandiyyah Order; or sometimes through such ritualistic practices as the **sacred dance** called Hadrâh (as in the Qadiriyyah Order), as a means of enhancing inner awareness to help induce religious experience. Zekr means remembrance.

3) What is the meaning of Sufi Orders?

The Sufi (Soofee) person is also called **Shaykh**, while some others are called **Darwish**.

In Islam, the Sufi Order is called as “Tariqat al-Shaykh”, which means “the Method of the Shaykh (Shek)”. So, the **Sufi Order** means the **method** or the **way** of the Shaykh or Sufi.

In Islam, Christianity and Judaism, many of the Sufi people became known as **Saints**.

Notice: Many of the Sufi or Saint people were pious people who had nothing to do with the people who founded Sufi Orders in their names after their death.

4) What is the Sufis claim about their descent?

The founders of the Sufi Orders usually claim that they are the descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatimah and his son in law Ali.

5) Where Sufism is located in the Muslim World?

Sufism was widespread in Islam throughout history and is still today, but to a lesser extent. Some of the Sufi Orders had some Impact on the Spreading of Islam, especially in Africa, Central Asia and South Asia, and also the Sufi Orders are Popular in Many Regions of the Islamic World.

6) Why many of the Sufi Orders conflict with the original teaching of Islam?

The Methods of many of the Sufi Orders conflicts with the original teaching of Islam, because of:

1) Some of the followers of the Sufi Orders consider the Sufi as their role-model instead of the Prophet.

2) Also some of the followers of the dead Sufi ask the Sufi for help in time of crises instead of asking God.

3) Some of the Sufi Orders emphasize on dissolution into the Divine, when some of the men and women of those Sufi Orders seek union with God through contemplation, asceticism, and prayer, which conflicts with the teaching of Islam.

4) Some of the Sufi Orders sometimes involve in Magic.

Notice: Almost in all religions around the world (including Christianity and Judaism), there are Sufi Orders under a different names; in Christianity it is called Monastic Orders, while in Judaism it is called Hasidism.

7) Why the Sufi Orders were very popular in Islam?

Some of the reasons that Sufi Orders were very popular throughout history:

- 1) Some people prefer spirituality, mysticism over some of the rigid Legalistic Laws of religions.
 - 2) Also some people want to turn to somebody close-by during crises, like during health problems, even when the Sufi is dead, and they believe that the dead Sufi or Saint can answer their prayers and come to their help during crises, which according to Islam is not true.
 - 3) Some people believe that their Pious Sufi is very close to God which means that the Sufi or Saint will intercede for their sins on the Day of Judgment. The Koran mentions that nobody can intercede on behalf of any body on the Day of Judgment without the permission of God.
- The Sufi Orders became less common since the beginning of the 20th century.

In the Modern times, many people do not know much about Sufi Orders; some people only have or carry the title name of their favorite or most popular Sufi orders in their area as their family names, and they consider the title as a name for respect and honor, so that they have more respect between the people.

Some of the Popular Sufi Orders in Islam:

- 1) Chisti 2) Qadiriyyah 3) Rifaa'i 4) Suhrawardi 5) Shaadhili 6) Badawiyya
- 7) Mevlavi (Mawlawi) 8) Baktashi 9) Naqshabandiyyah. 10) Khalwatiyyah
- 11) Ni'matullah. 12) Jarrahi. 13) Darqawi. 14) Sanusi. 15) At-Tijani

Naqshabandiyyah Order:

This Sufi Order is considered Orthodox, Conservative and more realistic than many other Sufi Orders. They practice silent Dhikr, and politically involved in the Islamic causes.

4-Some Sects that consider themselves Muslims

There are some other sects that call themselves Muslims, but their teachings are different from the teaching of Islam, and the most visible ones are as follow:

1) Alawi or Alevi sects:

The Alawi sects are in Syria, while the Alevi sects are in Turkey.

There are many different Alawi and Alavi groups.

They consider the Five Pillars of Islam as optional or not mandatory; and one group of Alevi pray twice a day as was the situation in the first ten years of Islam, before the prayers became five.

Their Sacred teachings have elements of different religions.

The followers of the Alevi sects are about 15-20% of Turkey.

While the followers of the Alawi sect are about 10% of Syria.

2) Ahmediyyah (or Qadyanis) Movement:

This Sect also believe in another prophet after the Prophet Muhammad, and their prophet called Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908) who lived in India in the 19th century.

They interpret the Koran in a novel way to fit their teachings.

Their followers are in Africa, the Americas, Europe and South and Southeast Asia.

Their population in the world in the year 2005 is about Ten Million.

Second: **The Islamic Law**
1-Islamic Shari‘ah (Law)

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the meaning of Shari‘ah (Sha-ree-aa)?

The term Shari‘ah was derived from the root Shara‘a’, “to introduce” or enact or prescribe.”

Shari‘ah is the comprehensive Muslim law derived from **two sources:**

First: The **Qur’an (Koran)**, which is the Holy Book of Islam.

Second: The **Sunnah** (Soon-na) or traditions of the Prophet Muhammad.

Shari‘ah is the code of behavior for a Muslim, that determines whether any action or detail of life is halal (right and allowed) or haram (wrong and forbidden). It involves putting faith in God into action; faith is meaningless without the deeds that express it in action.

2) What the Shari‘ah covers and protects?

Shari‘ah covers every aspect of daily Individual and collective living.

The purpose of Islamic laws is protection of individual’s basic human rights as follow:

1) The right to life. 2) Property. 3) Political freedom. 4) Religious freedom. 5) And safeguarding the rights of women and minorities.

Islamic Shari‘ah, also covers the rights and duties by which the Muslim may conduct his or her life in this world and to prepare themselves for the life of the Hereafter.

The low crime rate in Muslim societies is due to the application of the Islamic laws.

3) How the Shari‘ah was developed?

Shari‘ah is the Canonical or Official Law of Islam as put forth in the Koran and the Sunnah and developed thoroughly and analyzed by the principles of the Orthodox Sunni Schools, the Shafi‘i (Safe’ee), Hanbali (Hanbalee), Hanafi (Hanafee), and Maliki (Maalekee) Schools of Law, together with that of the Shi‘ites school of law called the Ja‘fari (Ja’faree).

The Zaydi (Zaydee) Shi‘ites of Yemen also have their own school of law as to the Ibadis (Ebadees), or Kharijites (Khaarejetes) in Oman

4) What are the things that limit the actions of Shari‘ah?

First: Shari‘ah law in practice is traditionally limited by the customary (‘Aadaat) laws of the people who adopted Islam. In some Muslim communities, the tribal customs (‘Aadaat) supersede Shari‘ah law.

Second: Muslim countries that underwent European colonialism adopted some parts of the legal codes of the colonial power; and the creation of modern constitution has led to further adoption of European law.

Modern time and Shari‘ah:

In the modern times, practicing Islamic teachings became more difficult than in the past, especially in the Western Countries, because of the many worldly attractions that keeps the people busy all time, especially the young generations.

There is a Hadith of the **Prophet** concerning the conditions of later days in the Muslim life: “In the beginning, if one omits a one tenth (1/10) of the law, one will be punished, but at the end of time, if one accomplishes a tenth of the law, one will be saved”.

2- Major **Forbidden (Haram or Haraam) Foods and Drinks in Islam**

The Prohibition of consuming certain food was mentioned in Verse 3 of Surah (Chapter) 5, as follow:

“(The food that is) Forbidden to you (Muslims) are: the **Dead Animals (carrion)**, and **Blood**, and the **Flesh of the Swine**, and that which has been Slaughtered as a **Sacrifice** for others (**Idols**) than for God, and that which has been killed by **Strangling**, or **Beaten** to death, or killed by a **Fall**, or by the **Goring of Horns**, or that which has been [**Partly**] **Eaten** by a Wild Animal—unless you are able to slaughter it (before its death while it was still alive)-- and [forbidden] all that which has been Slaughtered on **Idolatrous Altars.**”
(Koran 5:3).

First: The **Dead Animals**, as was mentioned in (Koran 5:3).

Notice: Many Muslim Scholars recommend that Muslims do not eat the meat of the Carnivorous animals, because they also eat dead animals.

Second: The **Blood**; because of disease concern, Islam forbids eating meat that still has some blood. Muslims usually drain the blood of the sacrificed animals completely. After fully draining the meat from blood, then the Muslims cook the meat fully (well-done), so that they do not take any chances if there were any diseases in the meat.

Third: The **Swine (Khanzeer):**

Consuming the meat (**Pork**) of the **Swine** (also called **Pig** or **Hog**) is prohibited.

The pork is being consumed in many countries of the world, from China to the Americas. Muslims and Jews (only Orthodox and Conservative Jews) are prohibited from consuming pork, while it is lawful in Christianity.

All kinds of pork meat products such as ham, bacon, pork sausages, Pepperoni, lard and under some other names are prohibited in Islam.

The Koran did not explain the reason for the prohibition, but Muslims believed that the swine is considered as Impure animal.

Modern Scholars and Pork:

Some Modern Scholars believe that Anthropology was the reason for the prohibition, while some other Scholars believe that health was the reason for the prohibition, as follow:

First: Anthropology

According to Anthropologists, avoidance of certain foods is only one of the ways of marking or identifying certain Group of People, Community, National or Religious Identity, to differentiate from each other.

Second: Health

Since the swine consumes all kinds of filthy foods, so the swine’s digestive system becomes unable to treat all the impurities (viruses, germs, parasites and poisonous chemicals) in the food that it consumes, which then leave some of the impurities to be transferred to people who consume its meat.

It is estimated that the human digestive system has to spend eighteen hours to treat the consumed pork from impurities, which make the human body tired and exhausted, while the human digestive system spend only five to six hours to treat the consumed meat of other cattle from impurities.

Fourth: Intoxicants (Alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine and whisky) or use any illicit drugs were forbidden.

It affects the people's Minds and Judgment during decision-making in time of necessity, especially during driving. Also it is bad for the health and creates many other family problems including divorce.

Notice: The Bible allows drinking in Judaism and Christianity.
The Bible advises the people not to get drunk.

The Prohibition of Drinking Wine in Islam was done in Two Steps, on a Two Different Time Periods:

First: The First Restriction on drinking wine in Islam was revealed on the 16th year of Islam, or the third year of Hijrah.

Second: The Second Prohibition on drinking Wine in Islam was also considered as the Last order of prohibition, and was revealed on the fourth year of Hijrah or 17th year of Islam.

3-Riba (Rebaa) in Islam (Interest or Usury)

Some questions and answers:

1) What is the meaning of Riba?

The Interest or Usury (yoo-zha-ree) is called Riba in Islam.
The Riba means to increase, to grow or exceed.

2) What was the reason for the Prohibition of Riba?

In Islam the Interest is considered neither a trade nor a profit.

Usury or interest from the loan of money or goods is prohibited in any degree in Islam.

Muslims are allowed to make money in fair trade, but not from exploiting the needy.

The Koran prohibits Usury, or interest on loans. This has been interpreted as meaning that money can be used as a means of exchange or trade, but cannot be treated as a commodity (article of trade).

3) How is the Riba in Christianity and Judaism?

The Riba was also prohibited in **Judaism** and **Christianity**.

4) What is the difference between Interest (Riba) and Zakat?

Interest (Riba) takes the wealth from the poor to the rich.

Zakat (Almsgiving) takes the wealth from the rich to the poor.

5) What are the consequences of Riba to society?

Islam believes that Riba leads to the exploitation of those who are economically weak by those who are strong and have the resources, and leads to the concentration of the wealth.

A rich person lending money at interest usually get people deeper into debt, which could leads to the disintegration of the family and society, morally and financially, and make it difficult for the family to do other necessary things in their lives and becomes disable in performing their daily family tasks.

6) How Slavery was connected to Riba in the Past?

In the past, those people who could not pay their debt, became **Slaves** of the people who they borrowed money from, and they stayed as Slaves until they could pay their debt in full; and even many of the people who were in debt sold their wives and children into Slavery so that they could pay their debt.

The main problem was that when the people were not able to pay their original debt (because of health, age or unemployment... etc.), the interest on their debt was increasing many folds to the extend that it become impossible for them to pay it back, so they and their families end up becoming slaves of their debt.

7) How the Bankruptcy Laws help in times of hardships?

In the modern time in the western countries there is the **Law of bankruptcy** for the people who can not pay their debt, while in the past and also in Islam, there was no bankruptcy law.

Muslims who live in the Western countries, rarely take the question of Interest seriously; well may be because there are the Bankruptcy Laws, which make it easy for any person to borrow money without worrying about the consequences, since the borrowers can escape debt at any time they declare bankruptcy.

8) What is the Islamic Banking?

The Islamic banking is a system, which incorporates adherence to the prohibition of Riba

It is also based on an important Islamic principle that there should be **equality of risk**.

From a banking point of view this means that **the Risks and Rewards should be Shared between the Borrower, Bank and Depositor**.

Muslim banks do not refinance goods or schemes, which are forbidden in Islam.

In Islam, the safest way in dealing with Riba, is as follow:

There are several different ways of the Islamic Banking.

But to stay within the letter of the religious law and soothe consciences, some Islamic banks offer the Solution of **Mudarabah** (Sleeping partnership).

Mudarabah (Mudaaraba) is a technical term in Islamic business and banking indicating limited or silent partnership.

In Practical terms, Mudarabah operates like this:

1-The Solution of Mudarabah in the Islamic Banking means that putting up financial backing, for operations entrusted to some one else (the placing of capital as a co-investment), and Profit Sharing in the profits of these operations (brings return to both parties).

2-Mudarabah is when an Islamic Bank agrees to lend money to a customer so that he or she can build up a business.

Then the bank will receive annually a percentage of the profits over a specified time.

In this way the bank loan is repaid and some profit is earned for the bank.

3- Mudarabah is a business partnership is where one partner puts up capital and the other the labor.

The depositor of money is considered as a limited partner in the ventures of the bank, thus earning a return on investment.

9) How is the Riba in the Modern World?

In the modern secular world, the Riba has been ignored.

Today in the world of secularism (the separation of religion from politics or state) and the new world economy (which is almost integrating all the countries economically together day by day), the prohibition of interest is hardly observed in any Islamic country.

The practice in modern times has been to accept the requirements of economic necessity, and disregard the question of interest.

Banks in most Muslim countries have long given interest on loans.

Some scholars believe that the banks in Islamic countries in the modern time probably based their actions on some of the following reasons:

1- The accepted principle among the Islamic schools of law that “**Necessity makes prohibited things permissible.**”

2-Or probably they simply based their actions on disregarding the Riba, as one well-known Egyptian Mufti named Muhammad ‘Abduh, at the end of the 19th century declared that “moderate interest on deposited capital is lawful”.

3-Or some people these days refer to Riba by different names such Euphemism as “Commission”. The term Euphemism means the act or the example of substituting a mild, indirect, or vogue term for a harsh, or offensive one. It is a word used to avoid saying an unpleasant or offensive word.

10) Why Islam did not allow even small amount of Riba?

According to Islam, if the Riba was not prohibited in Islam, or even if Islam allowed a little interest, then the natural reaction of the general public is to misuse it, and then it gets out of control, because once it becomes legal, then the people usually or naturally do not care about its limits anymore and they try to take advantage of it and misuse it on each other.

Many of the people, who were enticed into borrowing money, sometimes entrap themselves in debt for many years or even a lifetime.

So if the money borrowed for a business venture that went wrong, the borrower is still saddled with the debt to the bank or lender until all is paid off.

11) Did the Prophet allow Riba in extreme cases of necessities?

The Prophet Muhammad permitted borrowing with interest for the Muslims in extreme cases of necessities, for example, Food, Clothing or Medicine, and to borrow what is Needed Only, and the borrower have to Work Hard to pay it back, even to work Extra Time if necessary.

12) How the Prohibition of Riba was done in Islam?

The prohibition of Riba was done in Two Steps, during Two Different Times:

First: The first order about Riba (Interest) was revealed on the third year of Hijrah (15th year of the beginning of Islam).

Second: The final order prohibiting Riba was revealed on the eighth year of Hijrah (20th year of the beginning of Islam).

The Riba (Usury) was prohibited in these Verses: Koran 2:275-276 & 2:278-280 & 3:130 & 4:161 & 30:39.

How to Help the Needy:

The people's greatest weakness is that they forget, and when prosperous, they tend to be unmindful of their duties toward others.

. Muslims with wealth are requested to help the needy by lending what they need without interest.

. God tolled us in the Koran to try to help the Muslims who are in hardship and indebted (owing money) to us.

God said: "If the debtor is in difficulty, grant him time until it is easy for him to repay you. Your repayment (your reward from Allah) would be greater if you cancelled the debt altogether."

. Usually canceling the debt is from the people who cannot pay it back because of the life hardships beyond their control.

. Islam encourages the Muslims to help other people who are in need of help.

According to Islam, at the first look after we donate some of our money to help the people, it seems like we are losing money, but after we become patient and believe that God will reward us for that, then we will get blessed with some of God's wealth, or with good health or happiness, in the way God sees it to benefit us in this world and in the Life Hereafter.

Usually the help is for needy relatives or friends, neighbors, sick people or the places that care for them; for places of learning, places of worship, non-profit organizations that care for the poor people around the world or care for the environment and animals.

. The worldly calamities that occur in the world and in the people's lives are for the people's test to see who will help and who is not going to help.

Also the calamities bring the people closer to themselves and to God.

4-The Modern Islamic Reform Movement

It means as follow:

1) It was an **Egyptian Islamic Reformist Movement** that began in the **1870s**, and founded by Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani of Persia, and Muhammad Abduh of Egypt, during their exile in Paris.

. They tried to steer a **middle way** between the **stricter** doctrines of Islam and the ideas of **secular society** and modern science, according to some of their interpretations from the beginning of Islam.

. Abduh became Mufti of Egypt and declared that “**moderate interest** on deposited capital was legal”, and he called for the **dissolution** of the four Sunni schools of law, which he saw as anarchism (lacking order or organization), and for the establishment of a **unified law**.

2) One of the main Principle of this movement was to correct some **contradictions** in relating some stories about the beginning or early days of Islam including some Hadiths of the **Prophet**, also about the **correct** way of **interpreting** some verses from the Koran.

3) This movement started in Egypt, but it had **great influence** on other **Arab countries** and the **Muslim world**.

1- Belief or Faith (Eman or Iman)

Some questions and answers:

1) What are the three parts of the canonical elements of Islam?

Islam as a religion is divided into three parts:

First: The **First Canonical** or formal element or aspect of Islam is **Practicing** the **Rites** of Islam (**Five Pillars** of Islam).

Second: While the **Second Canonical** element or aspect of Islam is **Belief (Eman)**.

Third: And the **Third Canonical** or formal element or aspect of Islam is **Ehsan (Virtue)**.

2) What does Eman (ee-maan) mean?

Eman means belief or faith. Eman is considered as the second part of Islam.

Eman is faith in itself and a term designating those articles of belief which are part of Islam.

. Eman is defined as faith in God, His Angels, His books (Revelations), His Prophets, and the Life after Death and the Day of Judgment, and that everything good or bad is from the creation of God.

. It is faith which saves, because God is beyond comprehension by the mind; therefore to know Him, one must believe; it is faith which brings knowledge of God.

The Prophet Muhammad said:

“Faith (Eman) is a Confession with the Tongue and Verification (believe) with the heart (mind or brain), and an Act with the Members (parts of the body).”

. Eman is derived from “amana” to believe and “amina” to be tranquil (peaceful or calm) at heart and mind, to be safe or secure, to trust, and to have a strong or unshaken confidence.

. In Islam, faith means the conscious application of Islamic principles in a person’s life so that faith and trust in God (Allah) govern every action and intention.

. Faith is meaningless without the deeds that express it in action.

3) What does Ehsan mean?

Ehsan (or Ihsan) literally means **Virtue** or **Excellence** or Making Beautiful.

Eh’saan is the highest stage of Eman, which is when a believer obeys God’s commands as if he is seeing God, and though he does not see God, he knows God Sees him all the times.

. Ehsan (or Ihsan) is explained by the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad:

“Worship God as if you see Him, and though you do not see Him, nevertheless He sees you.”

Eh’san also refers to excellence in what we do, as Hadith of the Prophet advising us that if we have to do or accomplish something in our life, in family, school, work and other things, then we have to do it well and correct, not doing it half way or incomplete way or in a dishonest way.

The Prophet once said to his Companions:

“God likes a person who, when does something, he or she try their best.”

4) What are the Pillars of Belief (Eman or Iman) in Islam?

It is also called Emanul Mufassal (Eman in detail), as follow:

As in Verse 177, Surah 2 (Koran 2:177), and this is part of the Verse, which also require the believers to donate some of their wealth to Charities and perform prayers, have patience and be truthful people:

“But the Righteousness is to believe in **God (Allah)** and the **Last Day (Life after Death)** and the **Angels** and the **Revelation (Scripture)** and the **Messengers.**”

But according to Hadith of the Prophet, Muslims should also believe in **Al-Qadr** as explained here.

In Islam there are Six Pillars of Eman (belief or Faith) as follow:

1) Allah (as one God).

2) God’s Angels (Malaa-ikatul Allah)

3) God’s Books (Revelations or scriptures), which means believing in the Holy Books of al-Qur’an (Koran) and the original Revelations of Tawrat (Torah) and Injil (Gospel) which were revealed to Musa (Moses) and ‘Esa (Jesus) at their times.

4) God’s Messengers (Rusulul-Allah) also it means His Prophets.

5) Life after Death (Resurrection Day), and the **Day of Judgment**.

6) Al-Qadr (or Qadar):

The word Qadr comes from the word Qadar, which literally means the Measure, Destiny, power or will of God.

It means to believe that everything whether good or bad comes from God (Allah) or are from the creation of God, or to believe that everything good or bad is decided by God, according to our actions.

2-Practice in Islam (The Five Pillars of Islam in Summary)

Notice:

There are some verses in the Koran that allow the believers to do what they can from the mandatory or required things in their religion, as follow:

1) **“God does not burden a person beyond his (or her) abilities**, he (or she) gets reward for good deeds, and gets punished for bad deeds.” (2:286).

2) **“So, follow the Guidance of God as much as you can**; listen and obey (God), and spend in charity for the good of yourselves, and whosoever protect himself (or herself) from his (or her) own covetousness (extreme desire to acquire or possess), then they become the successful ones” (64:16).

3) Also, there is a rule in Islam, which agreed upon by Muslim Scholars, and supported by the Koran, which is **“Necessity make prohibited things permissible”**.

Muslims’ relations with God are regulated by the Five Pillars of Islam.

1-Shahadah 2-Salat 3) Zakat 4-Sawm 5-Hajj

First Pillar of Islam: Shahadah (Testimony of Faith)

Shahadah is to bear witness that there is no deity (god) worthy of worship but Allah (God), and that Muhammad is the Messenger (or Apostle) of God.

Shahadah means that God is One.

In Arabic, Shahadah is written as Follow:

Ash-hado An Laa ELaaha ELLaL Allah, Wa Ash-hadu Annaa Muhammadan RasooluL Allah.

Any person who is intending and willing (believing) to become a Muslim, recites the Shahadah as the first step of the person into Islam.

According to Islam, God forgives the previous sins of anyone converts to Islam and practice it sincerely.

Second Pillar of Islam: Salat (Salaat) or Salah (Salaa): Salat means Prayer

Salat is as follow:

1) God says in the Koran that He created the humans to worship Him.

The **Prayer** is the most important part of worshipping God.

Any other activities that Muslims do in their life according to God's guidance is also considered as a worship, like becoming nice to people, guiding the children, helping the needy people, helping Charities, help in building shelters, hospitals and places of worship; also helping and not harming Animals and protecting the environment.

2) Salat has several meanings, which depend on who is doing Salah, as follow:

Salah as an **act of God** is translated to mean as "to bless".

While Salah as an **act of people** is translated to mean as "to Pray, to thank, or to praise"

Salat's meanings are as follow:

First: When **God and His Angels** are doing Salah on the Prophet and on the Believers (as was mentioned in the Koran), it means that God and His Angels are blessing the Prophet and the Believers.

Second: When the **Prophet and the Believers** are doing Salah for God, it means that "he and the Believers are Praying to God, Thanking God, and Praising the Glory of God".

Third: When **We do Salah on the Prophet**, it means that "we are asking God to bless him."

Performing Salat (Prayer):

First: Performing Ablution (Wudu')

Wudu' (Wudoo'), which means Ablution, is obligatory before performing Salah.

Ablution is a ritual before prayer, which means purification before Prayer.

Ablution is to wash the Hands, Mouth, Nose, face, Arms (wrist to elbow), wiping the Head and Neck, wiping the Ears, and Washing the Feet or sometimes just wiping on top of the socks if necessary.

One Ablution can be used for other Salats (prayers) if none of the followings happen, which invalidate Ablution:

- 1) Natural discharge (urine, stool, wind and the like).
- 2) Flow of blood from injury or pus (impure fluid)
- 3) Full mouth vomiting.

4) Falling a sleep lying down (deep sleep).

5) Touching (directly) sexual organs (genitals or private parts) or become sexually excited. Taking full bath or shower is necessary after sexual intercourse, ejaculation, menstruation, child birth, or contact with dead body.

For those people who can't find water or for health reasons can't use water, then they can use dust, sand or stone by touching or placing the hands on the dust or sand or stone; then shaking the hands of excess dust, then rubbing the hands together, then rubbing the face, then rubbing the right arm (wrist to elbow) and the left arm.

Notices:

Concerning Ablution and women.

There is a controversial question concerning the explanation of part of one verse in the Koran (5:6), which mentions when to do Ablution, and one of the requirements was that, when some body touches women.

The Explanation:

Imam Abu Hanifah (Haneefa) and the Hanafi (Hanafee) School of Law explain the meaning of the verse to mean that before prayer if a person touches a woman in a sexual way, then the person must do the Ablution before praying. And any touching which does not generate any sexual feeling, then it does not need Ablution.

And the Hanafi explanations come from other verses in the Koran (2:236-237 & 3:47 & 19:20 & 58:3-4), which mentions touching women, with its clear meaning that touching means having sexual relationship or sexual feeling.

The Hanafi School of Law has the largest number of followers in the Islamic World.

The other Schools of Law explain the verse (5:6) to mean that any time before prayer if a person just touches a woman then the person must have ablution before prayer.

So, the answer is according to Imam Abu Hanifah and the Hanafi School of Law as explained.

Second: Performing Salat

Salat (Prayer) in Islam is a ritual, more of a prescribed form of a religious worship than the Prayer in Christianity, which usually resembles the Supplication.

So, the Supplication in Islam mostly resembles the Prayer rite in Christianity.

Each Salat is composed (consist) of a series of movements and recitations repeated several times.

Also each Salat is composed of several Units, and each (One) Unit is called (One) Rak'ah (One Cycle).

Rak'ah (plural: Raka'at) literally means bowing.

Each One Cycle is composed of sacred recitations and movements.

So, Rak'ah in Salat means "One full Cycle of complete movements and recitations of ritual words during the Salat prayer".

The movements of each Cycle consist of Standing, Bowing, Prostration (twice) and Sitting. Surah (Chapter) of Al-Fatihah must be recited in every single Rak'ah.

And the "the Greetings (al-Ta'hiyyatu) or called Al-Tashah'hud" must be recited during Salat; in addition to other recitations during Salat.

The obligatory Salah is to pray five times a day in certain times of the day, as follow:

First: Dawn or Morning Prayer (Fajr), which is from the beginning of dawn until just before sunrise. It is Two Rak'ahs or Two Units (Two Cycles).

Second: Noon or Early Afternoon Prayer (Zuhr), which is from just past noon until mid afternoon
It is Four Rak'ahs or Four Units (Four Cycles).

Third: Mid or Late Afternoon Prayer (Asr), which is from mid afternoon until just before sunset. It is Four Rak'ahs or Four Units (Four Cycles).

Fourth: Sunset Prayer (Maghrib), which is from just after sunset until daylight ends or until it is dark. It is Three Rak'ahs or Three Units (Three Cycles).

Fifth: Night Prayer ('Esha), which is from dark until shortly before dawn

It is Four Rak'ahs or Four Units (Four Cycles).

Notice: When Muslims pray, it is like they are talking to God, and when they read the Koran, it is like God talking to them.

The Prayer Times:

The Koran mentions the prayer times as follow:

“Indeed prayer has been enjoined on the believers at particular times of the day.” (4:103).

Also the Koran mentions that the believers do their obligations according to their abilities, as follow:

“So, follow the Guidance of God as much as you can” (64:16).

When Salah can not be performed at scheduled times, because of work or some other activities, which make it difficult to perform Salah for some people, then the prayer can be done at a later times when it is more convenient, which is according to Islam “**Necessity makes prohibited things permissible**”.

Also it was known from Hadith of Muslim, which was narrated by Ibn Abbas, that the Prophet prayed Noon and afternoon prayers together, also he prayed the Sunset prayer with the Night prayer together for no reason or without explanation, and was not during travel, because the Prophet did not want to burden the believers with prayers that they can not do during non-convenient times.

Menstruating (monthly period) women do not pray and do not make up missed prayers; they become free from the obligation of Salah during menstruation.

Any person who wants to **know more** about Salah can find the **information** from the Internet or from Islamic or bookstores or from any Mosque.

Third Pillar of Islam: Zakat or Zakah (Zakaa)

It is **Almsgiving** or support for the needy.

It is the Third Pillar of Islam, it means as follow:

1) Zakat is obligatory for every practicing Muslim who has more money than he or she needs.

2) Zakah means to purify or cleanse our wealth and ourselves, which leads to growth or blessings.

3) Zakat is to share the wealth with those who are needy and poor Muslims. It is the right of the needy Muslims in the wealth of the rich.

Muslims who have extra wealth show their concern for the needy Muslims.

4) Zakah is the payment of money, food, or cattle (livestock).

5) Paying 2 ½ percent on cash, bank savings, silver and gold jewelery.

Zakah is different for Food (Agriculture) and Cattle.

6) To pay Zakah, one full year must pass on the extra wealth before paying Zakah on the extra wealth.

The best time to pay Zakat is in Ramadan, because in this month you remember to do it at the same time every year, also it is a Holy Month.

Fourth Pillar of Islam: Sawm (Fasting) in the Month of Ramadan

Fasting is the Fourth Pillar of Islam and means as follow:

1) Fasting means Abstinence from food, drink, smoking and not to do intimacy (sex) with spouses from dawn to sunset.

2) During the month of fasting, the Muslim must keep or stay away from bad behavior.

3) Fasting teaches us to be patient, give up bad habits, greed and selfishness.

4) Fasting remind us of the poor, hungry and needy; also teaches us to visit the poor, the sick, and the needy to share their sorrows.

Notice: Fasting at other times of the year is called optional fasting.

5) Those who cannot fast because travelling or sick, can fast the missed days after Ramadan. But those who cannot fast at any time because of old age or permanent health problems or permanent work hardship, then they must substitute each day they cannot fast by feeding a poor person for each day of Ramadan and the food must be sufficient to feed a poor person one full day for each day of Ramadan, or paying the cost of food to a poor family or giving the money to charities.

6) Fasting is prohibited on the first day of both Eeds, Eed al-Adha and Eed of al-Fetr.

7) Un-intentional eating or drinking due to forgetfulness does not make the fast invalid.

8) These things do not make the fasting invalid: Rinsing the Mouth by avoiding drinking the water, using toothpaste, putting drops in the eyes, and Vaccination in the muscle.

9) The Koran was first revealed during the month of Ramadan, during Laylat ul-Qadr (Night of Power).

Also there are especial sunnah prayers during the month of Ramadan called Tarawih (Taraweeh).

Notice: About travelling during Ramadan:

During the Prophet's time, the Muslims did not measure the distance of travel, so there are some Muslim Scholars who mention how many miles is the distance for travel, while many other Muslim Scholars do not mention any exact distance for the traveler Muslim to break his or her Fast during Ramadan.

Fasting and Gluttony:

Like lust, gluttony focuses on pleasure and finds it in food and drink, and lust finds it in sexual activity; both (food, drink and lust) enslave the soul to the body, even though the soul which is being superior to the body should be in charge.

Gluttons do not eat out of necessity or for social reasons, but merely to consume and experience the pleasure of taste, which leads to obesity and sickness.

So, fasting help the person to control his or her body and be in charge instead of letting the lust be in control or in charge, which slowly perishes the human body.

Fifth Pillar of Islam: Hajj, which means Pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca)

Hajj is the Fifth Pillar of Islam and means as follow:

- 1) A Muslim must be adult to do the Pilgrimage.
- 2) Visiting the Ka'bah, which is God's oldest and holiest house or Shrine, and is located in Makkah

It is done once in a life time for those who are able to do it physically and financially.

- 3) Muslims go to Hajj to glorify God (Allah) and ask Him for forgiveness for their sins and to cleanse them at His own House.

According to Muslim tradition, Arafat which is located near Mecca is the same location when Adam and Eve asked God for forgiveness and God forgave them.

- 4) Pilgrims meet all other Muslims from around the world and discuss their problems, so it is the meeting place of all Muslims; and the Hajj occasion may be rightly be called the annual international Muslim Assembly.

- 4) At Hajj the Pilgrims become equal in front of Allah, rich and poor, old and young, men and women.

- 5) The Pilgrim men wear special clothes called Ehram (two pieces of unstitched white cloth), while the women do not wear special clothes. Ehram (Ehraam) is also written as Ihram.

- 6) Eed al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice) comes at the end of Hajj ceremonies, and it is four days, and every Pilgrim sacrifices cattle (sheep, cow, camel, goat, etc.).

- 7) The Ka'bah was first built by Prophet Adam (Father of Mankind), but later was destroyed by Noah's Great Flood, and then later God ordered Abraham (Ibrahim) and Ishmael (Ismail) to rebuild it.

Notice: According to the Tradition in Islam, Muslims say for respect after the name of the Prophet Muhammad: “Peace be upon him”.

Also to say the same thing after the name of any other Prophet or any other Angel

The Prophet Biography in Summery:

1) According to the most common Islamic Tradition, the Prophet was born in **570** C.E. (or A.D.), on the 12th of the Muslim month of Rabi’ (Rabee’) al-Awwal], in the city of Mecca (Makkah). His tribe was Quraish.

The year which the Prophet was born called “**the Year of the Elephant**”, because an attack on Mecca occurred by Abrahah, the Abyssinians (Ethiopian) King of Yemen by using Elephants to destroy the walls of Ka’bah, but the expedition failed, because God sent Plaque on the attacking army.

Notice: the Birthday of the Prophet Muhammad was not known during his lifetime; later some Muslim Scholars interpreted or understood a Hadith of the Prophet to mean that the Prophet would die on the same anniversary day when he was born; the Prophet died on the 12th of Rabi’ al-Awwal, which then became the day of his birth too.

The birthday of all other Prophets of God is not known too.

Also there are three different years (569, 570 and 571 C.E.) as the year of the birth of the Prophet, but most Muslim Scholars agreed on the middle year of 570 C.E. (or A.D.) as the most likely year of the birth of the Prophet.

2) He is from the Descendants of the Prophet Ishmael (Esmaeel), the son of Abraham (Ebraheem).

His Father called **Abdullah** the son of Abdul-Muttalib, and his Mother called **Aamina** (Aamena) the daughter of Wahab.

His father died few months before his birth, while his mother died when he was Six Years old.

His Grandfather Abdul-Muttalib took care of him; then at age eight his uncle Abu Talib took care of him. He was shepherd; then he became a successful and reputed Merchant.

The Name Muhammad means “the Praised One” or “Praiseworthy”.

Before he became a Prophet, the people of Mecca used to call him as “al-Amin (al-Ameen)”, which means “the **Trustworthy**; also they called him as “as-Sadiq (Saadeq)”, which means “**the Truthful.**”

3) He became Prophet at the age of Forty in the year **610** C.E. (or A.D.) when the Angel Gabriel descended from Heaven and ordered him to proclaim the word of God.

He began calling the people to God and abandons the worship of the Idols. He received the revelations from God through the Angel Gabriel, and the collections of the revelations called the Book of Qur’an (Koran).

The reason the people worshipped many gods:

The Meccans and other Arab tribes worshipped many gods including the god of the Moon; some Idols resembled some other planets and some of the Jinn (Invisible beings); also some Idols resembled some of the dead pious (Saints) people; and they considered three of the top idols as resembling three Angeles as the daughters of God.

There were 360 Idols in Mecca, one Idol for each tribe in the Arabian Peninsula.

They believed that those gods can bring rain, prevent natural disasters, help defeat their enemies, heal the sick, increases their wealth and many other worldly matters.

They gave sacrifices to their gods to make them happy, so that they help them in time of need.

They were so attached to their gods that they considered every Miracle by the Prophet as an act of Magic. They thought that God was so remote and invisible, that He could not be reached in time of need.

The Koran described the reasons that some people worshipped Idols, as in (Koran 10:18), as follow:

“And they worshipped besides God things that harm them not, nor profit them, and they say:” These are our intercessors with God”. And also in (Koran 39:3), as follow:

“ And those who take gods besides Him (God) (They say): “We only worship them so that they may bring us near to God.”

The Prophet promised them that if they only worshipped God the Creator, then God will bring them rain, increase their wealth and children, and also will reward them in the Life Hereafter. But the people called him Magician or Sorcerer.

God has many Angels under His command to help the people; also each person has two Guardian Angels who record our deeds and guard us against things that not supposed to reach us, and allow other things to reach us if supposed to reach us whether good or bad according to our actions.

Also God has many other ways of helping the people in time of needs.

4) The Prophet was Illiterate; he could not read and write at all.

The Koran called him as “**the Seal of the Prophets**”, which means that he was the last Prophet before the **Second Coming of Jesus** (‘Isa).

He was a Messenger with a message to the Entire World including the World of Jinn (Genies). The Revelations of the Koran was coming to him from Allah (God) through the Angel Gabriel.

He was a Prophet for about 23 years.

5) The Esraa’ (or Isra’) and Mi’raaj (Mee’raaj): **The Night Journey to Heaven.**

On the tenth year of Islam (on the 27th of the Muslim month of Rajab), the Prophet ascended to the Seventh Heaven with the Angel Gabriel through the city of Jerusalem (Al-Quds) from the famous **Rock**, which is presently under the Golden Dome of “Dome of the Rock Mosque”. The Prophet was riding on a small Heavenly Horse-like creature called Bur’raaq (Lightning), with wings and extreme speed.

The Prophet witnessed Many Wonders, including seeing some of the Prophets, going through the Seven Heavens, and getting close to the Last place before the Throne of God and speaking with God without seeing Him.

The Five Daily Prayers became mandatory during this Journey.

Muslim Scholars argued about that if only the Soul of the Prophet ascended to Heaven, or if both his body and Soul together ascended to Heaven; while no body questions the ability of God to do any one of them, still nobody knows for sure which one was the correct answer.

Notice: The exact night of the Night of Israa' and Mi'raaj is not known, but the Night of the 27th of the Muslim month Rajab was chosen as a Symbolic Night for the Night Journey, so that many Muslims worship more on this Blessed Night.

The Verse of the Night Journey:

“Glorified is He (God) who transported his servant (Prophet Muhammad) by night from Al-Masjid Al-Haram (the Sacred House of worship at Mecca) to Al-Masjid al-Aqsa (the Remote House of Worship in Jerusalem)--the environs of which We have blessed, so that We might show him (Muhammad) of Our Signs (proofs, lessons, symbols and evidences), Verily, He (God) is the All-Hearing, All-Seeing.” (Koran 17:1).

6) The Prophet Migrated to the city of Medina (Madinah) in the year 622 after he and his followers of believers suffered at the hands of the Meccans.

While he was in Madinah (Madeena) he had **Three Major Battles** with the people of Mecca; and those battles were as follow:

First: The Battle of **Badr** (Second year of Hijrah).

During the battle of Badr, the small Muslim Army, about 313 fighters with the help of some of the Angels won the battle against bigger Meccan army of 1000 fighters.

Second: The battle of **Uhud** (Third year of Hijrah)

During the battle of Uhud, the Muslim Army of 700 fighters lost the battle to a bigger Meccan and other Arab tribe's Army of 3000 Fighters.

Third: The **Ahزاب (Allies) Expedition** (Fifth year of Hijrah).

During the Expedition of Ahzab, the Muslims won against the army of several Arab tribes including Mecca.

During the Ahzab Expedition, the Muslims dug a ditch in the unprotected areas a round the city of Medina which prevented the attacking army from entering the city, then God sent a strong wind that forced the Meccans and other Arab Tribes to retreat.

The Prophet conquered Mecca on the eighth year of the Hijrah calendar or 630 C.E.

7) The Prophet died in 632 (11 year of Hijrah) in the city of Medina.

Abu Bakr became the First Successor after the Prophet's death, and then followed by 'Umar, 'Uthman and 'Ali; they are called Al-Khulafa al-Rashidun (the **Rightly Guided Caliphs**).

The Prophet's Character:

The Prophet was Model of simplicity and humbleness.

When he was at home, he lived like an ordinary man, he would sweep the house, stitch his own clothes, mend his own sandals, water the camels, milk the goat, help the servants at their work, eats his meals with them, and he would go to buy a thing from the market and carry it himself.

He would visit any sick, would walk as a mourner after any bier he met in the street, and if a slave invite him to dinner, he would go dine with him

The Prophet once said to his companions “God likes a person who, when does something, he or she tries their best”.

(Some of the Prophet's Miracles)

The Prophet had many Miracles, and some of them were as follow:

1) The Water Miracle:

The miracle of the flowing of the water continuously through the Prophet's fingers during travelling in the desert when the Companions of the Prophet got very thirsty.

2) The Food Miracle:

When more than a thousand Muslims ate from one single plate; whenever a Muslim took some food from the Plate, then the Plate became full again.

3) The Dry Well:

One day about 1400 Muslims reached a dry well and they were thirsty, then the Prophet prayed to God for water, and the well became full of water.

4) The Prophet's Prophecy:

During one of the battles, one of the Muslim warriors was fighting better than any other Muslim; so one of the Companions of the Prophet thought that this warrior will be in the best place in Paradise; but the Prophet told him that this warrior will end up in hell.

At first the Companion did not understand the Prophet, but later during the same battle when the companion witnessed the warrior committing suicide after he was injured during the battle, then the Companion understood that the person who commits suicide will not go to Heaven (Paradise) even if the person has good deeds.

5) The Splitting of the Moon:

The Prophet got tired of the vast majority of the Meccan people ridiculing his Miracles and do not believe him and they called him as a Magician; so one day he asked them about what things that make them believe that he was a Messenger of God?; the Meccans answered him by telling him to make the Moon splits in two in front of their eyes; then the Prophet tolled them that if they witnessed the Miracle would they become believer in him?

The Meccans answered the Prophet by saying yes; then the Prophet prayed to God to make the moon appears splitting to the Meccans, so when the Miracle happened and it appeared that the moon was splitting, and even was witnessed by some Caravans who were far away from Mecca; then the Meccans tolled the Prophet that he is a great Magician.

After this Miracle the Prophet gave up on the Meccans and he went to other regions to tell them about Islam.

The Koran mentioned the Miracle of the Splitting of the Moon, (Koran 54:1-2):

“ The hour has drawn near, and the Moon has been split asunder; and if they see a sign, they turn away and say: “This is continuous magic”.

6) The Night Journey, as was mentioned above was another big Miracle.

7) The Koran is considered as a very big Miracle, because recently many of its signs explained many of the scientific discoveries in our Modern times, as was mentioned in this book under the subject Science in the Koran.

8) Also the Prophet had many other Miracles including his Prophecy that the Muslims will conquer the Persian and Byzantine Empires.

The Prophet's Wives:

He married at the age of **Twenty five**, and his First wife called **Khadijah** (Khadeeja), she was Forty years old.

Khadijah was his only wife for nearly 25 years until he became Fifty years old.

The Prophet had a total of **Eleven Wives** and **Two Concubines** during his life.

At his death he had **Nine Wives**.

His most famous wife after Khadijah was called 'Aishah (Aeysha), the daughter of Abu Bakr.

He had Three Sons, who died in their Infancy, two of them from Khadijah, and also he had Four Daughters from Khadijah too; the most well-known daughter was called **Fatimah** (Faatema), because she resembled her father the Prophet very closely on Habits, Traits, and in Conversation.

Notice: According to the **Bible**, King and Prophet David (Dawood) had **One hundred wives**, while King and Prophet Solomon (Sulayman) had **Seven hundred wives** and **Three hundred Concubines**.

Al-Khulafa al-Rashidun (The Rightly Guided Caliphs)

They are also called as "The Orthodox Caliphs".

Four of the Top Companions of the Prophet became Caliphs as follow:

First: Abu Bakr (Abu Bakr as-Siddiq) (11-13 A.H.).

He was the first Caliph after the Prophet, and during his rule he fought the war of Apostasy, when many Arab tribes refused to pay Zakat. He ruled for two years and few months.

He was considered as the First Male adult to become Muslim, and the Fourth person to convert to Islam.

He was the closest friend to the Prophet.

He was called as-Siddiq (as-Sedeeq), which means Testifier to the Truth, because he was very strong believer in the Prophet. He was a skillful merchant, and spent all his money for the sake of Islam.

He sent the Muslim armies to fight the Sassanian Empire in Persia and the Roman Byzantine in Syria and Palestine.

He died in Medina and was 63 years old.

Second: 'Umar (al-Khat-taab) (13-23 A.H.).

He was called al-Faruq (Faarooq), which means the one who distinguishes between right and wrong.

He became the Second Caliph and ruled for Ten years.

During his rule, the Muslim armies defeated the Sassanid's Empire and the Roman Byzantine's armies, then conquered Iraq, Iran (Persia), Syria, Palestine and Egypt.

He was brave, tough in attitude and straightforward person uncompromising in basic principles. He was great talented leader and strong disciplinarian. He was concerned for the welfare of the citizens under his rule.

He was killed in 23 A.H. and was buried in Medina. He was 63 years old.

Third: ‘Uthman (23-35 A.H.).

He is the Third Caliph and ruled for Twelve years.

During his rule, the Koran was gathered and organized in one Book.

He was close friend of the Prophet and was a pious man.

He married two of the Prophets daughters; he married the second one after the first one died.

He was very generous man for the Islamic causes.

The first few years of his rule was calm, but the last years of his rule created unintentional problems between some of the Companions of the Prophet concerning who has the right to top government positions; some of the Companions who converted to Islam earlier than some other Muslims (during the Prophet’s time), believed that they deserve to be in top positions before some of those who were late converts to Islam; and the argument continued which ended in the killing of Uthman.

He was buried in Medina and was 82 years old.

Fourth: ‘Ali (35-40 A.H.).

He was the fourth Caliph, and ruled for five years.

He was the cousin of the Prophet, and was raised in the Prophet’s house.

He was the First Child to become Muslim at the age of 10 years old, and was one of the First Four people to convert to Islam.

He was married to the Prophet’s daughter Fatimah; and their two sons were called al-Hassan and al-Hussein.

He was very learned and wise man that he was called the Gate of Learning.

He was very strong fighter, and took part in most of the Prophet’s battles.

The Capital city of the above three Caliphs was the city of Medina, while the Capital city of Ali was the city of al-Kufah (Koofo), in Iraq.

During his rule, and after the killing of Uthman, some of the Companions of the Prophet fought each other, many of them fought to punish the killers of Uthman, while some others fought for the right to the Top government positions including the position of the Caliph, which ended in the killing of Ali.

And these problems were the beginning of the Divisions in Islam, which created some Muslim religious groups that continued until this day.

Ali died at the age of 63, and was buried in unknown location in the dessert near al-Kufa.

Chapter Six: (Women and Islam)

First: Women in Islam

1) How Islam treat women?

Islam respects women and it elevates their status.

It acknowledges the woman's dignity and rights, as a Girl, Lady, Mother, Sister, Wife, or as a member in the community.

Women are independent individuals, same as men, who as a Muslims can enjoy their rights fully and freely.

2) How women are treated in politics, elections, social welfare and Religious duties?

Women have the same legal rights as men, to participate in the political process of the state. They have the right to elect, to be elected, and to express their opinion.

Women have the same rights as men, to participate in social welfare activities of the community.

Women and men are accorded religious equality in terms of fulfilling religious duties and obligations.

3) How the Koran mentions women?

Allah (God) the Creator has fixed the women's rights and duties according to their nature and biological make-up. Women and men have been created from one and the same Soul. There are many verses in the Glorious Qur'an that assert women's rights and the duties men have towards them.

4) How is Women and Education in Islam?

Islam urged teaching boys and girls how to read, how to write and at least the elementary basis of science.

Women have the same rights as men, to acquire knowledge and skills.

The Prophet Muhammad, asked a lady to teach one of his wives how to write.

Education of women so encouraged by the Prophet, it soon became widespread and advanced.

In Muslim countries nowadays, the number of women in schools and universities are increasing.

Women are also competing with men in almost all jobs.

5) Does Islam oppress Women?

According to Islamic Shari'a, Islam elevated the status of women more than 1,400 years ago by giving them the right to divorce and the right to have financial independence and support, when in the rest of the world, including Europe until the end of the 19th century, women had no such rights.

Islam allows women to keep their maiden name after marriage, and to keep their earned money and spend as they wish.

Not Islam, but some Muslim men do oppress women today and this is because of their cultural habits or their ignorance about their religion.

6) How is the treatment of Wives?

The Glorious Qur'an (Koran) called for the good treatment of wives, and the Prophet Muhammad recommended kind treatment of women.

The Prophet himself was the noblest example in treating his wives. He said, "The best of you is the best to his family; I am the best with my family".

7) How is the treatment of Husbands?

Islam did call upon the husband to treat his wife so kindly, but also called upon the wife to behave likewise.

The Prophet said, "A good wife is that who is pleasant to look at, who obeys you, and who keeps her honor and protects your wealth in your absence."

8) What is the Women Inheritance and Financial Rights?

Islam acknowledges the woman's right to possess wealth, be in cash, property or any other thing.

She is entitled to engage in trade, and she is completely free to conduct her financial affairs without hindrance (obstacle), be it from her husband or father as long as she is of age.

Women have the same rights (as men) to earn money through working and acquire, buy, manage, or sell property on their own.

If Islam allows the woman half the share of her brother in inheritance in certain cases, it is because in regard for justice; since the woman is not responsible to provide for a family, while it is obligatory on the male to provide for his wife, children and dependent parents; so the brother has more financial obligations than the sister.

9) Are Women "Half" of Men?

Women are not half of men. The charge that woman's testimony is only half of a man, arises from a Qur'anic verse (2: 282) that tells about business contracts; and the meaning of this verse is that a woman is asked to have a friend come along when she negotiates a business contract, because if later, the other party to the contract try to cheat her, then her friend can remind her about the details in a court situation.

So the second witness for business contracts is merely a safeguard for the woman.

In this and in all other testimonies, a woman's word is accepted as equal to that of a man.

10) How the Divorce is done in Islam?

Islam, moreover, has prohibited a husband to demand the return to him anything he might have given to his divorcee.

Islam did not even deny the woman's right to ask for divorce.

Under the Islamic law, she can ask the court to divorce her from her husband if the later fails to fulfill his matrimonial duties; for example, if he deserts her for too long, or if he fails to maintain her or fails to fulfill a term she had added in the marriage contract, or on the ground of cruelty.

11) How Polygamy was done in Islam?

Historically, all the prophets except Jesus and John the Baptist, who were not married, had more than one wife.

For Muslim men to have more than one wife is a permission, which is giving to them in the Qur'an, not to satisfy lust, but for the welfare of the widows and the orphans of the wars. It is not a command or order to marry more than one wife.

Islam has ascertained the girl's right in approving of her marriage and this right was well acknowledged in Islam.

According to Islamic law, any Muslim who wants to marry a second woman has to get the agreement or permission of the first wife, and if she does not agree, then he cannot marry a second woman, unless the first woman is barren, insane or have some other major disabilities that prevent her from performing her house duties.

Even if a woman has some of the above disabilities, still very few Muslim men marry a second woman.

The overwhelming majority of Muslims are Monogamous (they have only one wife).

The Qur'an says, "You can marry 2 or 3 and up to 4 women if you can be equally just with each one of them."

Since it is very difficult to be equally just with all wives, in practice, most of the Muslim men do not have more than one wife.

The Prophet Muhammad himself from age 25 to age 50 was married to only one woman, called Khadijah.

Sterile Wife: Suppose a wife is proven sterile or incapable to perform her matrimonial duties, but cannot support herself if she is divorced; it is our opinion that compassion would dictate to keep her, even if she has to become a co-wife, especially when she herself prefers that.

Notice: The Koran allowed Polygamy, because in the past, there were no welfare system to take care of the families; since during wars, men were the one who had to fight and get killed, as a result of this, many women became widows and many of them had many small children with no one to support them, so God allowed the surviving men who were mostly married, to have more than one wife, so that to solve the problem of the many widows of the wars.

12) How Polygamy was done through History?

First: Polygamy in the pre-Islamic period:

In the pre-Islamic period in the Arabian Peninsula, men used to have many wives.

Second: Extramarital Affairs in the Western Countries:

In the western society, some men who have one wife have many extramarital affairs. Thus, a Survey was done, which asked more than Five Thousand Mistresses about what they would like their status to be; they said that, "they preferred being a second wife rather than the 'other woman' because they did not have the legal rights, nor did they have the financial equality of the legally married wives, and it appeared that they were being used by these men."

Third: Polygamy in the Ancient Israelites:

The ancient Israelites allowed polygamy, and when Moses came he did not restrict it. Up till now some Israelites are allowing polygamy. One sect of the Jews restricts the number of wives to four.

Fourth: Polygamy in early Christianity:

In the beginning of Christianity, polygamy was not prohibited, because Jesus came to add to the creed (religious belief) of Moses not to refute it (prove it wrong). St. Paul did not prohibit polygamy except for the clergymen.

Fifth: Polygamy in the Ancient Nations:

Other nations also practiced polygamy before, like the Pharaohs, Babylonians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, Hindus and Arabs during pre-Islamic times.

Islam has reformed polygamy, and restricted it, making it a limited practice, depending on the need and necessity, and insisting on justice and equal treatment of co-wives.

The Dress Code for Muslims

1) What is the meaning of Hijab?

Hijab (Hejaab) literally means cover, Veil.

According to Islam, the idea of Hijab is ancient and was done during the time of other prophets of God.

Islam emphasizes modesty. No person should be perceived as a sex object.

There are certain guidelines both for men, and women, that their dress should neither be too thin nor be too tight or transparent to reveal body forms.

For men, they must at least cover the area from the knee to navel.

For women, their dress should cover all areas except the hands and face.

2) What is the Reason for Hijab?

It is started from the fact that women are so alluring to men that males may judge them by their look or may try to accost them sexually; so, to protect women from this type of abuse and degradation, Islam asks them to cover their hair and wear loose-fitting clothes so that their full beauty is concealed.

The purpose of hijab is intended to reduce potential attraction between men and women who are not intending to be marriage partners.

Women do not need to wear their veil and loose clothes at home or when they are with women or family members.

3) What is the meaning of dress modestly and be modest:

According to Islam, the Hijab of women' clothing is not to put on a kind of "uniform", but to dress modestly, in such away that the outline of the female body is not visible, by wearing loose fitting clothes.

So, the real Hijab for women is to be modest, and to dress modestly, and to make sure their bodies were decently covered.

The word is often used these days to refer to a "head scarf." But this is not its real meaning.

4) What is the inner Hijab?

There is also the inner Hijab, which refers to the attitude of modesty, the intent not to arouse, as was mentioned in the Koran 24:31.

The Koran also tells men and women to lower their gaze and not to ogle (stare at in a sexual manner) each other.

Both outer and inner aspects are characteristic of Muslim women; one aspect is meaningless without the other.

5) What do the Koran and Hadith say about Hijab?

The Koran verses (24:31 & 33:59), mention the Hijab.

Also there is a famous Hadith, which refers to the Prophet Muhammad stating that after puberty a woman should only show “this (face) and this (hand)” in public. He pointed to his face and his hands.

The order of Hijab for women was revealed in the Koran on the 17th year of the beginning of Islam (fourth year of Hijrah).

6) How is the Hijab in Christianity and Judaism?

In Christianity and Judaism until the beginning of the twenty century, it was the norm that women wore clothing that covered their bodies modestly, which is still evident these days in the Roman Catholic Nuns’ uniforms; also women still wear modestly during most religious ceremonies in both religions.

Notice:

- 1) The new liberal dress for women started in the 20th century.
- 2) Like in many other religions, wearing uniform in many regions of the Islamic world, became part of the local customs and has nothing to do with religion.

Second: (Some Islamic Views)

The Islamic view on the following subjects:

1) Dating and Premarital Sex:

Islam does not approve of intimate mixing of sexes, forbids premarital or extramarital sex.

. Islam encourages marriage as a shield to such temptations and as a means of having mutual love, mercy and peace.

2) Homosexuality and Aids:

Islam opposes homosexuality and considers it as a sin; however Muslim physicians are advised to care for Aids patients with compassion, just as they would care for other patients.

3) Abortion: Islam is against abortion and does not permit it except to save the mother’s life; for example: the mother has a serious medical condition which require her to continuously take medications, which is considered by doctors as a threat to the unborn, and the medical condition is decided by qualified doctors.

4) Euthanasia (yoo-tha-nay-zha) and **suicide:** Islam is opposed to both suicide and euthanasia.

5) Organ Transplantation: Islam stresses upon saving lives (Qur’an 5:32); thus, transplantation in general would be considered permissible provided a donor’s consent is available.

. The sale of organ is not allowed.

Chapter Seven:

(Populations, Islamic History and Scholars Contribution to Knowledge)

First: The Muslim Population in the World

The total population of the Muslims in the world in the year 2005 is more than 1.4 billion people.

There are Muslims in more than 185 countries.

Islam is considered as the fastest growing religion in the World, mostly because the birth rate in the Muslim populations is higher than non-Muslim populations.

Notice: Counting the correct number of adherents to any religion is not easy task; in some books, there are some Scholars who count all the people who were born from a Muslim or Christian families and counting them as a Muslim or as a Christian, even if they do not practice or do not believe in the teaching of Islam or Christianity; while in some other books, there are some other scholars who do not count all the Muslims or Christians completely, because they consider some percentage of them as not believing in Islam or Christianity. The Scholars count all other religions in the same way.

For example: in the United States of America, there are about seven million Muslims in the year 2005, but many books or magazines or newspapers or the Media in general mention the Muslims between three to five millions, because they believe that many of the Muslims do not practice Islam at all, and some of them do not believe in the teaching of Islam; also the publishers or Media mention the same thing about Christianity, Judaism and all other religions.

Here we mention what was reported by the governments:

M means Million People

MM means Million Muslims

First: The Countries with a Muslim Majority or Large Muslim Population in the World are as follow:

- 1) 88% of **Indonesia's** 220 Million People (**193 Million Muslims**).
- 2) 97% of **Pakistan's** 154 M (**149 MM**)
- 3) 88% of **Bangladesh** 147 M (**129 MM**)
- 4) 99% of **Turkey** 71.5 M (**70.8 MM**)
- 5) 99 % of **Iran** 69 M (**68 MM**)
- 6) 94% **Egypt** 72 M (**67.7 MM**)
- 7) 50% of **Nigeria** 124 M (**62 MM**)
- 8) 50% of **Ethiopia** 70 M (**35 MM**)
- 9) 99% of **Algeria** 32 M (**31.7 MM**)
- 10) 99% of **Morocco** 30.5 M (**30.2 MM**)
- 11) 99% **Afghanistan** 26 M (**25.7 MM**)
- 12) 97% of **Iraq** 25.5 M (**24.7 MM**)
- 13) 100% of **Saudi Arabia** 24.5 M (**24.5 MM**)
- 14) 70% of **Sudan** 35 M (**24.5 MM**)
- 15) 88% of **Uzbekistan** 26 M (**22.9 MM**).
- 16) 99% of **Yemen** 20 M (**19.8 MM**)
- 17) 90% of **Syria** 18 M (**16.2 MM**)
- 18) 60% of **Malaysia** 24.5 M (**14.7 MM**)
- 19) 90% of **Mali** 13 M (**11.7 MM**)
- 20) 100% of **Somalia** 10 M (**10 MM**)
- 21) 60% of **Cote D'Ivoire** 16.5 M (**9.9 MM**)
- 22) 98% of **Tunisia** 10 M (**9.8 MM**)
- 23) 80% of **Niger** 12 M (**9.6 MM**)
- 24) 92% of **Senegal** 10 M (**9.2 MM**)
- 25) 93% of **Azerbaijan** 8.5 M (**7.9 MM**)
- 26) 47% of **Kazakhstan** 16 M (**7.5 MM**)

- 27) 85% of **Guinea** 8.5 M (7.2 MM) 28) 50% of **Burkina Faso** 13 M (6.5 MM)
- 29) 85% of **Tajikistan** 6.5 M (5.5 MM) 30) 97% of **Libya** 5.5 M (5.3 MM)
- 31) 92% of **Jordan** 5.5 M (5 MM) 32) 89% of **Turkmenistan** 5 M (4.4 MM)
- 33) 51% of **Chad** 8.5 M (4.3 MM) 34) 75% of **Kyrgystan** 5 M (3.7 MM)
- 35) 60% of **Sierra Leone** 5.5 M (3.3 MM) 36) 100% of **Mauritania** 3 M (3 MM)
- 37) 96% of **United Arab Emirate** 3 M (2.9 MM). 38) 70% of **Lebanon** 3.8 M (2.7 MM).
- 39) 86% of **Oman** 3 M (2.6 MM) 40) 70% of **Albania** 3.5 M (2.4 MM)
- 41) 85% of **Kuwait** 2.5 M (2.1 MM) 42) 51% of **Eritrea** 4 M (2 MM)
- 43) 40% of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** 4.2 M (1.7 MM)
- 44) 90% of **Gambia** 1.5 M (1.3 MM) 45) 100% of **Bahrain** .75 M (.75 MM)
- 46) 95% of **Qatar** .75 M (.7 MM) 47) 45% of **Guinea-Bissau** 1.5 M (.7 MM)
- 48) 94% of **Djibouti** .75M (.7 MM) 49) 89% of **Comoros (Islands)** .75M (.6 MM)
- 50) 100% of **Maldives (Islands)** .35 M (.35 MM) 51) 67% of **Brunei** .35M (.2 MM)

52) The **Palestine Authority** in Gaza and the West Bank in 2007 was not officially Independent State yet, but is considered as a member of the Islamic States.

85% of the Palestine Authority in Gaza and the West Bank 3 M (2.45 MM)

Second: Also the Top Fifty Six Countries in the World with a large Muslim Minority are as follow:

- 1) 15% of **India's** 1,070 Million People (**150 million Muslims**)
- 2) 3% of **China's** 1,320 M (**40 MM**), which is according to the government of China.
Notice: Many Muslims scholars believe that the Muslims in China in 2005 are more than 100 million.
- 3) 15% of **Russia's** 150 million (**22.5 million Muslims**).
- 4) 35% of **Tanzania's** 37 M (**13 MM**).
- 5) 2.4% of **U.S.A's** 295 M (7 MM) 6) 20 % of **Kenya's** 32 M (6.4 MM)
- 7) 30% of **Ghana's** 21 M (6.3 MM) 8) 10% of **Congo Dem. Rep. of.** 54 M (5.4 MM)
- 9) 16% of **Uganda's** 26.5 M (4.2 MM) 10) 5% of **Philippines'** 83 M (4 MM)
- 11) 20% of **Mozambique** 19 M (3.8 MM). 12) 7% of **Myanmar (Burma)** 50 M (3.5 MM)
- 13) 5% of **Thailand's** 65 M (3.2 MM) 14) 20% of **Cameron's** 16 M (3.2 MM)
- 15) 5% of **France's** 60 M (3 MM) 16) 20% of **Malawi's** 12 M (2.4 MM)
- 17) 2.6% of **Germany's** 82.5 M (2.1 MM) 18) 3.4% of **United Kingdom** 60 M (2 MM)
- 19) 19% of **Serbia and Montenegro** 10.7 M (2 MM)
- 20) 10% of **Madagascar** 17.5 M (1.7 MM) 21) 7.5% of **Sri Lanka** 20 M (1.5 MM)
- 22) 20% of **Benin** 7 M (1.4 MM) 23) 15% of **Bulgaria** 7.9 M (1.2 MM)
- 24) 11,5% of **Zambia** 11 M (1.2 MM) 25) 4.5% of **Nepal** 26 M (1.1 MM)
- 26) 20% of **Togo** 5 M (1 MM) 27) 15% of **Israel** 6.2 M (.9 MM)
- 28) 2% of **South Africa** 45 M (.9 MM) 29) 20% of **Liberia** 3.4 M (.7 MM)
- 30) 16.3 % of **Singapore** 4.5 M (.7 MM) 31) 10% of **Burundi** 6.8 M (.7 MM)
- 32) 5.1% of **Cambodia** 14 M (.7 MM) 33) .4% of **Brazil** 182 M (.7 MM)
- 34) 30% of **Macedonia** 2 M (.6 MM) 35) 11% of **Georgia** 5.2 M (.6 MM)
- 36) 5% of **Netherlands** 16.3 M (.8 MM) 37) 15% of **Central African Rep.** 3.8 M (.6 MM)

- 38) 1.4% of Argentina 40 M (.5 MM)
 40) 5% of Rwanda 8.4 M (.4 MM)
 42) 17% of Mauritius 1.2 M (.2 MM)
 44) 1.7% of Greece 11 M (.2 MM)
 46) .4% of Spain 41 M (.2 MM)
 47) 18% of Cyprus .8 M (.14 MM)-This is without the Turkish Northern part of Cyprus.
 48) 4% of Mongolia 2.7 M (.1 MM)
 50) 20% of Suriname .4 M (.08 MM)
 52) 10% of Guyana .7 M (.07 MM)
 54) 2.3% of Congo Rep. of. 3 M (.07 MM)
 56) 4% of East Timor .9 M (.03 MM)
- 39) 4.4 of Belgium 10.3 M (.4 MM)
 41) 1.9 of Australia 20 M (.4 MM)
 43) .6% of Canada 32.5 M (.2 MM)
 45) .3% of Italy 58 M (.2 MM)
 49) 10% of Swaziland 1.2 M (.1 MM)
 51) 6% of Trinidad and Tobago 1.3 M (.08 MM)
 53) 8% of Fiji .9 M (.07 MM)
 55) 1.2% of Croatia 4.4 M (.05 MM)

Second: Some of the Major events and Dynasties in Islamic history

- 1) In **570 C.E. (or A.D.)** the **birth of the Prophet Muhammad** in the city of Mecca.
- 2) In **610** the **beginning of Islam** in Mecca.
- 3) In **622**, the beginning of the **Islamic Hijrah calendar**.
 . In **630**, the Muslims conquest of Mecca
- 4) In **632**, the **death** of the **Prophet** in the city of Madinah.
- 5) In **632-661**, the Era of the four “**Rightly Guided**” **Caliphs**. Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman and ‘Ali, the Successors of the **Prophet**.
 . In **636**, the battle of **Qadisiyyah** (Qade-see-ya) occurred in Iraq in which the Muslims defeated the Sassanids Persians. The commander of the Muslim army was Sa‘ad ibn (ebn) Abi (Abee) Waqqas, the uncle of the **Prophet** from his mother side.
 . In **637**, the battle of **Yarmuk** (Yarmook) occurred in Syria in which the Muslims defeated the Roman Byzantines. The commander of the Muslim army was Khalid (Khaaled) ibn (ebn) Al-Waleed.
- 6) In **661-750** The **Umayyads** (Umay-yaads) Dynasty ruled the land from Spain to China; its capital was Damascus in Syria. This dynasty was named after the name of one of the clans of Quraish in Mecca called the clan of Ummayyah.
 . In **691** the **Dome of the Rock** and **al-Aqsa** mosques were built in Jerusalem (al-Quds).
 . In **705**, the great **Umayyad** mosque of Damascus was built.
 . In **711**, **Tariq ibn (ebn) Ziyad** (Zeyaad), a Berber, invade **Spain** and conquer it.
 The Muslims remained in Spain (Andalusia) from 711-1492 C.E. (or A.D.) or for 771 years.
- 7) In **750-1258**, the ‘**Abbasids** (Ab-baa-seeds) Dynasty ruled a large Empire in the beginning.
 . Its capital was Baghdad in Iraq. The Abbasids were the descendants of Abbas, the uncle of the **Prophet**.
 . In **1258**, the **Mongols** conquered Baghdad and ended the ‘Abbasids.

- 8) In 756-1031, The Umayyads** Dynasty in the Andalusia (Spain and Portugal)
- . Its capital was Cordoba (Cordova).
 - . In **755**, the beginning of the construction of the great **mosque of Cordova**
 - . In **1492, Granada**, the last Muslim stronghold in Spain, falls to the Spanish king Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, which ended the Islamic rule in the Andalusia (Spain), after more than 700 years. Also in the same year Columbus discovered America.
- 9) In 909-1171, The Fatimids** (Faa-te-meeds) Dynasty ruled the land from the Atlantic Ocean in North Africa, to Syria and Arabia; its capital was the city of Cairo in Egypt.
- . This dynasty was named after the name of Fatimah (Faatema), the daughter of the **Prophet**.
 - . In **969, al-Azhar** (al-Az'har) University was founded in Cairo.
 - . In **1099**, the Crusaders captured Jerusalem. The Crusade started in **1095** and ended in **1291**.
- 10) In 932-1055, The Buyids** (Bu-yeeds) Dynasty ruled the Abbasids. The Buyids were a group of Shi'ah.
- 11) In 1055-1300, The Saljuqs** (Sal-jooqs) Dynasty ruled the Abbasids and Asia Minor. The Saljuq was a name of one of the Turkish tribes.
- 12) In 1174-1260, The Ayyubids** (Ay-yoo-beeds) Dynasty ruled from Tunisia to Diyar Bakir (in present day Kurdistan of Turkey). This dynasty was named after the name of Ayyub, the father of Sultan Salahaddin (Saladin); also the name Salahaddin is considered as a title which was given to Yousif (Saladin) the son of Ayyub.
- . In **1187**, Salahaddin (Salaa-had-deen) or Salahuddin captured Jerusalem from the Crusaders.
 - . Saladin founded the Ayyubids and ruled from 1174-1193.
 - . After Saladin, the Ayyubids was divided between two of his sons into Two Kingdoms, one kingdom was centered in Egypt (1193-1252) and another kingdom was centered in Syria (1193-1260).
 - . In 1260, the Ayyubids just ruled in the Diyar Bakir region (1260-1492) after the Mongols conquer of Syria.
- 13) In 1252-1517, The Mamluks** (Mam-looks) Dynasty held power in Egypt, Syria and Palestine.
- The Mamluks came to power in Egypt after they ousted the Ayyubid Sultan in Egypt in 1252.
- 14) In 1299-1924, The Ottomans** Dynasty. The Ottoman Turks controlled Anatolia, parts of Eastern Europe, and most of the Arab world. Their capital was Istanbul.
- This dynasty was named after the name of Othman, the father of the founder of this dynasty
- . The Ottomans also called **Osmanli** (Osmaanlee).
 - . In **1453**, the Ottomans captured the city of Constantinople, which ended the Byzantines; the Ottomans renamed the city as Istanbul.
 - . In **1924**, the Ottoman Caliphate was abolished and Turkey was established.
- 15) In 1369-1500, the Timurids** (Te-moor-eeds) Dynasty conquered the land from Asia Minor to India.
- 16) In 1501-1736, the Safavid** (Safaveed) Dynasty in Persia (Iran); their first capital was Tabriz then Isfahan.

. In **1935**, the name of **Persia** was replaced by the name **Iran** by Shah (king) Reza Pahlavi.

17) In 1526-1858, the **Mughal** Dynasty established Empire in India.

18) In 1804, Mohammad Ali became viceroy of the Ottoman in Egypt. In 1811 he became independent of the Ottoman and his family ruled Egypt until 1952.

19) In 1968, the enlargement of the Grand Mosque of Mecca, which began in 1957, was completed.

After the enlargements of the Grand mosque, now normally about 124,000 people can pray.

. During Hajj, about 275,000 people can pray inside the mosque and about 100,000 people can pray outside of the mosque.

. So the total people who can pray at one time during Hajj are about **375,000** people.

Third:

(Contribution of some Muslim Scholars to World Knowledge)

The Koran and the Prophet Muhammad and Knowledge:

There are many Verses in the Koran telling Mankind to use their Intellect, to think and to know.

The Hadith literature is also full of references to the importance of Knowledge.

Such famous saying of the Prophet as “Seek Knowledge even in China”, and “Seek Knowledge from the cradle to the grave”, and “Verily the people of Knowledge are the inheritors of the Prophets”, all these Hadiths and others have echoed throughout the history of Islam and incited Muslims to seek Knowledge whenever it might be found.

Muslims played a remarkable role in the history of science.

. They regarded seeking knowledge as another way or manner of worship in response to the call of their religion.

. Many western scholars admired this attitude of seeking knowledge by the Muslims.

Advanced Islamic libraries and universities:

In the Middle Ages, the Muslims had many universities that included laboratories, observatories and libraries well equipped with all that is necessary for scientific research.

. For example, in Spain (Andalusia) during the Islamic rule, the library of the city of Cordova contained six hundred thousand books, while four hundred years later the library of the king of France contained nine hundred books.

. The old tradition of Islamic learning influenced the West greatly through Spain (Andalusia), through translation, starting from the 11th century C.E. (or A.D.)

These are few examples of some contributions made by certain Muslim scholars in the following branches:

First: Astronomy and Geography

1) During the Middle Ages, the Muslims built a number of **Scientific Observatories**, between the ninth and the sixteenth century C.E.
The Muslims were the first to create an Astronomical Observatory as a scientific institution.

2) **Al-Sufi** (980 A.D.) catalogued the position and brightness of over 1,000 stars in his book of “**Fixed Stars**.” Many star names in English such as Aldabaran still recall their original Arabic names. His book had a deep influence upon stellar toponymy in European languages.

3) **Al-Sharif al-Idrisi** (al-Ed-ree-see):

He was a leading Geographer in the 12th century C.E.

. He was educated at the University of Cordova (Cordoba) in Andalusia (Spain).

He worked at the court of Roger II in Sicily.

. He wrote a book in geography, and dedicated his book to Roger II, and called it “The Book of Roger”, which became the major source of geography from which Europe drew their geographical knowledge during the Middle Ages.

. That book was the most comprehensive geographical work up to that age, so it became tremendous interest to many nations. In addition he drew maps on a huge ball made of pure silver. His maps were among the great achievements of Islamic Science.

4) **Ibn (Ebn) Majid** (Maajed) **an-Nagdy** (Najdee):

The navigation up till the first half of the 19th century always depended upon his books.

. In 1498, he was a pilot who guided the Portuguese **Vasco de Gama** in his voyage to India.

He was called the Sea Lion in the 15th century C.E.

. He wrote treatises on navigation in verse (to aide memorization) and ordinary language.

Verse means: A writing which is arranged in short lines with regular rhythm or poetry.

5) Also many other Muslim navigators guided the Portuguese in many of their voyages.

6) The precise astronomical knowledge of the Muslims also permitted them to make perfected **Astrolabes** (as-tro-laabs), which were a vital contribution to the voyages of the age of European exploration.

7) The superiority of Muslims in Astronomy gave them a lead in navigation.

Many Muslim Astronomers wrote major works on Astronomy and their books were translated into the European languages and were a source of Astronomy for Europe.

8) In 1492 Christopher **Columbus** made use of the Muslim geographer’s knowledge in his discovery of America.

Second: Chemistry

Muslim scientists made Chemistry, which retains its Arabic title (In Arabic it is called **al-Kimya**).

. **Jabir Ebn Hayan (Geber)** was the Great scholar of Chemistry in the 8th century C.E.

. He wrote 200 books and some of his books were translated into Latin and other European languages.

. He was the first to describe some of the basic processes such as **distilling, evaporation** and **crystallization**. Also he described for the first time some of the chemical compounds such as **potassium, Uranium salts, silver nitrates** and **Mercuric chloride**.

Third: Mathematics

1) Al-Khawarazmi (al-Kha-waa-razmee): **9th century**

He was the first great Muslim mathematician.

. He was the author of the first major book on **Algebra**.

. The very name Algebra comes from the name of the book of al-Khawarazmi, entitled **Kitab al-jabr**.

. He wrote treatise on arithmetic whose Latin translation brought what is known as **Arabic numerals** to the west, including the Zero.

. The terms **Algorism** (al-go-riz-im), and **Algorithm** (Al-go-rith-im), which is derived from his name, is still being used in English

2) Al-Biruni (al-Be-roonee): 11th century, he developed **Trigonometry**, which was established as a distinct branch of mathematics.

3) Al-Kashani (al-Kaa-shaanee): He invented a **Computing Machine** during the 15th century.

Fourth: Medicine

1) Al-Razi (al-Raazee) (**Rhazes**): **10th century**

He wrote numerous valuable works in medicine; one of his famous books called **Kitab al-Hawi** (Contents) was used as an important medical authority and textbook in Europe up to the 18th century.

He emphasized on clinical medicine and observation. He was a master of prognosis and psychosomatic medicine and also of anatomy. He was the first to identify and treat smallpox, to use alcohol as an antiseptic and make medical use of mercury and purgative.

2) Ibn-Sina (Ebn-Seena) (**Avicenna**): **11th century**

In the west he was called the **prince of physicians**.

. His book called "**The Law in Medicine**", which was translated in Europe, is considered as the most famous of all medical books in history. This book was the final authority on medical matters for nearly six centuries.

. Ibn-Sina discovered many drugs and identified and treated several ailments such as meningitis, but his greatest contribution was in the philosophy of medicine. He created a system of medicine within which medical practice could be carried out and in which physical and psychological factors, drugs and diet are combined.

3) Sa'ad al-Katib of Cordoba in Andalusia (Spain) composed a treatise on gynecology.

4) Al-Zahrawi (Albucasis) (12th century) composed medical masterpiece called **Kitab al-Tasrif** was well-known in the west as **Concessio**. He was a great surgeon.

5) Ibn (Ebn) al Nafis (Nafees): 14th century

He was the first to discover the lesser or pulmonary circulation of the blood.

Also he was the first to distinguish between the arteries and the veins.

6) Also the Muslims were advanced in building **hospitals**; and also in **pharmacological** knowledge.

7) The 12th century scientist, **Al-Ghafiqi**, wrote a book called "**Book of Simple Drugs**", which described the medical properties of plants known to Muslims.

Islamic medicine combined the use of drugs for medical purposes with dietary considerations.

Fifth: Physics and Optics

Ibn al-Haytham (Alhazen): He wrote a book called “The Treasury of Optics, in 1000 C.E., and this book was well known in the West; in his book he described lenses, mirrors, and discovered the Camera obscura. He solved many optical problems
He explained correctly the process of vision and studied the structure of the eye
And explained for the first time why the sun and the moon appear larger on the horizon.

Also in physics, the Muslims observed, measured and carried out experiments, and made some other contributions in physics.

Sixth: Philosophy

The debts of philosophical studies to Muslims needs no emphasis, and among the geniuses were:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) Al-Farabi (al-Faa-raabee) (al-Farabius). | 2) Al-Razi (al-Raazee) (Rhazes) |
| 3) Ibn (Ebn) Rushed (Averroes) | 4) Al-Kindi (Al-Kendee) |

Also these philosophers made contribution to some other field of sciences like Mathematics, Geometry, Medicine, Chemistry, logic, Astronomy and Music.

Seventh: Sociology

Sociology is one area in which Muslims made a proud contribution.

. **Ibn (Ebn) Khaldun** in the 14th century C.E. (or A.D.) was regarded as the founder of sociology about 400 years before any sociologist appeared in Europe.

Eighth: Geology

Al-Biruni (11th century) wrote an outstanding book about various aspects of geology and earthquakes called in the west as “Liber de Mineralibus”. This book dominated thinking on mineralogy for 500 years.

Ninth: Botany

Al-Ghafiqi (12th century), from Andalusia (Spain), composed the most important treatises on Botany.

Also Muslims wrote books on Agriculture and Zoology.

Tenth: Technology and Architecture

The Muslims developed new architectural techniques of vaulting, methods of ventilation, preparations of dyes, techniques of weaving, technologies related to irrigation and numerous other forms of technology in building strong dams, domes which withstood earthquakes, and other technologies, some of which survive to this day.

Islamic architecture through Andalusia (Spain) had influence on European Architecture.

Islamic architecture combined technology and art, as was shown from the great masterpieces of Islamic architecture from the Cordoba Mosque in Spain and the Dome of the Rock Mosque in Jerusalem; also the Taj Mahal in India.

Islamic architecture had influence on the building of Gothic arches as well as interior courtyards of Medieval and Renaissance European structures.

First: Judaism

1-Prophet Moses (Musa)

The name Moses in Hebrew was called “**Moshe**”, and the Latin name called “**Moses**”. According to scholars and archeologists, Moses lived in the thirteen century B.C. in Egypt. Moses was called “**Kaleem of Allah**”, which means that Moses was **Speaking with God** without seeing Him.

According to modern scholars, Moses lived at the time of **King Ramesses II**, who ruled for 67 years from 1304-1237 B.C. and then during Ramesses’ successor King Mernepteh (Reigned 1236-1223 B.C.), and Mernepteh became the Pharaoh of the Exodus in 1223 B.C.

When King Ramesses, saw a dream that one of the children of Israel who was born that year would become a threat to his kingdom in the future, so he ordered the killing of any Israeli child born that year

When Moses was born, his mother put him in a basket and put the basket in the Nile River; later baby Mosses was found by a member of King Ramesses’ family and Mosses grew up in the king’s castle. The name Moses was named by the family of Ramesses.

Notice: The word Pharaoh means the **Great House**, which originally referred for palace. The title of Pharaoh was first used for the person of the King during the reign of King Thutmose III (ca. 1479-1425 B.C.) in dynasty 18.

God sent Moses to free the people of Israel from the captivity of the Pharaoh (King). Also Moses became a Prophet and Messenger to the People of Israel and also partly to some Egyptians including the Pharaoh.

God sent Nine Signs to scare King of Egypt and his people so that they believe Moses and free the people of Israel, but without any result; and after every Sign the Pharaoh tolled Moses that he was a great magician.

Then God sent the tenth Sign which was the biggest one; then the Pharaoh freed the Israelites.

The Signs that God sent to the People of Egypt were as follow:

- 1) The Staff (called Aaron’s Rod or Staff) turns into Serpent.
- 2) The Hand of Moses shine after it was drawn out from Under his Arm.
- 3) The Famine. 4) The Flood. 5) Disease and Hail
- 6) Locusts 7) Lice 8) Frogs 9) The Blood.
- 10) The Plaque on the people of Egypt that killed every first-born male in Egypt, except the Israelites.

When the fleeing Israelites found themselves blocked by the Red Sea, then God miraculously [after Moses struck the Sea with his Staff (also called Aaron’s Staff)] opened the Sea and made an in-road in the Sea for the Israelites to cross toward the Sinai; when the Pharaoh and his Army tried to chase the People of Israel, the huge walls of water of the Sea came down on them and they were drowned including King Mernepteh.

According to many scholars and archeologists the Exodus happened around 1223 B.C., which was the last year of the rule of King Merneptah, who ruled from 1236 B.C. to 1223 B.C.

Notice: In the Modern time, Muslim Scholars believe that the meaning of one of the Miracles of the Koran became known (revealed or proven) to us recently as follow:

God mentioned in the Koran that He had saved the drowned body of Pharaoh (Mernepteh), so that his body becomes as a Sign to the people after him (after the time of king Mernepteh).

As in the Koran in Verse 92, Surah 10 (10:92):

“So this day We (God) shall save (deliver from the Sea) your body (Pharaoh Mernepteh drowned body) that you may be a Sign (warning Sign) for those after you (after the time of Mernepteh)”.

Muslim Scholars in the past did not understand the exact meaning of this Sign until Modern time when Modern Western Scholars and Archeologists revealed that the Prophet Moses lived during the Reign of King Ramesses II.

And after the Medical examination of the Mummies of King Ramesses and King Mernepteh, it is became known that King Mernepteh was the one who was drowned not King Ramesses. So, the Scholars believe that the Mummy of the body of King Mernepteh, which was discovered in 1898 and now is in the Cairo Museum in Egypt, is considered as a Sign to the people after his time including our time, as was mentioned in the Koran.

A medical examination of the Mummy of King Mernepteh has shown that the body was drowned but did not stay in the water for long, because it does not show signs of deterioration due to prolonged submersion.

The Verse that mention the Crossing of the Sea:

Then We inspired Moses, saying: “Strike the Sea with your Staff!”--whereupon it (the Sea) parted, with each part (of that Sea water) appeared like a huge, firm mass of a mountain.” (Koran 26:63).

God gave Moses the **Torah** (Tawrat), which included the verses of the **Ten Commandments** on Mount Sinai in the Sinai Peninsula, which form the bedrock of Jewish Law.

The Ten Commandments are:

- 1) I am the Lord who rescued you from Egypt and you are to have no other deities (gods) before Me.
- 2) Do not try to represent God by making an Idol or any other Image of Him.
- 3) Do not misuse the Name of your Lord.

- 4) Remember the Sabbath day (Saturday) by keeping it Holy.
- 5) Respect your father and mother.
- 6) Do not murder. 7) Do not commit adultery.

- 8) Do not steal. 9) Do not tell lies.
- 10) Do not long (wish) to have anything that belongs to another person (which means do not become Jealous).

Also God promised the People of Israel the land of Canaan as the Promised Land, which was also the land of the Patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

God ordered the Israelites to go fight and retake the land of the Patriarch from the Canaanites.

But the people of Israel refused to perform their duties on the battlefield even with the assurances of Moses and Aaron that God and some of His Angels will be with them on the battlefield; because the Israelites thought that they reached a place in Canaan where the people were bigger, taller and more muscular than themselves and they were inside a Fortress. So they believed that they cannot defeat those people.

As a punishment for them, God did not let them enter the Promised Land, and He told them that they will be left wandering in the Sinai Peninsula for forty years. The Israelites changed their mind but it was too late.

During the wandering, God provided them with water and food miraculously until all the adult people who were in captivity in Egypt died except for the two Israeli leaders, Joshua and Caleb who did not refuse to perform their duties in the battlefield.

Notice: The adult Israelites who were in captivity as a slaves in Egypt never used to fight for their rights, so when they reached a tough place to fight in Canaan, they could not perform their duties.

Moses, before his death, appointed Joshua as the new leader for the Israelites.

The new generation of Israelites who either never been in captivity or were very young at that time and also were hardened by the Sinai desert during the Wanderings, became under the leadership of the **Prophet Joshua**, who trained them very hard until they became skilled fighters and were able to conquer some of the Fortresses of Canaan after years of fighting and with the help of God, and settled in the Promised Land of the Patriarch.

The food that God provided in the Sinai desert during the Wandering was called **Manna**, it was like a grain which was found on the ground every morning; the second type of food was called **Quail**, which was a low flying bird, and was easy to catch.

The meaning of some terms:

1) Ark of Covenant: It is the chest containing the **Ten Commandments** written on stone tablets and **Aaron's Rod**, carried by the Hebrews during their desert Wanderings.

Two gold statues of two Angels were over the lid.

2) Tabernacle: It was the **portable sanctuary** tent for **worship** in which the Jews carried the Ark of Covenant, during the Wanderings in the Sinai Peninsula.

3) Holy of Holies: It was the sanctuary inside the Tabernacle or inside the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, in which the **Ark of the Covenant was kept**.

It is unlike Christianity, which is generally defined in terms of **Doctrines** and **Beliefs**, Judaism on the other hand is defined by **Practices** and **Ethics** primarily.

The Jewish religion in general is more focused on life in this world than on Afterlife. In Judaism, there are no details about the Life-Hereafter as there are in Islam and Christianity.

The Orthodox (including Ultra Orthodox) Jews believe in the Day of Judgment, which means believing in Reward (in Paradise) and punishment (in Hell) in the Life Hereafter.

Other Jewish groups only believe that the Soul will be immortal with no physical resurrection, and no reward and punishment.

The Jews understand themselves as the people to whom God gave the Commandments to observe as their obligation to God.

So, they believe that by following God's instructions (Guidance), then they as "the Chosen People" become a blessing to the entire world as they help to establish God's realm of Justice and Peace (Shalom).

Also, there is the deeply anchored hope that one day the **Messiah** (Jewish Messiah) will come to transform the people of the world into God's holy people. This will be accompanied by the extermination of all evil.

Until God's rule finally dawns, devout Jews try to live their daily lives according to the Commandments dedicating their lives to God.

The Jews believe that there is One God who created the universe and rules over it, and that they should be faithful to God and carry out God's commandments.

Converting to Judaism:

The Jewish people do not have missionaries to convert people to Judaism.

. They link a person to Judaism through mothers only, not through fathers; so, if a Jewish man marries a non Jewish woman, then his children are not considered as a Jews according to the Jewish doctrine, but they are still accepted, because they consider themselves as Jews; also there are still some converts to Judaism and are accepted as part of the Jewish people but not as a real Jews in the Jewish Orthodox doctrines.

. But if a Jewish woman marries a non Jewish man, then her children are considered Jews in the Jewish doctrines.

. Also any female which is considered as a Jew, must have been born from another Jewish woman, so that she can be considered as a real Jew.

Notice: The Reform Movement considers a person as a Jew if his father is a Jew.

Prayers:

Observant Jews pray (worship) three times a day, but they do it mostly twice a day because the second prayer falls in the afternoon, which is the time of work; so they pray in the morning then they mostly combine the afternoon and the evening prayers and pray in the evening. They also pray in Synagogues in congregations led by a Rabbi, which means a teacher or a master.

Worship consists of readings from scripture, prayer and singing praises of God.

Usually, they pray in the Standing position. Also they pray in the Sitting position.

Group worship and prayer in synagogues or places of worship are indispensable elements of a righteous life. At least ten males are required to perform prayer at places of worship, while other Jewish groups' requirement can be ten males and females.

Fasting: Fasting in Judaism is not a major rite, while in Islam and some Christian groups is considered as a major rite

The Jewish people fast to commemorate certain sad religious events, about five events, also they fast on the day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), which means that they fast for six days every year. The Orthodox Jews fast more than the other Jewish groups.

The origin of the words Israeli and Jewish:

When the Jews refer to themselves, they call themselves by the names Hebrew, Jew, Jewish or Israeli.

. The Jews were called Israelis after the second name of the Patriarch Prophet Jacob (Israel), and they were continuously called by the name Israelis or people of Israel until the time of their forced deportation and exile from the region of Judea in Palestine to Babylon in the sixth Century B.C.

. Then in Babylon they were called **Yahud (Jewish)**, which refers to their region of **Yahudah (Judea)**, and the name Yahudah was derived from the name of the tribe of **Yahudah (Judah)**. So the word **Jew** was originated from the name of **Judah**.

. So, the name **Israel** was the name of the Prophet Ya‘qub (**Jacob**) who had twelve sons, and he was considered as the **father** of the People of Israel.

. In the Koran, Jacob’s Twelve Children were called as **Al-Asbaat**, and later their descendants became the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

In Islam, the Jewish people are called **Yahud (Ya’hood)** Singular: **Yahudi (Ya’hoody)**, which was derived from the name of the tribe of Yahudah (Judah); also the Jew is called as Israeeli (Israaelee).

In the Koran, they are called as **Yahud (Jewish)** or **Bani Israaeel (People of Israel)**.

The Kingdom of **Israel** was first established in part of Canaan in 1025 B.C. by King Saul, the first King of the People of Israel.

Judea was first called **Palestine** by the Romans after the year 135 A.D. (C.E.), after the last failed Jewish revolt against the Romans between 132-135 C.E.

The Jewish Talmud:

Talmud literally means Learning or Instructions.

. The Talmud is the collection of ancient Jewish Rabbinic writings that forms the bases of Jewish religious law, consisting of the early scriptural interpretations (Mishnah) and the later commentaries on them (Gemara). The Talmud is a collection of legal, ritual, and ethical writings, as well as Jewish history and folklore. It serves primarily as a guide to the civil and religious laws of Judaism.

. The Jewish Talmud constituting the bases of much of Jewish law.

. Both the Mishnah and Gemara were oral laws, then the Jewish scholars wrote them down between the years 200-500 A.D. (or C.E.).

There are two versions of the Talmud, the **Jerusalem Talmud** and the **Babylonian Talmud**.

Jewish Food and drink Laws:

The Jews are prohibited from consuming **pigs, rabbits, camels, shellfish**, and any animal that had died of natural causes. Also it was **forbidden** to eat **meat** and **milk** in the **same meal**, or to eat the **blood** of animals.

When an animal was killed for food, its blood had to be drained out. Meat that has been treated this way is called **Kosher**. Many devotees of Orthodox Jews still follow these food laws today.

The Jewish People are allowed to drink alcoholic beverages.

Kosher: It means as follow:

- 1) Kosher means fit or proper.
- 2) It is anything conforming to dietary laws.
- 3) Describe food that has been prepared so that it is fit and suitable under Jewish law.
- 4) It is ritually pure kosher meat.
- 5) It is selling or serving food prepared in accordance with dietary laws of Judaism.

2-The Main Jewish Religious Groups

Today's Main Jewish Religious Groups in the world:

In the United States and Europe, Judaism has been divided into three main Jewish groups since the beginning of the 19th century, as follow: **Orthodox, Conservative** and **Reform**.

Orthodox Jews are the most traditional; they follow strict laws about how they dress, what they can eat, and how they conduct their lives.

Conservative Jews follow many of the traditions.

Reform Jews are the least traditional.

In the year **2005**, the total Jewish population in the World was about **15** millions.

The population of the Jewish people in the state of Israel was about **4.5** million; and their population in the U.S.A. was about **6** million.

So, there are many Jewish groups in the world, but only three of them have large number of followers as follow:

First: Orthodox Jews:

Orthodox Jews rigorously observe Jewish law, ritual and custom.

The Orthodox Jews emphasis on the supreme authority of the Torah, including the dietary rules and laws for keeping the Sabbath, and take a fundamental literalist approach to the authority of the law and seek to pass along existing traditions without changing them and incorporate their faith into a wide range of daily activities and social interactions.

They pray three times a day, in the morning, in late afternoon, and after sunset. The men wear hats or skullcaps at all times as a sign of respect to God.

. They do not work, travel, or carry money on the Sabbath

. Their population in the U.S. in 2005 is about One million people.

Notice: Like in all other religions including Islam, not all the followers of any group including the Orthodox branch observe everything as was written in the Scriptures; some adherents observe most of their rites, while some others observe just some of it and still call themselves Orthodox.

Second: Conservative Jews:

The Conservative Jews accept most of the principles and practices of traditional Judaism, but support the modification and relaxing of certain laws of the Torah.

The Conservative Jews have rejected the principle that there can be no contact with the new societies and cultural systems that Jews encounter in their daily lives, but they nevertheless try to retain as much as continuity as possible with the ancient Tradition of Judaism.

- . They acknowledge the need to make some accommodations to external society, but nevertheless grant an important and usually dominant role to the traditions of the past.
- . Conservative Jews founded in the 19th century. Their population in the U.S. in 2005 is about 1.5 million

Third: Reform Jews:

They accept the entire Torah as inspired by God, but it is also seen as open to the study and interpretation of the individual.

They see God's relationship with the Jews as an ongoing process, and emphasize the broad moral messages of the Jewish Tradition.

Reform Judaism professes a more liberal interpretation of Jewish doctrine and ritual, and is especially prevalent in the United States.

Reform Jews seek to adopt religious practices to modern times.

They feel that Judaism's ritual practices have no significance for them. They have discarded many traditional customs and ceremonies.

- . They believe that moral and ethical teachings form the most important part of Judaism.
- . They do not see the authority of the Torah and Talmud as binding regulations on daily conduct with others, but rather seek to honor tradition and faith by making religious observance accessible to modern practitioners.
- . Reform Jews founded in the 19th century and their population in the U.S. in 2005 is about 1.4 million.

Hasidism (Ultra Orthodox):

They resemble the Sufi Orders in Islam, and the Monastic Orders in Catholicism.

The Hasidism is a Jewish Mystic movement was founded in reaction against the rigid Talmudic legalistic learning.

It is a religious movement, characterized by great enthusiasm, religious ecstasy, and strong personal devotion to the individual leaders.

Hasidism (the pious one) is today a branch of Orthodox Judaism with origins in a mystical movement in the 18th century in Eastern Europe that stressed prayer over studying the Torah and Talmud.

The Hasids' followers are very strict observers of the Jewish religious laws.

The Hasids wanted to enliven a religion that had become rigid, bogged down in laws and commandments, with no sense of spirituality, mysticism, magic, and joy.

Hasidism is based on the belief that the natural world and the supernatural world (Invisible beings called Jinn or Genies world) interact with each other constantly.

The creator is found within the world, which is merely his cloak. "No place without him"; this phrase from the Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism) forms the starting point for Hasidic teaching, in which God and Humans look each other in the eye.

The Hasidism sect followers clearly visible since the men wear black suits with a black hat, side curls and beards; they follow a charismatic leader.

3-Important Religious Holy Day Celebrations in Judaism

The dates of the Holy Day celebrations in Judaism differ every year because the Jewish calendar is a **Lunar**; so that to keep the annual religious celebrations of the Lunar Calendar year in line with the **Same Season** of the Solar Calendar year.

So, the Jewish people add more than 30 days every two or three years in a 19 year cycle, on the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th year, to keep their calendar in the same Solar season every year.

The Lunar calendar year which is 354 days is usually 11 days shorter than the Solar Calendar year which is 365 days, so every three years the difference becomes 33 days.

Notice: Muslims also use the Lunar Calendar Year for religious purposes only (like Ceremonies, rites and celebrations), and every year all the religious events changes 11 days backward every year, and according to the traditions of Islam, the Muslims do not change their Lunar Calendar Year.

Since the beginning of Islam, the Muslims used a separate Solar Calendar for the Farmers and other non-religious purposes.

The followings are some of the important religious celebrations:

First: Passover (Pesach).

Passover is a major Jewish Holy Day honoring the delivery or Exodus of the Hebrews (Jewish people) from slavery or captivity in Egypt.

. God sent a tenth plague on the first-born of the Pharaoh and the people of Egypt and killed their first-born males, but God passed the plague over the houses of the people of Israel and they were saved from death; also it was the reason that the Pharaoh allowed them to leave Egypt.

. Passover is celebrated for seven days, which is in March or April.

Second: Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur).

It is the Holiest Day in Judaism, and on which the Jewish people fast and say prayers of penitence.

. Yom means Day, and Kippur means atonement.

. It is on the 10th day of the Jewish month Tishrei, which is in September or October.

. The term atonement means the reconciliation between God and humans, or the making of reparation for a sin or a mistake.

Third: New Year (Rosh Hashanah).

It is the Jewish New Year, a holiday that takes place on the first and second days of the Hebrew month Tishrei; it is roughly the middle of September to the middle of October.

Fourth: Festival of Lights (Hanukah).

It is the **Modern Menorah** (Candelabrum). Hanukah is also written as Khanukah or Chanukah.

It has nine branches, one for each of the eight days of the festival of Hanukah, and the ninth, known as Shamath, is for kindling of all the others.

- . The Hanukah custom is mostly in the U.S.A., developed after War World II.
- . The Menorah of Hanukah is a ceremonial candle holder with eight curved branches of candle holders and they light one branch each night until they complete the eight days, which is in November or December.

. Hanukah is the eight days Jewish festival resemble and commemorate the lighting of the temple for eight days after the Jewish victory over the Syrians in 165 B.C; the Syrians (Ruled by Greeks) captured Jerusalem and profaned the Temple in Jerusalem and they put statues of Idols in the Temple, which outraged the Jews and led to revolt against the Syrians.

. The Hanukah Menorah is usually displayed in the window of the Jewish homes as an electric Menorah.

The Ancient Menorah:

This Ancient Menorah has seven branches and is considered as the traditional Menorah; it resembles the six days of creation; the middle branch is for kindling the other six.

. The Ancient Menorah is considered as an **Emblem** of Judaism and the state of Israel, and it adorns Synagogues.

4-The Meaning of some Terms in Judaism

Hebrew: The term Hebrew means “**Those who pass from place to place**”, or “**Nomads**”, a designation applied to Abraham and his family by the Ancient people of Amorites.

So, Hebrew means any member or descendant of a Semitic people claiming descent from Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the Israelites.

In general, the term Hebrew means any **Jew**.

Also the term Hebrew means the **Semitic language** of the **Ancient Hebrews** and any of the later forms of this language, especially Modern Hebrews.

Hebron:

A city of the West Bank, located southwest of Jerusalem, which according to the Bible was considered as the burial place of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob. It is considered as a holy place to the three religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Torah: In Islam it means **Tawrat** (Tawraat), which is:

- 1) Torah literally means “Law” or “Instruction”.
- 2) The Holy Book of the Jewish people.
- 3) It is the scroll containing the Five Books of Moses; also, in broader sense, the accumulated sacred Jewish writings of the centuries following the time of Moses.
- 4) Also it is the entire body of Jewish religious law and learning including both sacred literature and oral tradition.

Chosen people:

God chose Israel as a Nation, because God wanted Israel to become as an example to the other Nations. The Israelites were to follow and obey God.

The Jews in the Ancient times were called God's Chosen People.

The Koran referred to the Ancient Jews as the Chosen People.

The Christians also refer to themselves as the new Chosen People.

The Muslims also consider themselves as the new Chosen People.

The Hebrew Bible (called Tanakh or Tanach):

The Hebrew Bible consists of twenty four books, subdivided into three main parts: **Torah** (the five books of Moses), books of the **Prophets**, and the books of **Writings**.

Many of the scriptures were written from 950 to 450 B.C.

The Books of Writings date from the time of the Babylonian captivity (586-538 B.C.) and they were presumably adopted into the Hebrew Bible around the year 190 B.C.

Notice:

Some of the Editors of the Old Testament of the Bible (Hebrew Bible) tried to link Abraham to Shem (Sam), the son of Noah by writing the ages of some people that were considered as the descendants of Shem and they linked them with Abraham, but they made a major Historical contradiction, which was that they made the time of Abraham as he was living in the last 75 years of Noah; while now it is known from the recent discoveries in 1993 in the Black Sea area, that the Great Flood of Noah happened 7,600 years ago, which means that the time between the death of Noah to the birth of Abraham was more than 3,000 years. And this contradiction created credibility problem with the Modern Western Scholars and Archeologists concerning the accuracy of the dates of some events that was reported by the editors of the Bible in the First Millennium B.C.

The most important of the Jewish scriptures is the book of Torah, which was revealed to the Prophet Moses, and is considered as the first five books of the Old Testament of the Bible.

The sacred scripture of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), consists of 24 books (The Christian Old Testament divides the same text into 39 books).

The Torah, or Law, was composed between the 10th and 5th centuries B.C.

Rabbi (Raa-baay): It means as follow:

- 1) Literally Means: "My Master"
- 2) The leader of a Jewish congregation, or the chief religious official of synagogue
- 3) Or a scholar qualified to teach or interpret Jewish law.

Synagogue (Senne-gog): It means as follow:

- 1) It is the place of worship and communal or meeting center of a Jewish congregation.
- 2) It is a body or congregation of followers of Judaism for the purpose of worship or religious study.
- 3) It means the community that congregates.

Zion: The word Zion was originated from the name of the Hill of Zion in Jerusalem (Al-Quds), the hill includes Mount Moriah on which the Temple of Solomon stood.

Zion means the Historic or Ancient Israel.

Zionism: A Movement arose in the late 19th century in response to growing anti-Semitism in Europe, especially in Russia in the 1880s, and in France in the 1890s.

The Zionist Movement sought to reestablish a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Today the Zionist Movement is concerned with the support and development of the State of Israel.

The State of Israel was founded in 1948.

Semite: The word Semite originated from the name of Sam (Shem), the elder son of the Prophet Noah and one of Noah's Three Sons.

Many religious scholars, considers the Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim) as one of the descendants of Shem (Sam).

There are many groups of people are from the descendants of Sam, including the Hebrew (Jews) and the Arabs.

Anti-Semite (or Anti-Semitism): It means anyone who is discriminating against or hostile or prejudice toward Jews.

The term Anti-Semitic was first used in the 1870s in Europe.

The Wailing Wall:

It is considered as the most Sacred place in the Jewish world.

The reason called Wailing Wall is because Jews used to stand by it lamenting the loss of the Temple in Jerusalem in 70 C.E. (A.D.) by the Romans.

It is also called "the **Western Wall**", because it was located on the west side of the Temple.

The Wall was the only thing left from the destroyed Temple.

The Romans left the Wall standing as a reminder for the Jews not to revolt again against the Romans, but 62 years later in 132 C.E. the Jewish people revolted again, because the Romans tried to make Jerusalem as a pagan city; and the revolt lasted for three years and it was very costly for the Jewish people, because many Jews either were killed, became captives or fled permanently to other regions or countries and it became known as the Jewish Diaspora, also it was the last Jewish revolt until the founding of the state of Israel in Palestine in 1948.

After the failed Jewish revolt of the year 132 A.D., the Romans changed the name of the land of **Judea** to the new name of **Palestine**.

Sabbath (Saab-ath): It means a day of rest, which is the seventh day of the week.

For Muslims, the Sabbath is on Friday but they are allowed to work before and after the Friday Sermon.

. It is on Saturday for the Jews and some Christian groups and observed as a day of religious worship and rest.

. For most Christian groups, it is on Sunday as a day of rest and worship.

The Jewish Sabbath is observed from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday.

Jew, Israeli or Hebrew: In Islam it is called **Yahudi** (Yahoody) or **Israeeli**.

Jews, Jewish or Israelites or Hebrews (the people of Israel):

In Islam it is called **Yahud** (Yahood) or **Banu -Israel**.

The Term **Yahud** originated from the Hebrew term **Yahuda** (Judah).

Psalms (Saams): In Islam it is called **Zabur** (Zaboor), which was the Holy Book that was revealed to the Prophet **David** (Dawud).

Notice: Some Muslim scholars believe that **Zabur** was probably the same as the book of the Psalms in the Bible.

Second:

Christianity

1-Prophet ‘Esa (Jesus Christ) in Christianity and Islam (4 B.C.-29 A.D.)

In Islam Jesus is called ‘Esa (Eesa) or ‘Isa:

In Islam, Jesus is considered as human being, and not divine.

Jesus was described in the Koran (Qur’an) as follow:

1) He was called ‘Esa ibn Maryam, which means Jesus son of Mary.

2) Also called as Prophet and Messenger, and the Servant of God

3) And called the Word of God and a Spirit from God.

Notice: In Islam, the meaning of the **Word of God** means that when God ordered the creation of the Spirit of Jesus He said the command Word “**Be**” and then Jesus was created as a result of the Word of God “**Be**”, which is considered as the direct command of God. Muslim Scholars interpret the Phrase “Spirit from God” to mean a Spirit was created by God.

4) Also was described as “he (Jesus) is One of those brought Nigh”, which means he is in a near place in Allah’s presence.

5) He was called al-Masih (al-Maseeh), which means “the Messiah”.

The Messiah literally means the **Anointed One** or as in the Greek language it means “**Christ**”.

6) In the Koran, Jesus was called as ‘Esa (Jesus), which was derived from the Hebrew name Yesu’ or Yesua, and Yeshua or Yoshua (Joshua) which means the Savior.

Also God (Allah) Himself called the son of Zakariyya (Zecharia) and Elizabeth by the name “**Yahya**”, which in Hebrew become as “**Yuhanna**” and known in English as **John the Baptist**.

Mary (Maryam)

The name **Mary** was derived from the Hebrew name **Maryam** or Miryam or Miriam.

Jesus’ mother was called **Mary** the daughter of ‘**Emran**’.

Maryam means the “**Worshipper**”

Mary, like John the Baptist (Yahya) and the Prophet Isaac (Es’haaq), was born in a miraculous way.

Her mother was barren and very old; but her mother did not give up hope, and she was continuously praying to God to give her a child, and she promised God that if God gave her a child, then she would give her child to work in the temple of God.

After Mary was born and became old enough to work in the Temple; her mother sent her to the temple and became in the custody of her relative Zakariyya (Zecharias), the father of John the Baptist, who was a priest in the Temple of God.

In Christianity, Zakariyya (Zakareyya) was a priest, while some Muslim scholars believe that he was a prophet.

Zakariyya took care of Maryam in the Temple, and whenever Zakariyya visited Mary in the Sanctuary of the Temple, he was surprised to find all kinds of food and fruits with Mary, and he always asked her where this food came from?, and she always answered that God provided her with food (through the Angels); some of the food was from a different season, which means that the food or fruits were not available in the local markets at that time.

According to some Scholars, after the birth of Jesus, Mary married Joseph, and later Joseph married another woman and he had four sons and also daughters from the other woman; so Jesus had four half brothers and also had half sisters. Mary and Joseph lived in the town of Nazareth in the region of Galilee.

(Jesus' Ministry)

Jesus started his ministry in **Nazareth**. He preached in the synagogue, but because the people of the town recognized Jesus as a local man and the son of a lowly carpenter, they refused to accept him despite some of his miracles and they drove him out of the town.

Jesus said that no Prophet has been accepted in his own hometown.

Probably not acceptance in the same hometown comes from growing up with them, so they do not take the prophets seriously.

Then Jesus' ministry took place in the cities and countryside around the Sea of Galilee, and many of Jesus' miracles happened there.

. Jesus was a Messenger to the People of Israel, but later after his time, some of his followers became Apostles of Christianity to the world.

Jesus became Prophet at the age of thirty, and his Prophet-hood was only for three years until the age of thirty three. He never married.

Christianity is based on the acts and sayings of Jesus of Nazareth as related by his followers and Apostles.

Jesus born as a Jew in the town of **Bethlehem** around 4 B.C., but details of his life before he became as a Prophet is obscure.

Jesus lived for 33 years, from 4 B.C. to 29 C.E. (A.D.).

(Jesus' Birth and Nature according to Islam)

God said in the Koran that He created Jesus in a miraculous way without a father, just as He had created Adam before without a father and without a mother.

As in Verse 59, of Surah 3 (Koran 3:59):

“Verily, the Likeness (nature) of Jesus in the sight of God is as the Likeness (nature) of Adam, whom He (God) created out of dust and said to him, “Be”-and he is (created).”

God gave the Angels the ability to appear to humans in the form of men; as the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary in the form of man and gave her the news of the birth of Jesus. According to Christian Tradition, Jesus was born in a cave (used as stable) on the outskirts of the town of Bethlehem; while according to the Koran, Jesus was born under a Palm-Tree. The Church of Nativity was built after the time of Jesus and now covering the cave.

[The Story of Mary (Maryam) and the birth of Jesus ('Esa) in the Koran; Also the story of Zecharia (Zakariyya) and the birth of John the Baptist (Yahya)]

Mary's mother dedicates her new born Mary to the service of the Temple of God:

The family of Emran was working in the temple, and Emran was the chief priest.

Emran and his wife became old with no son to work after Emran in the service of the temple.

So the wife of Emran who was barren prayed to God to give her a son so that her son can serve God in the Temple.

God answered her prayer and she became pregnant, but the child turned out to be female and called her Maryam (Mary), which means Worshipper; and because she promised God, so she sent Mary to serve in the Temple after she grew up.

Zakariyah (Zecharia) was married to Elizabeth, the Aunt of Mary (the sister of Mary's mother).

So, Zecharia became Mary's relative; as a result of this Jesus and John the Baptist (son of Zecharia and Elizabeth) became cousins.

And the Story of the Family of Emran, as follow:

First: God described the family of Emran, as in Verse 33, Surah 3, as follow:

"Behold, God preferred (raised or chose) **Adam** and **Noah** and the Family of **Abraham** and the family of **Emran** above all Mankind."

The Family of Emran:

The Family of Emran are the parents of Mary (Emran and his wife), and Mary, Jesus Christ, and John the Baptist and his parents (Zecharia and Elizabeth).

Second: The Mother of Mary dedicates Mary:

"(Remember) when the wife (mother of Mary) of Emran said: O my Lord (God)! I have vowed to you what (the child that) is in my womb to be dedicated for your services (in the Temple), so accept this from me. Verily, You are the All-Hearer, the All-Knowing."

"Then when she gave birth to her (to Mary), she said: "O my Lord! I have given birth to a female child, and God knows better what I have brought forth; and the male (she had hoped for, to serve in the Temple) is not like the female, and I have named her Maryam (Mary), and verily, I seek your protection for her and for her offspring against Satan, the outcast." (Koran 3:35-36).

Third: God accept Mary:

"So her (Mary) Lord accepted her (Mary) with goodly acceptance. He made her grow in a good growth (good manner) and placed her in the care of Zakariyah (Zecharia).

"Whenever Zecharia visited her (in the sanctuary of the Temple where Mary was), he found food with her (was provided with food), He (would ask) said: "O Mary! From where have you got this?" She (would answer) said, "This is from God." Verily, God provides (through the Angels) sustenance to whom He wills, without limit."

(Koran 3:37).

Fourth: Zecharia and the birth of John the Baptist:

At that time (when Zecharia saw that Mary was getting Food through the Angels) Zecharia invoked his Lord, saying: “O my Lord! Grant me from You, a good offspring. You are indeed the All-Hearer of invocation.” (Also another verse in the Koran mentions longer Invocation by Zecharia about offspring).

Then the Angels called him (Zecharia), while he stood praying in the sanctuary, (the Angels Saying): “God gives you the good news of (the birth of) Yahya (John the Baptist), who shall confirm the truth of a **Word** (Jesus) from God, and (shall be) outstanding (noble) among men, and utterly chaste, and a Prophet from among the righteous.” (Koran 3:38-39).

Fifth: Choosing Mary as the Mother of Jesus:

1-Verse 42, of Surah (Chapter) 3, (called Chapter of “**The Family of Emran**”), about Choosing Mary as mother of Jesus:

“And Lo! The Angels said: “O Mary! God has chosen (elected) you (to be mother of Jesus) and made you pure, and has preferred (raised) you above all the women of Mankind.” (Koran 3:42).

2-And in (Koran 21:91):

And she (Mary) who guarded her chastity (was Virgin), therefore, We breathed into her of our Spirit (Angel Gabriel breathed on Mary), and caused her and her Son (Jesus) to become as a Sign to all Mankind.”

3-Also in (Koran 3:45-46):

“(And remember) When the Angels said: “O Mary! Verily, God sends you the good news of a Word (God’s Word will become Mary’s Son) from Him (God), whose name shall become known as the Christ (Messiah), Jesus, son of Mary, held in great honor in this world and in the Life-Hereafter, and will be one of those who are drawn near unto God; and he shall speak unto men in his cradle, and in his middle age (after the second coming), and shall be of the righteous.” (Koran 3:45-46).

Sixth: Mary and Jesus is a Sign to Mankind:

1-Verse 91, Surah 21 of Koran:

“And We (God) made her (Mary) and her son (Jesus) a Sign for Mankind.”

2-Nine: Also as in (Koran 4:171):

“Verily, the Messiah, Jesus, Son of Mary was a Messenger of God, and His (God’s) **Word** (Jesus), which He conveyed unto Mary, and a **Spirit** (Jesus) from Him (God)”.

Seventh: (The Birth of Jesus)

There is a full Chapter number 19 (Surah 19) in the Koran under the name Maryam (Mary).

And these are some of its Verses 16-33, about the birth of Jesus (Koran 19:16-33):

“And (O Muhammad remember to) mention in the (Koran) Scripture (the story of) Mary, when she withdrew in seclusion from her family to a place facing east”

Then We (God) sent to her Our Spirit (Angel Gabriel), and he appeared before her in the form of a perfect man.”

“She (Mary) exclaimed: “Verily, I seek refuge (protection) with God the Most Gracious from you (it means do not approach me), if you do fear God.”

(The Angel Gabriel) answered: “I am only a Messenger from your Lord Who announce to you the gift of son endowed with purity (righteousness).”

She said: “How can I have a son, when no man has touched me, nor I am unchaste?”

He said: “So (it will be), your Lord said: “That is easy for Me (God). And We (God) might make him (Jesus) as a sign (symbol) to Mankind and a Mercy (act of Grace) from Us (God), and it is a matter (already) decreed (by God).”

“(And in time) She conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a far place.

And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a palm-tree.”

(Then Jesus was born under the Palm-Tree).

“She exclaimed: “Oh, Would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!”

Then he [the new born Jesus spoke miraculously to her] called out to her from below her (while she was standing and the baby was on the Ground), saying: “do not grieve; your Lord has provided stream water under you (spring water just opened miraculously).”

“(Baby Jesus still talking to his mother) And shake (by Miracle) the trunk of palm-tree towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe dates upon you.”

“(and Baby Jesus said) So eat (dates) and drink (Spring water) and be glad. And if you see any human being, say: “Verily, I have vowed a fast unto God, so I shall not speak to any human being this day.”

(After Mary heard her baby Jesus speaking to her, and that God would defend her through Baby Jesus in front of the people who new her, then Mary decided to go back to her people and face them.).

“Then she brought him (the baby) to her people, carrying him. They (exclaimed) said: O Mary! Indeed you have committed a big sin.

“O sister of Aaron! (Resembling her to Prophet Aaron in worshipping God) Your father (her father was their chief priest and died before) was not a bad man, nor was your mother an unchaste woman.”

“Then she pointed to him (to baby Jesus). They said: “How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?”

“(But) He (baby Jesus) said: “Verily, I am a servant of God, He has given me the Scripture (Gospel) and made me a Prophet;”

“(Baby Jesus still talking) And He (God) has made me blessed wherever I may be, and has enjoined on me Prayer, and Charity, as long as I live.”

“And (has endowed me with) piety towards my mother; and has not made me arrogant.

“(Hence) Peace was upon me on the day I was born, and (will be upon me) on the Day I die, and (also will be upon me) on the day when I shall be raised to life (again)!”
(Koran 19:16-33).

(According to some Scholars; after Baby Jesus defended his mother miraculously, her people understood this as a Sign from God; but they also asked a young man called Joseph to marry her so that to keep other people (who don't understand this Sign) quiet about accusing Mary of committing big sin.).

(Miracles of Jesus according to the Koran)

1) Jesus **talked** to the people **soon after his birth** in defense of his mother's piety, and he told the people that he is the servant of God (Allah) and that he will become Prophet and Messenger to the people.

2) He could **make birds** become **alive** out of **clay**.

3) **Heal leprosy**.

4) Restored the Eyes of the **Blind**.

5) Make the **Dead** come **Alive**.

6) He could tell what the people **Having** or **Hiding** in their homes.

He could do all these Miracles by the **Command** of **Allah** (God).

Notice: There are some other Miracles that was mentioned in the Bible, like feeding thousands of people by a meal was just enough for few people; also Jesus' walking on the water, and some other Miracles.

God said in the Koran that He favored the families of Adam, Noah, Abraham and the family of **'Emran** over all Mankind. **'Emran** is the father of Mary.

Also God said in the Koran that he chose Mary to become the mother of Jesus over all the other women in the world.

Muslims believe that Jesus and his mother Mary were the only two people in the world that were not touched by Satan or his descendants (the devils) during their birth.

Jesus as the Lamb of God in Christianity:

The Christians explain the meaning of the Lamb of God, to mean that God sent **'Esa** (Jesus) as a sacrifice (like a lamb to be as a sacrifice) for the sin of the people who become Christians sincerely.

The Crucifixion of Jesus takes away the sins of the people, after they become true or sincere Christian Believers.

John the Baptist identified Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, which means that Jesus will make intercession with God (Allah) for the sins of the sincere Christians.

The Christians believe that the Fall of Adam and Eve (**Haw'waa'**) is seen as the fault of the will, and the Fall of Man (or woman) is redeemed by Jesus' sacrifice for man and by man's sacrifice for Jesus (**'Esa**), in denying himself (becomes sincere Christian) in order to accept Jesus' faith; which means that Jesus will intercede or will be the Savior of the Sincere (True or Practicing) Christian Believers on the Day of Judgment.

(The End of Jesus according to Christianity and Islam)

First: According to Christianity:

Jesus was crucified, and after three days he rose from the dead and then after forty days he ascended to Heaven to sit at the right hand of God, then he will come back before the end of the world as the Messiah, the Savior, then conquer the **Anti-Christ**, and make peace in the world.

Second: According to Islam:

In Islam, the end of Jesus is mysteries as follow:

The following Koran Verses about the end of Jesus:

First: Verses 157-158 of Surah (chapter) 4 of the Koran, as follow:

“And their saying (those people who said that they crucified Jesus): We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, the Messenger of God,” But they did not slay him, nor crucify him, but it appeared so to them, and those who differed therein are in doubt thereof; they have no knowledge thereof, they follow nothing but conjecture; for surely, they did not slay him.” But God raised him up unto himself, and God is Ever All-Powerful, All-Wise”
(Koran 4: 157-158).

Second: Verse 55, of Surah 3, as follow:

“When God said: O Jesus! Verily, I will cause you to die and will raise you to Myself and clear you of those who denied the truth; and I will make those who follow you superior to those who deny the truth, until the Day of Resurrection. In the end, unto me you all must return and I shall judge between you with regard to all on which you used to dispute.”
(Koran 3:55). The Muslims also consider themselves as the followers of Jesus Christ, but according to the Koran and the Islamic teachings.

There are two explanations for the above verses (4:157-158 & 3:55), as follow:

First: The explanation of Muslim Scholars

Notice: Many mysterious Verses of the Koran were not explained during the Prophet Muhammad’s time; so later those mysterious verses were interpreted or explained differently by each group of Muslim Scholars, as the same thing happened with the verses of the end of Jesus.

Many Muslim Scholars interpret the Verses (4:157-158 & 3:55) to mean that Jesus was not crucified, because God saved him from crucifixion without the knowledge of the people, and then raised him up to Heaven; and probably God changed the look of somebody else into the look of Jesus and was crucified instead of Jesus.

And that Jesus will come back before the end of the world as the Messiah, the one who make peace in the world and make the people Submit to God after conquering the Anti-Christ (al-Masih ad-Dajjal).

Second: The explanation of some Western Scholars

Some Western Scholars explain the above verses (4:157-158 & 3:55), by the following two verses (3:169 & 2:154), as listed below, which mention that those who were slain in God’s cause are not considered as slain or dead, as follow:

“But do not think of those who have been slain in God’s cause as dead. Nay, they are alive! with their Lord, (and) they have provision. (3:169)”

“And say not of those who are slain in God’s cause, “They are dead”. Nay, they are alive; but you perceive it not. (2:154)”. So some Western Scholars believe that since according to Christianity Jesus was slain (on the Cross) in God’s cause, so (in the Koran) probably God did not consider Jesus as slain or dead but alive, because Jesus was slain in God’s cause.

(The Anti-Christ)

Anti-Christ: Literally means “the Deceiver” or “the Imposter”, which means a False or deceiver Messiah or an enemy of Christ.

Islam and Christianity expect a great adversary (Anti-Christ) to cause chaos and corruption in the last days before the Second Coming of Jesus, then Jesus descends from Heaven and destroys the Anti-Christ.

Some scholars believe that there is a verse in the Koran (27:82) that mentions the Anti-Christ, as follow: “ And when the word (of torment) is fulfilled against them (Mankind), We (God) shall bring out from the earth a creature (or a beast) for them, to speak to them, because mankind did not believe in our Signs (then the Second Coming of Jesus Christ).”

(The Second Coming of Jesus according to Koran)

The Second Coming of Prophet Esa (Jesus), as in the following Verses of Koran:

First:

“**And he (Jesus) shall be a known Sign for (the coming of) the Hour** (It means Jesus’ Second Coming is a Sign that the end of life in the World is approaching, and after that is the Day of Resurrection) **So have no doubt about it (the Hour), and follow Me (God’s Scripture)**”. (Koran 43:61)”.

Second:

“**And there is none of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) but must believe in him (Jesus) before his death (after the Second Coming). And on the Day of Resurrection, he will be a witness against them**”. (Koran 4:159).

Third:

In the following Verse, Jesus was mentioned as he spoke to people when he was new born, and that he will speak to people when he becomes in his middle age.

Since Jesus died at the age of 33 years old, which is before middle age, so the following verse mentions the middle age after his second coming.

“**And he will speak unto mankind in his cradle and in his middle age (during his Second Coming), and he is of the righteous**” (Koran: 3:46).

Fourth:

There are some Muslim Scholars believe that the following Verse 33, of Surah 19, (Koran 19:33), is also likely mentions the Second Coming of Jesus, as follow:

“(Hence) Peace was upon me (Jesus) on the day I was born, and (Peace will be upon me) on the day I die, and (also will be upon me) on the day when I shall be raised to Life (again).”

Also, there are several Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad about the Second Coming of Jesus.

(Christian Beliefs)

Christian belief is rooted in **Three Basic Beliefs**:

First: God the Son:

The Spirit of the Word of God, took human form (**human embodiment**) as Jesus Christ and became God the Son.

In Christianity, Jesus is also called as “**Lord**”.

Second: God is Trinity:

Trinity is the belief that the One true God has Three Natures or three persons; each person of the Trinity is God. All three make only One God; which is:

- 1) **God the Father**, who “**Created**” the world.
- 2) **God the Son** (Jesus Christ) who “**Redeemed**” the world.

- 3) **God the Holy Spirit** or Holy Ghost, who “**Sanctifies**” the world.

The Holy Spirit is considered as God’s Power that is active within people and all Creation. The word Ghost also means Spirit.

Eastern Orthodoxy does not believe that the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son.

Notice: God does not have a gender.

Third: Atonement:

The world was created by God, is good, and is influenced by the sin of Adam and Eve; and that Mankind was reconciled to God through the agency of Christ.

Jesus came to earth in human form to teach humankind about God’s love and to sacrifice his life on the Cross so that all could enter eternal life with God.

The Christians believe that God the Son came on earth, died on Friday (Good Friday) on the Cross to save humankind, and rose from the dead on the third day on Sunday (Easter Sunday), and then after forty days he ascended to Heaven to sit at the right Hand of God the Father.

The purpose of life for the Christians is to do the will of God in this world and to be judged worthy of Heavenly Life in the next.

The Christian Theologians explain the Trinity as follow:

First: God the Father

In some denominations, the Sincere Christians mostly call God the Creator during their prayers by the name “Father” because they consider Him (God) as the Father of Jesus Spiritually, and also they consider Him as like their Father who takes care of them. So God the Father is considered as the Father of all the Christian Believers.

Second: God the Son

Since Jesus was created from the **Word of God** (Word of the Father) and the Spirit of the Word of God became Incarnate (bodily flesh) in the womb of the Virgin Mary, so it means that Jesus as God’s Word became His Begotten **Son** in the flesh, and Jesus became as a divine and as a Lord.

And since the Word of God was with God in the beginning, so it means that Jesus was also existed in the beginning with God when God created everything, which also means that Jesus was also involved in the creation

And since the Word of God was part of God, so it means that Jesus was also considered as **God** too, but originally part of God the Father.

So the Christians believe that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are now Three but they were originally as One God, which means that Christianity believe that they are Monotheistic Religion like Islam and Judaism, because they consider the Three as part of One God.

For Jesus as God the Son, the Christians believe that Jesus is all human and is all God; Jesus was always existed (as Word of God).

Jesus as Word of God in the Koran:

1) The Koran described Jesus as His **Word**, as in Verse 45, Surah 3 (Koran 3:45-46):

“(Remember) When the Angels said: O Mary! Verily, God gives you the good news of a **Word** (God’s Word will become Mary’s son) from Him (God), whose name shall become known as the Christ (Messiah), Jesus, Son of Mary, held in great honor in this world and in the Life-Hereafter, and will be one of those who are drawn near unto God; and he shall speak unto people in his cradle, and as grown man, and shall be of the righteous.”

2) And in (Koran 4:171):

“Verily, The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary was a Messenger of God, and His (God’s) **Word**, which He bestowed on Mary and a **Spirit** (Jesus) from Him (God).”

The meaning of the **Word of God** and the meaning of **Spirit from Him** according to Islam was explained in the beginning of this Subject of Christianity.

Also Jesus was mentioned as **Word** of God (Koran 3: 39) in the section of the birth of John.

Third: God the Holy Spirit

The Christian Theologians explain the Holy Spirit as the Spirit which was originally part of the Spirit of God, but now this Holy Spirit is with the Sincere Christian believers to help them and guide them.

The Holy Spirit works between God and the believers, which means that the Holy Spirit makes intercession with God for the sins of the sincere Christian believers.

The Holy Spirit helps the Christians understand God’s word, and He also guides, sanctifies and comforts the Christians.

The Holy Spirit in the Koran:

The Koran also mentions that God supported Jesus with the Holy Spirit, as follow:

1) In Koran 2:87 & in 2:253:

“To Jesus, son of Mary, We (God) gave clear evidence of the truth (Signs) and strengthened (supported) him with the **Holy Spirit**.”

2) And in Koran 5:110:

“(Remember) when God said (to Jesus), “O Jesus, Son of Mary! Remember the blessings which I bestowed upon you and your mother when I (God) supported (strengthened) you with the **Holy Spirit** so that you spoke to people in Cradle (as a new born, he spoke to defend his mother against her accusers) and (also the Holy Spirit will support you) during your (Jesus) Middle-Age (during the second coming of Jesus).”

Many Muslim scholars believe that the Holy Spirit who was supporting Jesus was more likely the Angel Gabriel, because he was described in the Koran as a Spirit when he first met and spoke to Mary to give her the good news of the birth of Jesus, as was explained in the section of the birth of Jesus.

Life Hereafter in Christianity:

Like Islam, Christianity also believes in the Life Hereafter and its Judgment Day including Heaven (Paradise) and Hell.

The Christian Holy Book (The Bible)

First: This Verse from the Koran about toleration:

This Verse shows toleration toward other religions, including Christianity and Judaism, by giving each religion a different law and a different way of Life, as follow:

“**To each among you** (Christians, Muslims, Jews and some others), **We (God) have Prescribed a Law** (a different Law to each one) **and** (a different) **Way of Life. If God had so willed, He could surely have made you all One Nation, but** (He willed it otherwise) **in order to test you in what He has given you; so compete with one another in doing good works** (deeds).

Unto God you all must return; and then He will inform you (make you truly understand) **about all that in which you used to differ.**” (Koran 5:48).

Second: This Verse about the Gospel and Torah, as follow:

“We (God) bestowed on him (Jesus) the **Gospel** wherein is guidance and a light (**Noor**, which is bright white light) and confirmation of the **Torah** that had come before it, and a guidance and admonition for the believers.”

“Let the people (Christians) of the Gospel judge by what God has revealed in the Gospel, and whosoever does not judge by what God has revealed (then) such people is disobedience.” (Koran 5:46-47).

The Bible:

In Christianity, some Bible Verses are considered as the direct Words of God, while some other Verses are considered as the indirect Words of God through all the Prophets of God including Moses and Jesus, and also through the Apostle of Jesus.

1) The term **Bible** means the **Book**,

2) The Christian Holy Book of the Bible consists of the **Old Testament** (the Hebrew Bible), originally written in Hebrew and Aramaic, and the **New Testament** (first written in **Greek** in the **first century**), which relates to the life and teachings of Jesus and his early followers.

3) The word Testament means **Agreement** or **Covenant**.

4) The Bible is a collection of **66** Holy Christian and Jewish Books assembled in one large book.

The total pages of the Bible in the English Language are less than one thousand page, while the Bible in some other languages is more than one thousand pages.

5) The Jewish Bible contains The Old Testament, while the Christian Bible contains The Old Testament and the New Testament.

6) The Roman Catholics canon also includes **15 books** found in the **Greek Septuagint** (translation of the Bible from the Hebrew Bible in the **third century B.C.**, with some modification to make it understandable for the common people) but not listed in the Hebrew Bible.

The Orthodox Church accepts **four** of these Apocryphal books, while Protestants accept **none**.

A **third century** (A.D.) translation of the Bible into **Latin** was called the **Vulgate**.

The Gospels:

1) The term **Gospel** means **Good News** (Enjeel).

The word Gospel originated from the Old English as god-spel (which is translation of the Greek term Euangelion): god (good) + spel (news), which became Gospel.

So the Gospel means the Good News that Jesus with great joy brought Salvation.

2) More than **Eighty** Gospels were written in the **first** and **second** centuries of Christianity,

3) The central portion of the New Testament consists of the **Four Gospels**, which were written by four of the earliest Christians; they are the books of Luke, Mark, Matthew and John. The Four Gospels were written before the end of the First century A.D.

4) The Four Gospels form the **first four books** of the New Testament of the Bible.

5) The Four Writers of the Gospels:

First: **Luke** was a doctor and close companion of Paul and travelled with him on his journeys.

Second: **Mark** was companion of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey.

Third: **Matthew** was one of the Twelve Apostles; also he was called Levi.

Fourth: **John** was one of Jesus' closest disciples.

While each tells the story of Jesus' life and death in their Gospels, they differ in details, with Luke and John providing more stories and greater emphasis on Christ's divinity.

6) The reason that the early fathers of Christianity in the beginning of the Fourth century A.D. (C.E.) accepted the four Gospels out of the other Eighty Gospels was because the Four Gospels were considered as the **earliest** written **Gospels** while the others were considered as a later or late written Gospels.

7) The **Gospel** is also called the **Evangel of Jesus**.

So the Islamic term for the Gospel is "**Enjeel**" which was derived from the Greek word "**Euangelion**". Some Muslim scholars write the term Enjeel as Ingil.

8) In Islam, the Gospel means the Revelations that was revealed to Esa (Jesus), while in Christianity it means the story of Jesus, about his life from birth to death, and his resurrection.

The Christians consider the Gospels as the Word of God through Jesus and his disciples.

Early Christianity in the Roman Empire:

The story of the spread of Christianity in the first century is told in the Acts of the Apostles and the epistles (letters) of St. Paul.

Christians were widely persecuted in the Roman Empire until the Emperor Constantine legalized the Religion in 313 C.E. (A.D.).

In 380 Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire.

(Practice in Christianity)

Central to the practice of most Christians are the **Seven Sacraments**.

The Roman Catholic, Eastern Churches, and some protestant Churches recognizes the Sacraments as any of the traditional **Seven Rites** instituted by Jesus to confer sanctifying grace

- 1) **Baptism**
- 2) **Confirmation** (of faith)
- 3) **Marriage** (Holy Matrimony)
- 4) **Ordination of Priests** (Holy Orders)
- 5) **Anointing** of the Sick
- 6) **Reconciliation** (Confession and Penance)
- 7) **Communion** (Eucharist)

While most of the **Protestants** recognize the Sacraments as only the **Two Rites** of **Baptism** and **Communion** as was instituted by Jesus to confer sanctifying grace.

The Sacramental offering and consumption of Bread and Wine represents the body and blood of Christ.

Christians are organized into Congregations, and worship in churches led by priests or ministers who administer the Sacraments.

Most denominations designate Sunday as the Sabbath and the day for special observance and worship.

The meaning of some Terms:

Sacraments: It is a Religious Rites that mediate God's Grace. Literally means making Sacred.

Confirmation: It is a Christian rite admitting a baptized person to a full membership in a church.

Holy Order: It is the rite of ordination of a priest.

Anointing of the Sick: It is a rite in the Roman Catholic Church, which is the Sacrament of anointing a critically ill or weak person with prayers for recovery and an act of penance or confession.

Confession and Penance: It means as follow:

- 1) It is something confessed, especially disclosure of one's sins to a priest.
- 2) A voluntary act of self-discipline or devotion expressing sorrow for sin.
- 3) A Sacrament in some Christian Churches that includes repentance, confession to a priest, acceptance of a punishment, and absolution.

Eucharist (Communion) (yoo-ker-est): It means as follow:

- 1) The word Eucharist Literally means Thanksgiving, grateful or thankful; or grace; or to show favor; while the word **Communion** literally means Mutual or **common participation**.
- 2) Eucharist or Communion is a Sacrament and the central act or component of worship in many Christian Churches, in which **bread** and **wine** are consecrated and consumed or shared by a congregation in remembrance or to commemorate the sacrificial act of Jesus Christ.

The Christian Weekly Supper:

Most Christian denominations or groups have weekly Supper in their Churches, mostly on Wednesdays and the Supper is called "The Lord's (Jesus) Supper", in commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper.

(Christian Prayers)

Christians can pray anywhere and anytime, and can read the Bible alone or with others whenever and wherever they want.

For Catholics must go to Church to attend **Mass**, and only ordained priest can say the Mass. Mass is the sacred rite and the formal official worship service of Catholicism.

The Mass incorporates the Bible (Sacred Scripture), Prayer, Sacrifice, Hymns, Symbols, Gestures, Sacred food for the soul, and directions on how to live a Catholic Life—all this is in one Ceremony.

Mass on Sunday or on a Holy Day is obligation.

While the characteristic of Baptists and some other Protestants Denominations are centered on the explanation of the scriptures in a sermon, performing prayers without advance preparation and Hymn singing; they are more concerned for the religious experience and expression than precise theological formulations.

The Christian Prayers typically addressed to the Father (God) in the name of Christ (Jesus), and its motivation and effect are associated with the Divine action of the Spirit (Holy Spirit). Each Christian group has its own way of doing prayers, including times and the number of prayers.

Christianity encourages the Christians to read the Bible every day, especially in the early morning.

The early Christians did not use chairs or benches in the churches as the Christians do these days.

Among Christian groups, the act of communal prayer is the deepest way that the religious communities define themselves.

Christians pray communally on Sunday morning.

In all Christian prayer services, men and women pray together in the standing or sitting position; they also pray individually in the sitting or Kneeling position.

Usually at the end of the Prayers, many Christians make the Sign of the Cross by hand as a symbol of the Cross of Jesus.

Some denominations finish their prayers by saying: “In the name of Jesus, Amen”.

Hymn Singing is a feature of worship service, communal prayers, reading from the Bible and occasionally the celebration of the Eucharist.

Two important Holy places in Christianity:

Many Christian Pilgrims visit the following two Churches:

First: The Church of Nativity:

The term Nativity originated from the Latin term Nativitas, which means “Born”.

The Church of Nativity was built on the same cave out of the town of Bethlehem in Palestine where Jesus was believed born there.

Second: The Church of Sepulchre (Sep-el-cher):

The term Sepulchre was originated from the Latin term Sepulchrum which means “to bury the dead”.

The Church of Sepulchre in Jerusalem was built on the site of the death and burial of Jesus, and this Church is considered as the holiest place in Christianity.

(Fasting in Christianity)

According to the New Testament Jesus and his Disciples fasted, but Jesus encouraged them not to let the fasting get in the way of doing good works.

For Jesus, fasting became a private and personal experience; he admonished his followers not to walk around with long faces and obvious discomfort so that others might be aware that they were fasting.

Jesus fasted for forty days.

Eastern Catholics (in the Middle East) and **Eastern Orthodox** devotees observe two kinds of Fasting:

First: Some devotees observe the Great Fast, which means that they do not eat any meat, eggs or dairy products during all forty days of Lent before Easter (in the Spring).

Second: Midnight to noontime (no food); some Eastern Catholics and some Eastern Orthodox devotees fast on every Fridays of Lent from midnight to noon time; and even some of the devotees fast during everyday of lent from midnight to noontime except Sundays.

Fasting is not allowed on Sundays to honor the Resurrection of Jesus.

The **Vatican** has eased the rule of Fasting for **Catholics** after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).

Now Catholics can fast on only Ash Wednesday and on Fridays in Lent, which means abstinence from meat, while fasting on other Fridays are considered as voluntary.

The age of the devotee Catholics (who fast the abstinence from meat) are between 14-59 years old.

While those who fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are between 18-59 years old.

Notice: Many **Protestant** groups do not include fasting as one of their rituals.

(Food and Drink in Christianity)

In Christianity, there is no known prohibition for food and drink.

The Christians are allowed to consume all kinds of meat (including pork) and any other kind of Food; also they are allowed to drink alcoholic beverages.

Drinking Wine was allowed during the time of other Prophets before the time of Jesus, including David and Solomon.

The reason that all kinds of food are acceptable in Christianity is because of what Jesus said, as was mentioned in the Gospel of Mark (7:14-23), as follow:

(Jesus in Jerusalem) “Again Jesus called the crowd (Some of his followers, some Jewish People and the religious Authorities of the Temple called Pharisees) to come to him and hear “All of you Listen to me,” he said, “and try to understand this. It is not what goes into your body that makes you unclean. Rather it is what comes out of your heart (what you say and do) that makes you unclean.”

Then Jesus went into a house to get away from the crowd, and his Disciples asked him what he meant by the Parable he had just used. “Don’t you understand either? He asked. “Can’t you see that the food you put in your body cannot make you unclean? Food doesn’t go into your heart (Mind). But only passes through the stomach and then goes out of the body into the sewer”

In saying this, Jesus declared that all foods are “Clean.”

And then Jesus added, “It is what comes from inside (Mind) that makes you unclean (defiles you). For from within, out of a person’s heart (Mind), come evil thoughts, wickedness,

deceit, lustful desires, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these evil things come from within; they are what make you unclean (defiles you).”

According to Christian Scholars, Jesus’ statement about food raised the following question:

Did Jesus abolish Jewish dietary Laws by declaring all foods are “Clean”?

Then the Christian Scholars answered the question as follow:

According to the New Testament Book of Matthew, Jesus did not come to abolish the Law (Jewish Law), but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17). That Food was merely a superficial means to show the importance of spiritual cleanliness.

Jesus shifted the focus away from external restrictions so that the people could look within; Jesus taught that what makes a person unclean is **Sin**, not **Food**.

Still, his statement would have scandalized many of his listeners because, from their perspective, he was undermining their religious Laws.

And after Jesus’ statement, the Pharisees worked hard to get rid of Jesus.

John the Baptist (Yahya) (4 B.C.-26 A.D.)

John, like the Prophet Isaac (Es’haaq) was born in a miraculous way, because his mother was barren and was very old; his father Zakariyya (Zacharias) prayed to God to give him a son and God answered his prayers when the Angel Gabriel gave him the news of the birth of John.

In Islam he is called the Prophet **Yahya**, The words **Yahya** and **John** were derived from the **Hebrew** word **Yuhanan**. (John=Yuhanan); (Yahya=Yuhanan).

John or Yahya was named by God and God said in the Koran that nobody was called Yahya before him.

The name **Yahya** means “**become alive**” or “**make (Religion) alive again**”.

He was the son of Zakariyya (Zacharias, spelled Zek-uh-Rye-us).

Notice: In Christianity, Zakariyya was considered as a priest only, while some Muslim Scholars believe that Zakariyya was a Prophet, because he had contact with the Angels, when the Angel Gabriel came to him and gave him the news of the birth of John the Baptist; but the Koran only mentions that Zakariyya was a pious servant of God.

He was Jesus’ cousin; and was very learned, wise and righteous man.

God gave him Wisdom at very young age.

He was preaching the message of God before Jesus became Prophet, and John died in the beginning of the Prophethood of Jesus, when Jesus was thirty years old.

John was probably born six months before the birth of Jesus.

John was famous with Baptism, and he baptized many people including Jesus in the Jordan River.

John prepared the way for Jesus, and many of the followers of John became the followers of Jesus after the death of John.

He was killed by the order of King Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee in Palestine.

The Twelve Disciples (Hawareyyun)

Jesus selected twelve followers called Disciples, who later became known as Apostles after Jesus went to Heaven, except the Disciple Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus. One of the most important Disciples of Jesus was called Peter (Saint Peter), who became the chief of the 12 Apostles after Jesus' time, and traditionally regarded as the first bishop of Rome; he was the first to take the Gospel to the Gentiles; traditionally he was buried in Rome at the Vatican.

The second most important person after the time of Jesus was Paul (Saint Paul), who did not see Jesus but became the most important Apostle in early Christianity, he became missionary to the Pagan People in the Roman Empire in Asia Minor and Greece.

Peter and Paul were missionaries to the people in the Roman Empire and were arrested and crucified in Rome during the rule of the Roman Emperor Nero in 67 or 68 A.D. (C.E.).

(The Last Supper)

There is a story about the Last Supper Miracle in the Koran, in Chapter (Sura) five (5:111-115), also the whole chapter is under the name Al-Maa'edah (al-Maa-eda).

Most Scholars believe that this Miracle of Al-Maa'edah was the Last Supper.

Al-Maa'edah means a Table Spread with Food or a Repast.

This Miracle symbolizes the Communion Host of Christianity and the Last Supper.

In the story Jesus called down as a sign from Heaven a Table Spread with Food.

The Story as follow:

The Disciples (or probably just some of them) asked Jesus ("Esa) for a Miracle or Sign from God, which is a Table Spread with Food, as a Sign to strengthen their faith in God.

But the Disciples annoyed Jesus when they asked him "Is it possible for your Lord to send down on us a Table spread (with food) from Heaven?"

Jesus did not like the way or the manner they presented their request to him, and he forbade them to put God to the Test.

But the Disciples (or may be just some of them) repeated their request, and they explained that they did not intend to test God.

They said that they wanted to eat from it, so that to put their mind at ease (to **strengthen their faith**) and this Sign becomes as proof of the Truth of the Religion; also they would be as a Witness for this **Sign to future generations**.

The Verses (5:111-115) as follow:

"And when I (God) inspired the Disciples "Believe in Me and My Messenger (Jesus), they said: "We believe, and bear witness that we are Self-Submitted (to God)".

And (remember) when the Disciples said: O Jesus, son of Mary! Can your Lord send down on us a table Spread (with food) from Heaven? Jesus said: Fear (Jesus admonished them) God, if you are (truly) believers."

They said: "We wish to eat from it so that to satisfy our hearts (to be stronger in Faith) and to know that you have indeed tolled us the Truth and that we ourselves be its witness (to future generations)."

"Jesus son of Mary Said (prayed to God): "O God, our Lord, send down on us a Table Spread (with Food) from Heaven to be a Festival (an ever-recurring feast) for us, for the First of us and the Last of us, and a Sign from you. Provide for us. You are the best of providers." (Koran 5:111-115). Then the Table Spread with food either just appeared or descendent from Heaven in front of them, and was full of Food and they ate from it.

The Twelve Disciple's names, as follow:

1) Simon (Peter) 2) Andrew (Peter's brother) 3) James (Son of Zebedee)

4) John (Son of Zebedee) 5) Philip 6) Bartholomew (Nathanael) 7) Thomas
8) Matthew (Levi) 9) James (Son of Alphaeus) 10) Judas (Thaddaeus)
11) Simon, the Canaanite, the Zealot. 12) Judas Iscariot (he betrayed Jesus).
Matthias was selected to replace Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus.
The Twelve Disciples were with Jesus during his three years of Ministry.

2-The Main Religious Groups in Christianity

Christianity is divided into **Three Main Religious Groups** or divisions and many small groups under the larger groups.

Notice: The Western Churches Crosses are different from the Eastern Churches Crosses.

The **Three Major** Groups in Christianity are as follow:

First: The Catholics, known as Roman Catholics:

The Roman Catholics follow the leadership of the pope in Rome.

The term Catholic means **Universal**.

. The head of the Catholic Church is the Pope, who resides in Rome in the independent Vatican government, which has ambassadors around the world and run the Catholic world from there.

. According to the Catholic beliefs, Jesus (Prophet Esa) founded the Catholic Church when he first named the disciple Peter as the first representative of the Christian church.

. The Catholics have **Monastic orders** and accord special honor to the **Virgin Mary** (Maryam, Mother of Jesus), and they call Mary as “Mother of God”, also the Catholics have many **Saints**; also they do not allow women as priests but as **Nuns**.

Notice: Catholics pray to Mary and ask her for guidance and favors. For them Mary is the most highly venerated Saint as well as the patron of the Church.

The Catholics prayer to Mary and considering her as a holy is considered as the top major difference with the Protestants who just honor Mary as the mother of Jesus, and they do not treat her as a holy figure.

. The Catholic clergies are not allowed to marry (celibacy) while they are still active priests; this law started since 1054 C.E.; and the reason celibacy was declared at that time is because many of the priests had been corrupted by getting more involved in accumulating personal and family materials and financials than their involvement in religious matters.

. The population of the Catholics in the world in 2005 is about 900 millions.

. In the U.S. there are about 62 million members.

Schism (Skiz-em or Siz-em): It means as follow:

1) Schism is a separation or splitting or division of a group into mutually antagonistic factions.

2) A formal breach of union within a Christian Church on the grounds of differing beliefs or practices. 3) Disunion; discord.

Second: The Orthodox, known as Eastern Orthodox:

The Orthodox Christians accept most of the same teachings as Roman Catholics but follow different leadership.

The term **Orthodox** means following the **established** or **traditional rules** of religious belief, political, philosophy or a way of life.

. The Orthodox Church was originated in the Byzantine Empire and still recognizes the Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul) as Primate (high ranking bishop) rather than the Pope of the Vatican.

The Eastern Orthodox Church embraces a number of national or regional churches.

The Orthodox laity has more authority than are the Catholics; the bishop of Constantinople, who is the highest ranking bishop and considered as the head of the Eastern Church, is regarded as “first among equal Orthodox followers”.

. The Orthodox Church broke with the Roman Catholic Church during the council meeting in 1054 C.E. (A.D.); they split over differences of theology, politics, geography and language, it started when a group of Christians called Orthodox rejected the authority of the pope over the entire affairs of the Catholic Church. Also celibacy was declared during the same council meeting which was one of the main reasons for the major division in the Christian Church in 1054.

. The Orthodox Church allows the priests to marry, but the high ranking priests (Bishops) are not allowed to marry, so they are selected from Christian Monks. Also they do not allow women to become priests.

The Eastern Orthodox Church also **venerates** the **Saints**.

Eastern Orthodox priests have **beards**.

. There are two main Orthodox branches; one is called the **Greek** Orthodox Church and the second one is called the **Russian** Orthodox Church; some of the other branches are: the Romanians, Armenians, Syrians, Coptic and India.

The Greeks have two million members in the U.S. while the Armenians have eight hundred thousands members in the U.S.

. The total Christian Orthodox members in the world in the year 2005 are about 220 millions, including about 4.3 millions in the U.S.

Third: The Protestants:

Protestants means a Christian member or adherent of any denomination of the Western Christian Church that rejects Papal authority, and some fundamental Roman Catholic doctrines.

In the 16th century, Papal authority was challenged by such reform-minded priests as Martin Luther and John Calvin

. Protestants rely especially on the Bible itself, but they belong to many different groups or denominations.

. Protestants believe in justification by faith.

. The clergy or priests are called mostly by other names like Pastor, Minister and Reverend.

. Also some of these groups accept women as priests.

There are hundreds of Protestants denominations; and there is no single authority for all of them.

. The Protestants populations in the world in the year 2004 are about 425 millions.

There are many Groups of Protestants, and these are some of the well-known groups:

1) Lutheran Church: Founded by Martin Luther in Germany in 1517.

Lutheran is the first form of Protestantism and it focuses on the teaching of Jesus Christ and stresses individual faith over collective church authority.

- . They believe that God's Grace through faith and not just the good work of individuals, served as a source of salvation.
- . Their total members in the U.S. in 2004 are about 8 millions.

2) Anglican (called Episcopal in U.S.) Church:

In Latin, the term Anglican means England.

- . The Anglican Church ran or governed by bishops and was founded in 1534 in England, after Henry King of England, separated the English Catholic church from Rome.
- . The head of the Anglican Church is the bishop of Canterbury in England.
- . The followers of this church have embraced a commitment to positive social change; they are tolerant, sometimes permissive on some social action programs.

. The U.S. Anglican is called Episcopal, which means a church, and founded in 1789. In the year 2003, the Episcopal Church have created controversy and outrage in the Anglican Church and in other Christian communities after they tolerated and appointed a known homosexual bishop to head one of its branches in the U.S., and this action have threatened schism (siz'em) within the Anglican Church.

- . The total members in the world in 2004 are about 77 millions; and the U.S. members (Episcopal) are 2.3 millions.

3) Presbyterian Church:

This church was founded in Scotland in 1560.

- . This church was founded on the ideas and beliefs of French Theologian John Calvin, who devoted his life to the ideal of building a sturdy Christian society based on charity, humility and faith; his vision of a church governed by elders (In Greek, it means Presbyteros) led to the founding of the Presbyterian Church.
- . The total members in the U.S. in 2005 are about 4.2 millions.

4) Baptist Church:

Founded in England in 1609 by John Smyth; later Roger Williams founded the U.S. branch in Rhode Island in 1638. Baptists are the largest American Protestant denomination.

- . The Baptist Church baptizes people by total immersion in water to symbolizes purification from sin and become **New-Born** people in the Christian faith when the people are old enough to understand and declare their faith and accept Jesus Christ as their Personal Savior.
- . They have some tendency toward a perfectionist ethical standard and they are opposed to Alcohol and tobacco.
- . They are strong supporter of the separation of church and state.
- . Their total members in the U.S. in 2005 are about 28 millions.

5) Methodist Church:

The Methodist Church was founded by John Wesley in England in 1738.

- . The term Methodist originated from Method, which means a way of doing something or carrying something out, especially according to a plan.
- . Methodist is more concerned with social welfare and public morals.
- . The total members in the U.S. in 2005 are about 13 millions.

6) Jehovah's Witnesses Church:

Also this church is called as “**The Watch Tower Bible**”.

. The term Jehovah is a translation of the Hebrew name of God “Yahoaah or Yahweh”, which is used in the Christian Bible.

. This church was founded by Charles Taze Russell in Pennsylvania in 1870.

Jehovah's Witnesses deny the personality of the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost.

. Its members are very active missionaries internationally, and they claim that they publish religious literature in 130 languages, with over 16 million copies annually.

. They preach the imminent approach of the millennium (the Second Coming of Jesus Christ) after the battle of Armageddon, and they expect Jesus to reign on earth for about a thousand years.

They believe that only 144,000 (one hundred forty four thousands) true Christian believers will go to Heaven (Paradise).

. They reject secular law where it appears to conflict with the Divine; they also oppose war and organized government in matters of conscious.

. They refuse to salute the flag, bear arms in war, or participate in the political affairs of government.

They are especially active in opposing what they consider as the three allies of Satan:

First: The false teachings of the churches.

Second: The tyranny of human government.

Third: The oppression by big business.

. There are about One million members in the U.S. in 2005.

7) Pentecostal Church:

It is a movement started in Kansas, U.S. in 1901, and Los Angeles in 1906.

. The Pentecostal is a global movement emphasizing on ecstatic experience of God, often resulting in glossolalia (speaking in tongues).

. The term Pentecostal means relating to or being any of various Christian Congregations whose members seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit in imitation of the Apostles on the day of the Feast of Pentecost when the Apostles suddenly found themselves speaking in different languages.

. Pentecost feast is on the seventh Sunday after Easter.

. The Pentecostals follow the scripture, individual charismatic leaders and the teachings about the Holy Spirit. Some of their ceremonies are spirit baptism, especially as shown in speaking in tongues, healing and sometimes exorcism.

. Major denominations include “the Church of God in Christ” and “the Assemblies of God”.

. There are about 11 million members in the U.S. in 2005.

8) Congregationalism:

It is a nonconformist movement started in England, which honors the Christian community as a covenant of faithful individuals.

. Each local church operates autonomously, acknowledging only Christ as its head, and respecting the relationships of the various congregations as interactions between members of the Christian family. Fellowship and cooperation are at the heart of Congregationalism.

. There are many churches as Congregational, like the Church of Christ (Disciples), which have 1.5 million members and United Church of Christ, which have 1.4 million members in the U.S. in 2004.

. Nonconformist means not in agreement or not complying with the customs, rules, or styles of a group.

9) Adventist:

This group believes in the Imminent Second Coming of Jesus.

- . One of its major branches is the Seventh Day Adventist.
- . The total members in the U.S. in 2004 are less than a million.

Notice:

In the twentieth century, two important movements within Protestantism have had profound influence on Christian worship in the United States as follow:

The **First** one is **Fundamentalism**: Which holds that all statements in the Bible are literally true.

. Fundamentalist approaches to Christianity are broadly popular in the United States.

The **Second** one is **Pentecostalism**: Which is a global Movement emphasizing on ecstatic experience of God, often resulting in Glossolalia (Speaking in Tongues).

10) The Unitarian Universalist Religious Association:

The Unitarian was founded in the 18th century in the U.S.

It is a modern religious association considered among the most open and tolerant protestant religious traditions.

. The term Unitarian means monotheist who is not a Christian, or a Christian who is not a Trinitarian.

. It includes both Christian and non Christian members.

. They reject the doctrine of the Trinity, seeing Christ as a great teacher, not a Divine incarnation.

. They tend to avoid dogma or beliefs as restrictive and even going beyond what is right or proper, choosing to emphasize understanding rather than specific religious belief.

The Unitarian group merged with the Universalist group in the 20th century and became known as The Unitarian Universalist Religious Association.

. They have no belief derived from Christianity and seeing God as Unipersonal, the salvation as universal, and stresses reason and individual conscious in belief and practice.

. There are about 230 thousand members in the U.S. in the year 2004.

11) The Mormon Church:

They are called as “**The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints**”, and “The Mormon Church”, which was founded by Joseph Smith in New York in 1830; but he was killed in the 1840s.

. The Mormons consider themselves as Christians, but their teachings are different from other Christian groups, because they have their own holy book called Mormon in addition to the Bible.

Many Christian denominations call the Mormons as the Mormon Religion and they do not consider them as one of the Christian Denominations.

They believe that their founder Joseph Smith was prophet who received revelations from God through an Angel; also he tolled a story of a visit by the resurrected Jesus Christ to pre-Columbus America.

. The Mormon holy book is about the history of the Americas since the Tower of Babel (after the Great Flood and Noah) and until the 5th century C.E. (A.D.).

. The presidents (called living prophets) of this church still claim of continuing receiving revelations from God.

. In the 19th century they allowed polygamy or plural marriage, but they were forced by federal law to prohibit it in 1890; but some Mormons unofficially still practice polygamy.
. They are more concentrated in the city of Salt Lake City in the state of Utah, but they are widespread in the U.S., today.

Mormons believe that God reveals himself today as much as in the past.

The Bible therefore should not be seen as completed, but open to new additions.

Today the original community of Mormons has split into several divisions, some of which allow polygamy.

. They are very active missionaries; and central to this faith is a missionary service requires new members to volunteer their services that can last one to two years to convert other people to their religion, and is paid for by the missionary themselves.

Their total members in the U.S. in 2005 are about 5.2 millions; and their total numbers in the world in the 2005 are about 10 millions.

3-Some of the Religious Holy Days or Religious Rites in Christianity

Advent: Literally means coming or arrival.

It is the preparation days for Christmas from the end of November to Christmas.

It is the period preceding Christmas observed by many Christians as a season of prayer, fasting, and penitence.

Christmas: The word Christmas was derived from **Christ + Mass**.

It is the Christian feast of the Nativity (the birth of Jesus), celebrating the birth of Jesus on the 25th of December.

No body knows when Jesus was born; and the reason for choosing December 25, was because in the 4th century the Roman pagans had a very popular feast on the 25th of December, so the Christians tried to get rid of the Pagan feast by putting Jesus' day of birth on the same day.

Notice: The Catholic and Protestants celebrate Christmas on the 25th of December, while the Eastern Orthodox celebrates Christmas around the 7th of January, because the Orthodox did not correct the mistake that happened in the Julian calendar in the 6th century A.D. (C.E.), when the Christian Calendar was established at that time, while the Catholic and Protestants did correct their calendar since the 17th century.

Ash Wednesday: It is a Christian Holy Day occurs on the seventh Wednesday before Easter and the first day of Lent, when many Christians receive a mark of ashes on the forehead to indicate penitence (regret for wrong doing) and mortality.

Lent: Lent is a season of repentance and fasting that serves as a spiritual preparation for the joy of the Easter festival.

. It is a period of 40 weekdays from Ash Wednesday until Easter, which observed in some Christian churches as a period of prayers, penitence, fasting and Self-denial.

. It commemorates the 40 days that Jesus Christ spent fasting in the wilderness.

Palm Sunday: In Christianity, Palm Sunday is considered as the final Sunday of Lent and the last Sunday before Easter.

. It is considered as the first day of the Holy Week before Easter.

Good Friday:

According to the Christian belief, Good Friday is the Friday before Easter, when the Christian believers recall the death of Jesus on the Cross.

Easter:

According to the Christian beliefs, Easter is considered as the central of the Christian festivals, celebrating the resurrection of Jesus after his crucifixion and proclaiming the spiritual rebirth of believers through their union with the risen Christ.

Pentecost:

Pentecost is a feast commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Disciples of Jesus following Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven.

. Pentecost is celebrated on the 7th Sunday following Easter.

The meaning of Santa Claus:

Santa Claus means the personification of the Christmas spirit, usually represented as a jolly fat old man with a white beard and a red suit, said to bring gifts to good children on Christmas Eve.

The term Santa Claus was originated from “**Saint Nicholas**”; the Dutch people called the word Saint as Sint, and they called the name **Nicholas** as **Niklaas** and they shortened it to **klaas**, so they called Sint Niklaas (Saint Nicholas) as “**Sinterklaas**”, which later became known as “Santa Claus.

Saint Nicholas:

Saint Nicholas was born (270-343 A.D.) on December 6th in the region of Myra in Asia Minor (part of present day Turkey). He is regarded as one of the most important Catholic Saints.

He was the Bishop of Myra, and was regarded as the patron saint of merchants and children.

There is a feast on December 6th to commemorate Saint Nicholas.

Originally, the feast of Saint Nicholas was the day of gift giving, rather than Christmas; children made little boots or set their boots in front of the door in the evening, hoping to find them filled with presents the next day.

4-The Meaning of some Terms in Christianity

Mary: In Islam she is called **Maryam**; In Hebrew she is called “**Miriam**” the name of Jesus’ mother.

Jesus Christ: In Islam he is called the Prophet ‘**Esa** (Eesaa).

Christian: In Islam a Christian is called Nasraani or Masi’hee.

Christians: In Islam the Christians are called Nasaara or Masi’hiyun.

The **meaning** of the word **Bible** in **general**:

The word Bible was derived from the Greek word **biblos**, which means papyrus or book.

1) The Bible means the sacred book of Christianity, which is a collection of ancient writings including both the Old Testament and the New Testament.

2) The Bible also means the Hebrew Scriptures or Hebrew Bible, which is the sacred book of Judaism.

The Hebrew Bible does not have the books of the New Testament as the Christian Bible has.

3) The Bible also means a book or collection of writings constituting the sacred text of a religion.

4) The Bible also means any book considered authoritative in its field.

5) The Koran (Quran) called the Christians and Jews as the People of the Book, which means the People of the Bible.

Heavenly Father in Christianity:

We have an earthly father and mother, and since God lives in Heaven and takes care of the sincere Christian believers, so the Christian believers call Him as Heavenly Father; also they call Him in the Trinity as God the Father.

The Word or the **Word of God:** It means as follow:

1) It means the Bible or other Scriptures (like Koran) as the Word of God.

2) Also the Word it means Jesus as he was born through Mary by the Word of God; so in Christianity and Islam, Jesus is considered as the Word of God, but with two different explanations, as explained in this subject.

Heaven: It means as follow:

1) The Christian’s Paradise is called **Heaven**, because Jesus went to Heaven after his resurrection and promised his followers a Heavenly home.

Eternal life in Heaven is the gift that God gives the true Christian believers.

2) The abode of God, the Angels, and the Souls of those who are granted salvation.

3) An eternal state of communion with God; everlasting bliss.

4) A condition or place of great happiness, delight or pleasure, like saying the valley was heaven.

5) Any of the places in or beyond the Sky conceived of as domains of divine beings in various religions.

6) The Sky or Universe as seen from earth, which often used in plural.

Gentile: It means as follow:

1) A Christian. 2) One who is not of the Jewish faith, or is of a non-Jewish nation.

3) Also the Pagans were called Gentiles in the old times.

Baptism: It means as follow:

- 1) It is a Christian Sacrament marked by the symbolic use of water and resulting in the recipient's admission into the Christian Community
- 2) An initiation, purification or naming ceremony or experience.
- 3) Baptism is a religious ceremony in which somebody from birth to any age in life is sprinkled or immersed in water to symbolize purification from sin and become new-born Christian in faith or as a sign that the person has been accepted into the Christian faith.
- 4) Christianity believes that Baptism is a Christian sign of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and that the Christians are dead without Jesus and alive with Jesus.

Baptist: It means as follow:

- 1) A member of an Evangelical Protestant Church of congregational polity, believing in Baptism of voluntary, conscious believers.
- 2) One that baptizes.

Pastor: It means as follow:

- 1) It is the title of a Christian Minister or priest in charge of a congregation.
- 2) Also somebody who is not a minister or priest but who gives spiritual advice to a group of people.

Minister: It means as follow:

- 1) It is a member of the Christian clergy, especially protestant church.
- 2) Minister also means a senior officer of state in a government department.
- 3) A Diplomat representing a country, especially of a rank below ambassador.

Ministry: It means as follow:

- 1) The profession or career and period of services of a religious minister.
- 2) A government department headed by a minister.

Reverend: It means deserving to be shown respect.

It is a title and form of address for certain clerics in many Christian churches.

Priest: It means as follow:

- 1) Priest is an ordained Minister, especially in the Roman Catholic Church.
- 2) Priest is also a Minister or Spiritual leader or teacher of Non-Christian religion.
- 3) Priest is one with authority to perform and administer religious rites.

Bishop: It means as follow:

- 1) A high ranking Christian cleric in modern Churches usually in charge of a diocese.
- 2) A chess piece.

Cardinal: It means as follow:

- 1) It is a high Church official in the Roman Catholic Church, ranking just below the Pope, who has been appointed by a Pope to membership in the College of Cardinals.
- 2) A dark to deep or vivid red.
- 3) A North American bird, having a crested head and bright red plumage in the male.

Pope: The word Pope originated from the Latin word **Papa**, which means Father.

The word Pope means as follow:

First: For the Roman Catholic Church: He is the bishop of Rome and head of the Roman Catholic Church on earth.

Second: The Eastern Orthodox Church acknowledges the honorary primacy of the Patriarch of Constantinople (Istanbul).

Third: For the Egyptian Coptic Church: He is the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria.

Vatican: The word Vatican was originated from the Latin word Vaticanus, which means **Hill**.

It means as follow:

1) The official residence of the Pope in Vatican City.

2) The Papal government or the Papacy.

Diocese: Literally means administration, which is a district under the jurisdiction of a Bishop.

See: In religion, it means the official seat, center of authority, jurisdiction, or office of a bishop.

Holy See: In the Roman Catholic Church it means as follow:

1) The See of the Bishop of Rome.

2) The authority, jurisdiction, and governmental functions associated with the Papacy.

Holy: It means as follow:

1) Of, derived from, or associated with a divine power; Sacred.

2) Regarded with or worthy of worship or veneration.

3) Living according to a strict or highly moral religious or spiritual system; Saintly.

4) Regarded with or deserving special respect or reverence.

Holy Water: It is water blessed by a priest and used specially for religious purposes.

Holy Oil: It is Olive oil blessed by a bishop and used to anoint the sick and in Sacramentals.

Holy Week: It is the week before Easter.

Holy Day: A day specified for religious observance.

Church: It means as follow:

1) It is a Building for public worship, especially in the Christian religion.

2) It is a Denomination or branch of the Christian religion.

3) It is the Followers of a religion, especially the Christian religion, considered collectively.

4) It is the Clergy as distinct from lay people.

5) It is the Religious Authority as opposed to the authority of the state.

Denomination (di-nom-i-nay-shin): It means as follow:

1) A religious grouping within a faith that it has its own system of organization.

2) A large group of religious congregations united under a common faith and name and administratively organized.

Congregation (kong-gre-gay-shin): It means as follow:

1) It is a group of people who have gathered together for a religious service.

2) Members of a particular church.

- 3) A group of people or things gathered together.
- 4) The act of assembling.
- 5) Those who regularly worship at a specific church, synagogue or mosque.

Evangelist (i-van-je-list): It means as follow:

- 1) Any one of the authors of the four New Testament Gospel books, Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.
- 2) A Christian who tries to persuade other people to become Christian, especially in public gatherings or in broadcasts.

Evangelism: It means as follow:

- 1) It is the spreading of Christianity, especially through the activities of Evangelists.
- 2) It also means a great enthusiasm, fervor, or zeal for a particular cause.

Missionary (mish-e-ner-ree): It means as follow:

- 1) One sent on a mission especially to do religious or charitable work in a territory or foreign country.
- 2) One who attempts to persuade or converts others, as to a doctrine; a propagandist.
- 3) Somebody sent to another country by a church to spread its faith or to do social and medical work.
- 4) A person who tries to persuade others to accept or join something.

Lord's (Jesus') Prayer:

The most important prayer for all the Christian confessions; since the fifth century, it has been a fixed element in Christian worship services

Rosary: An established series of prayers within the Catholic Church; the beads on a rosary correspond to the prayers in the cycle.

Armageddon:

Armageddon means any decisive or catastrophic conflict.

In the Bible, the Christians believe that Armageddon is the scene of a final battle between the forces of Good and Evil, prophesied to occur at the end of the world, and the forces of Good win.

Aram:

Aram is a Hebrew word means "Highland", in opposition to the lowland of Canaan.

In the ancient times, Aram was called for Syria and North of Mesopotamia, as the high land.

Aramaean:

The Aramaean people emigrated from the mountainous area east of Syria; they settled in Syria and north Babylonia between 1100-800 B.C.

The Chaldees (Chaldeans):

They are another group of people who settled in south of Babylonia beginning around 1100 B.C. They spoke a different dialect of the Aramaic Language.

Amorites:

They are a member of one of several ancient Semitic people primarily inhabiting Canaan and Babylonia, in the second millennium B.C.

Aramaic:

It is the language Jesus spoke; it is similar to Hebrew language.

Aramaic was the language of Aram, which was spoken in Syria, Babylonia and Assyria. The Aramaic language is a branch of the Semitic languages, which was divided into two principle dialects:

The western Aramaic or Syriac, and the Eastern Aramaic or Chaldee

After the Babylonian captivity, pure Hebrew gradually gave place to Aramaic, and at the time of Christ, the Aramaic language was almost universally spoken in Palestine.

Quotations from the Old Testament and the New Testament are from the Aramaic version; all the Semitic words in the New Testament are Aramaic; the Talmud has a large mixture of Aramaic elements.

Before Islam and Christianity, the Aramaic language (sometimes is called Syriac language) was the official language for centuries, since the end of the second millennium B.C.E., during the Aramaean (Semitic people) period in Syria and North of present day Iraq (Assyria) during the Assyrian Empire and Babylonia in South Mesopotamia (south of present day Iraq).

. In 550 B.C., the Aramaic language became the official language of the Akhaemenide or Achaemenide (Persian and Mede) Empire during King Cyrus reign in the Near East including Palestine, which was located Southwest of Asia

. So during Jesus' time, the Aramaean language was still being used in Syria and Palestine,

. Later, in the fifth century C.E. the Christian Nestorians in Syria adopted the Aramaic (Syriac) language instead of the Greek language of the Byzantine Roman Empire, after they split from the main church and used the term **Alaha** as the official name for God, which was two centuries before the beginning of Islam.

. The Nestorian Christians who live in Syria, Iraq, Iran, East Turkey and Lebanon are still using the term **Alaha** to call the name of God in **Aramaic** or **Syriac** language.

. So, the name of the Creator was already known to the Arabs as Allah (God) before the beginning of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula in 610 C.E. (or A.D.).

Notice: The Aramaic or Syriac language and the Arabic language are both belong to the **Semitic** languages. Many words in the Koran were originated from the Aramaic and Hebrew languages, like Elah (Elaah) and Salah (Salat) or prayer.

The Story of some early Christians before Islam called as “the People of the Ditch (Pit)”, as follow:

The incident of the People of the Ditch occurred in 523 A.D., which is about eighty seven years before the beginning of Islam.

This incident was well known in History, because of the later involvements of the Roman Byzantine Emperor Justinian, who ordered the Army of Abyssinia to punish King of the Yemen.

The story started when king of Yemen (Southwest of the Arabian Peninsula) called Dhu Nuwas saw many people in the region of Najran were converting to Christianity and believed in the Trinity, so he threatened to throw them into a huge Ditch of fire if they do not renounce Christianity; but many of the Christians refused and they were thrown into the fire. There are some estimates of the total number of martyrs to be in the thousands, but no body knows for sure their numbers.

There are some Verses in the Koran about the People of the Ditch, described the event as follow:

“ Cursed were the people of the Ditch (pit), (who would ready a pit) of fire fiercely burning (for the believers); when they sat by it (near the pit of fire); and they witnessed what they were doing against the believers (burning them); and they hated them (the believers) for no other reason except that they believed in God (Allah), the All-Mighty, Worthy of all praise!; to whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth! And God is witness over everything”. (Koran 85:4-9).

So, in the Koran, God called the People of the Ditch as Martyrs and Believers.

This story shows that God considered the Pious Christians who also believed in the Trinity as believers.

Later during Islam the story of the Martyred Christians of Najran became known to the Prophet Muhammad.

When a group of Christians from the Najran region came to the Prophet in Medina in 629 A.D. for a treaty that will exempt them from paying Jizyah (Tax for protection), the Prophet treated them so well that he even allowed them to pray (Christian prayers) inside his own Mosque in Medina, and also exempted them from paying any Jezyah to the Islamic State. During the rule of the Caliph Omar (few years after the death of the Prophet), he built a big Mosque near the ditch in Najran in memory of the Martyred Christians of Najran.

Zoroastrianism (Zaradashtiyya)

It means as follow:

1) According to the Zoroastrian scriptures, Zoroastrianism was founded by the ancient prophet Zoroaster (Zaradasht) (628-551 B.C.), in northwest present day Iran after he received revelations from God at the age of forty years old.

The Zoroastrians **worship One God** as the Creator and they call Him **Ahura Mazda** as the God of **Light** or life. The name Ahura Mazda means **the Wise Lord**.

2) The **Koran** calls the Zoroastrians by the Old Persian name **Majus** (Majoos). In English Zoroastrian is called as Magus (Ma-ges), while for plural is called Magi (Ma-ji).

There is a verse in the Koran (22:17), which mentions that the Zoroastrians, Christians, Jews, and Sabians are all from the people who do not associate partners with God.

In early Islam, the Muslims treated the Zoroastrians in the same way as they treated the people of the Book or Scripture (Jews and Christians); even the Prophet Muhammad made a treaty with the Zoroastrians of Eastern Arabia and he allowed them to have their own Temples there.

Before Islam, the Kurds and the Persians were mostly Zoroastrians.

3) They believe in the Resurrection, Judgment Day and in Hell and Paradise, and they believed in **World Savior (Messiah)**.

Many Historians believe that the teachings about Judgment Day, Hell and Paradise, World Savior, the Bridge of Judgment Day and some other things in religion were probably first started or appeared in the Zoroastrian religion, then later appeared in the Jewish religion in the 6th century B.C. after they were exiled into Babylon, and Later appeared in Christianity then appeared in Islam.

4) Their Holy Book called Avesta (Law). And commentary on the Law is called “Zend-Avesta”.

They pray five times a day, and they do ablution before prayers.

5) They consider the following four elements of nature as sacred, because they are the symbol of life on earth:

1) The Fire. 2) The Earth’s Soil. 3) The Water. 4) The Air.

They consider the Fire as the Symbol of God the Creator (God of Light or Life) and also they consider the fire as the symbol of the sun’s light, because the sun is considered as the symbol of Life, which means that without the sun’s light there will be no human life on earth; and they keep the eternal fire burning continuously in certain temples, which are visited by the Zoroastrian Pilgrims.

6) Zoroaster’s **Four Main Principles** and their Motto:

1-The lowering of weapons 2) The removal of all quarrels and differences by peaceful means

3-Self-reliance 4-Righteousness

Zoroastrian oath, end up with the words that are the **Motto** of Zoroastrianism:

“I praise a loud the thought well thought, the word well spoken, the deed well done.”

7) The Zoroastrian principle belief is in a continuous universal or cosmic contest or struggle between two Spirits, one is the Spirit of Good, Life and Light, and one is the Spirit of

Darkness or Evil, and the struggle continues throughout history, and at the end, the Spirit of Good will win over the Spirit of Evil.

8) Their location and population in the world:

Today there are some followers in Iran in the region of Yazd, and there are followers in India, called Parsees, especially in the city of Mumbai (Bombay), where they have a distinguished reputation for honesty and uprightness.

In the year 2005, their population in the world was more than three hundred fifty thousands. There are about sixty thousand members in Iran, and about two hundred thirty thousands in India.

And there are about sixty thousand members in the U.S., Canada and Europe.

9) Zul-Karnayn or King Cyrus (Korush) (583-529 B.C.):

According to many Scholars and some historians, Cyrus was a Zoroastrian.

Cyrus was famous in History with the following three descriptions:

First: Master of the East and the West (Zul-Karnayn)

Many Modern Muslim Scholars believe that Cyrus (Korush) is the one who had been mentioned in the Holy Koran (Qur'an), by the name Zul-Karnayn (Dhul-Qarnayn)", which literally means "the one with the two horns" and according to some Scholars it means the horn of the west and the horn of the east, which then means Master of the East and the West of that time (from central Asia in Tajikistan in the East to the Aegean Sea in Asia Minor in the West).

His father was a Persian King while his mother was the daughter of the last Mede (ancient Kurds) King called Astyages.

Cyrus was able to control all the other Persian tribes and became strong King in 559 B.C.

When the Median Empire was at its weakest point and began losing control over some of its territories, then Cyrus with the help of many Medes revolted against the last weak Mede King, who also was his Maternal Grandfather and deposed him in 550 B.C.

Then King Cyrus united the Mede (including other ancient Kurds like the Guti people) and the Persians and they shared the government together in a kind of dual Monarchy of the Medes and Persians and formed a great Empire in Asia and the Near East.

In the six century B.C., the religion of the Mede and the Persians was Zoroastrianism.

Cyrus was mentioned in the Koran in sixteen verses (18:83-98), and the following three Verses are from the beginning of those sixteen Verses as follow:

“ And they ask you (some Jews asked the Prophet Muhammad) about Dhul-Qarnain, Say: “I shall recite to you something of his story.”

Verily, We (God) established him (Zul-Karnayn) securely on earth, and endowed him [the knowledge of] the right means to achieve anything [that he might set out to achieve]; and so he chose the right means [in whatever he did].”

Also Cyrus was mentioned in the Bible in the Old Testament of the bible in the Books of Isaiah and Ezra.

After Cyrus united Media and Persia (both were part of west of Iran), then with the help of the Medes, and other Ancient Kurds like the Guti people and with the help of the Persians, he went West and East to re-conquer the revolted regions of the Median Empire.

First, Cyrus went west and conquered the revolted region of Asia Minor (present day Turkey) and expanded it all the way to the Greek settlements on the Aegean Sea.

Then he returned and went eastward and conquered the rest of present day Iran which was mostly part of the Median Empire, then he expanded it further to the Indus River in India and into some parts of Central Asia and reached as far as Tajikistan.

In 539 B.C., with the help of the Guti Cavalry, he conquered the city of Babylon and its Babylonian Empire in Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine, which reached as far as the Egyptian borders. He called the new Empire by the name Achaemenide Empire, which became the largest Empire in History until that time and lasted from 550-331 B.C.

Second: Just-Ruler

The Koran called Cyrus as a Just-Ruler and a Believer in God. He was Zoroastrian. The Koran considered the Zoroastrians as believers in God, in addition to Islam, Christianity, Judaism and the Sabians, as the Five Religions that believed in God, as was mentioned in verse (22:17).

According to Historians, Cyrus was a Just-Ruler who treated the people in his Empire equally with Justice. Also Cyrus' successes was in his willingness to conciliate local populations by supporting Local Customs and did not interfere in the Religious Beliefs of other people and even sometimes he gave animal sacrifices for the religious ceremonies of other religions as he did with the Babylonian supreme god Marduk, to make the Babylonians happy so that they do not revolt against him.

So by Cyrus' diplomacy as well as force of arms, he established the largest Empire known until his time.

The Greeks and the Romans considered Cyrus as their Role-Model Just-Ruler, with great qualities as a tolerant, forgiving, noble and unselfish; and Cyrus was considered as the Pioneer of Democracy in History, and he influenced the Greek and Roman democracy and their thinking and the people's thinking until present day.

Third: The Liberator of the Jews

The Bible called Cyrus as the Liberator of the Jews from Babylon, after their forced exile from their land in Judea (was part of present day Israel and Palestine). They were exiled from Judea to Babylonia in 586 B.C. by the Babylonians (by King Nebuchadnezzar) after two failed revolts against the Babylonians; and the city of Jerusalem including the Great Temple of Solomon was destroyed; but they were liberated by Cyrus in 538 B.C.

Also Cyrus gave the Jewish People the treasurer that was stolen from their Temple, and allowed the Jews to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

The Name of 25 Prophets that were mentioned in the Koran (Qur'an):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1) Adam. | 14) Musa (Moses) |
| 2) Edrees or Idris (Enoch). | 15) Harun (Aaron) |
| 3) Nuh (Noah). | 16) Dawud (David) |
| 4) Hud | 17) Sulayman (Solomon) |
| 5) Saaleh or Salih | 18) Elyas or Ilyas ((Elijah) |
| 6) Ebraheem or Ibrahim (Abraham) | 19) Al-Yasa' (Elisha) |
| 7) Esmaeel or Ismail (Ishmael) | 20) Yunus (Jonah) |
| 8) Es'haaq or Is'haaq (Isaac) | 21) Zul Kefl or Dhul Kifl (Ezekiel) |
| 9) Lut (Lot) | 22) Zakareyya or Zakariya (Zecharias) |
| 10) Ya'qub (Jacob) | 23) Yahya (John the Baptist) |
| 11) Yusuf or Yousef (Joseph) | 24) 'Esa (Jesus) |
| 12) Shu'ayb | 25) Muhammad |
| 13) Ayyub (Job) | |

(Peace and Blessings of God be upon them)

Some of the names of some of the Prophets can be written in two different ways, but with the same pronunciation, as in the following examples:

- 1) **Jesus** can be written as Esa or Isa
- 2) **Abraham** can be written as Ebraheem or Ibrahim
- 3) **Ishmael** can be written as Esmaeel or Ismail
- 4) **Isaac** can be written as Es'haaq or Is'haaq.
- 5) Enoch can be written as Edrees or Idris
- 6) Elijah can be written as Elyas or Ilyas
- 7) Zecharias can be written as Zakareyya or Zakariya
- 8) Saaleh is also written as Salih
- 9) Ezekiel can be written as Zul Kefl or Dhul Kifl
- 10) Joseph is written as Yusuf or Yousef

Notice: The Koran did not mention that Zakariyya (Zecharias, the father of John the Baptist) was a Prophet, it only mentions that he was a pious person; but some Muslim Scholars believed that he was likely a Prophet.

(Short Biography of some Important Prophets)

First: Prophet Adam (First Father of Mankind)

Some Verses about the Creation of Adam:

“And indeed, we (God) created man from dried sounding clay of altered (transmuted) mud. And the Jinn (invisible beings), We created (long) before that from the smokeless flame of fire.”

“And (remember) when your Lord said to the Angels: “I am going to create a man (Adam) from dried (sounding) clay of altered mud.

“So, when I have fashioned him completely and breathed into him (Adam) of My Spirit (The Soul which I have created for him), then fall down before him in prostration! So, all the Angels prostrated themselves, all of them together. Except Eblis (Satan), he refused to be among those who prostrated themselves.

(God) said: “O Eblis! What is your reason for not being among the prostrators?”

(Eblis) said: “I am not the one to prostrate myself to a human being, whom You created from dried (sounding) clay of altered mud.”

(God) said: “Then get out from here, Verily, you are outcast.” (Koran 15:26-34).

And the Verses continuous, when Satan beg God to give him a chance to prove it to Him (God) that he (Satan) can corrupt all Mankind except those who are pious people who follow His Guidance; so, God gave Satan the chance to test Mankind.

The name **Adam** means “**the earth’s substance**”, which means that Adam was created from the earth’s substance.

The word **Human** originated from the word **Humus**, which is the main organic substance (of black or light black color) which is left over from the decayed animals and plants.

In Islam and in Hebrew the name **Haw’wa’** or Hawwaa’ (**Eve**), means “living or life”, which is in Latin became “Heva, Eva”.

The name Hawwaa’ means that she was created from something alive, which was one of the Ribs of Adam.

Adam in Summery:

1) Adam was the First Human Being or Man, and considered as the First Father of Mankind.

2) Allah (God) appointed Adam as His Khalifah (Khaleefa), which means Vicegerent or caretaker on earth, because other Human-Like Creatures before Adam failed to become caretakers; so, God mentions in the Koran that He created Mankind in the best form and Intelligence compared to other Human-Like Creatures before Adam.

3) God created Adam from clay then breathed into him of His Spirit and became alive.

4) God created the First woman called Haw-waa’ (Eve) from one of the Ribs of Adam and she became his wife.

5) Adam and Eve were in Paradise in the Garden of Eden.

According to the Bible, Garden of Eden was on Earth, but no body knows where it was located on Earth.

In Islam, the Koran did not mention the location of the Garden; so, as a result of this, there are some Muslim scholars who interpret some verses of the Koran to mean that probably the Garden was not on Earth, while some other Muslim scholars interpret the same verses of Koran to mean that the Garden of Adam was on Earth as was also mentioned in the Bible.

6) Adam is also considered as the First Prophet, but not a Messenger.

7) When God first created Adam, He ordered all the Angels to prostrate for him, and all the Angels did prostrate except Eblis (Satan), who was from the race of Jinn (Genies). The reason Eblis (Eblees) refused to prostrate for Adam is because he was created from Fire while Adam was created from Clay, which means that he considered himself better than Adam. And Eblis became outcast for his disobedience.

8) Then Eblis (also written as Iblis) became Satan and he became enemy of Adam, because he blamed Adam for all his problems with God, when God made him outcast.

9) God tolled Adam and Eve to eat the fruits from all trees in the Garden except for just one kind of Tree.

Also God warned Adam of Satan's tricks to make him disobey Him and that Satan is now his sworn enemy.

10) Satan was trying very hard to make Adam disobey God, so that God become angry and then punish Adam as he punished him before.

Satan was continuously coming to Adam and Eve in their dreams in the form of a Snake talking to them to convince them that if they ate from the **Forbidden Tree** they would become Immortals like the Angels, so he called the tree as the **Tree of Immortality**.

As in Koran (7:20), Satan whispered suggestions to both Adam and Eve: "Your Lord forbid you from this tree, because you would become angels or become immortals."

And in Koran (20:120): "Satan whispered to him (Adam) saying: "O Adam! Shall I lead you to the Tree of Life-Eternal and (thus) to a kingdom that will never decay?"

Finally they listened to Satan and ate from the Tree.

The Bible called the Forbidden Tree as the **Tree of Knowledge** of good and evil.

So the **Forbidden Tree** became as the "**Tree of Knowledge and Immortality**".

11) After Adam and Eve ate from the tree their mind completely changed; now they felt ashamed; shame and guilty for the first time in their life, and they tried to hide after they felt ashamed, because they were naked, while before this incident they were also naked but did not feel ashamed of it. So they tried to cover their private parts with the leaves.

Finally they were expelled from the Garden and left out on their own to work hard for food and make shelter for themselves.

12) After they were left outside of the Garden, they did not know what to do, and they cried a lot for their big Sin, so later God sent them some of his Angels and taught them how to ask Him (God) for forgiveness, and they asked God for forgiveness and then God forgave them.

13) According to the Bible, Adam lived for more than Nine hundred years.

Adam and Eve had many children during their lifetime.

Notice:

According to Islamic tradition, after Adam and Eve sinned and were taken out of the Garden, the Angels separated them from each other and they stayed separated for some time and became helpless and crying for God's help.

Then God sent some Angels to them, and the Angels guided them to each other and met at a place near present day Mecca; the Angels taught them how to ask God for forgiveness; then they asked God for forgiveness and God forgave them, and this meeting location was called later as '**Arafat**, which means the **Meeting Place**.

The 'Arafat place became the place of Pilgrimage for Muslims and the Pilgrims go on top of the same location where Adam and Eve were forgiven and ask God for forgiveness for their previous sins.

After Adam and Eve were forgiven their sin, then God ordered Adam to build His (God) first house of worship on earth called **Al-Ka'bah**, in the present day the city of Makkah (Mecca). Al-Ka'bah (The Ka'bah or The Kabaa) was destroyed during Noah's Great Flood.

Then during Abraham's time, God ordered Abraham (Ebraheem) and his son Ishmael (Esmael) to rebuild Al-Ka'bah again, and the place became known as **Makkah**; so Ishmael and Abraham were considered as the founders of Makkah.

The Koran calls Makkah as "**Bakkah**". Makkah means "**The House**", which means the House of God.

Kabah means "**Cube**", because the place of worship look-like a cube house.

Cain and Abel:

The first two sons of Adam and Eve were called Cain (Kaabeel) and Abel (Haabeel). Both gave offering to God, but God did not accept from Cain because of his character. Cain became angry of Abel, and one day he killed Abel out of jealousy.

The Time of Adam:

Nobody knows when Adam was created.

Until the year 2007 there were **Three Kinds** of discoveries concerning our Ancestors, as follow:

First: Indonesia.

Archeologists have found the oldest known skeleton which was **Identical** to **us** as Modern Humans and dated to about **40,000** (forty thousands) years ago; it was found in Borneo, Indonesia; and this skeleton was called as "**Modern Human**".

Second: Israel.

Archeologists have found human fossils in Israel, and this fossil has **some Neandertal** (Neanderthal) **traits**, and dated to **90,000** (Ninety thousands) years ago. This fossil was accepted by many scholars as an "**Early Modern Human**"; but still not identical to the Modern Humans.

Third: Africa.

Archeologists have found **Incomplete** Human Fossils, in East Africa, which dated to **130,000** (one hundred thirty thousands) years ago; and this fossil was debated by many scholars and created argument, because it was incomplete fossil; so it was accepted by some scholars and was rejected by others; but still was called as "**Early Modern Human**".

Many scholars concluded and considered Africa as the original place of Humanity Based on this incomplete fossil; also they based their conclusion on Africa, because of the discovery of some of the very ancient Fossils of human-like creatures of pre-Modern Humans, which dates from hundreds of thousands of years to seven million years ago, which was also found in Africa, and some was found in Indonesia.

Second: Prophet Nuh (Noah), and the Great Flood

The name **Noah** means "**Comfort**", which also means "through Noah, God brings comfort to an otherwise evil world".

Noah in Summery:

1) Noah is considered as the Second Father of Mankind.

2) Noah lived in the Sixth Millennium B.C.

3) Noah is considered as a Prophet and a Messenger.

4) He called his people to worship God (Allah) and abandon the Idols, which can not help them.

Noah's people worshipped five gods, and Noah tolled them to worship just one God, the Creator of heaven and Earth.

The reason people worshipped many gods:

The people in the ancient times were more concerned about getting rain for their farms, and concerned about the natural disasters, their enemies, their health, their wealth, and all kinds of worldly matters, so the people of the ancient times believed that those gods of the Moon or Sun or some dead Pious (Saints) people had the power to bring good and prevent evil.

So the people made Idols to resemble the gods they worshipped so that they can see the resemblance of their gods and give them the sacrifices especially during troubles.

Noah always promised them that if they believed and worshipped just God, then God will bring them a lot of rain and increase their wealth and children and they become prospered. The people did not believe Noah that there is invisible power called God can help them, despite Noah's Miracles, they called Noah insane.

5) Noah kept calling his people to God, generation after generation, for hundreds of years, but without result.

6) Finally God tolled Noah that He decided to punish all Mankind (including Noah's people) for their disobedience by the Great Flood.

7) God tolled Noah to build a Ship (Ark) to save him, his family, some of the people who became believers, and two of each animal that God chose to save from the Great Flood. The animals were collected and taken to the Ark by the Angels, who also later spread the animals around the world.

Also two of each kind of the Jinn (invisible beings) were on the Ark including Satan.

8) Noah built the Ark with the help of God through the Angels.

9) Noah lived in a Mountainous area, so when he began building the Ark, the place became a tourist attraction for all people who knew him, and they mocked and laughed at him for building a big ship far from the Sea. Some of them tolled him, as follow:

“you need to add some wings to the Ship so that it can fly to the Sea”.

Others tolled him “you need to find some giant Oxen to pull your ship to the Sea”.

Or they tolled him “you changed your profession from Prophet to carpenter”.

But Noah tolled them that when the Flood comes, you would know who would get the last laugh.

10) Then when the time of the Flood came, God said in the Koran that He sent pouring rain (world-wide), and He opened the grounds to gush forth springs (world-wide).

The Koran does not give numbers concerning the size of the ship, how many days rained, or how long the Ark stayed floating, or how high was the water.

Then God said that He ordered the Rain to stop and the Grounds to swallow the excess water.

(The Great Flood)

Kurdistan is considered as the most likely resting place for Noah's Ark and the beginning of Mankind after the World-Wide Great Flood.

Noah is considered as the Second Father of Mankind after Adam.

Notice: The story of the Great Flood was found in many cultures throughout history; even the American Indians have a story about the Great Flood.

The Black Sea Great Flood:

From the new discoveries in the Black Sea area in 1993, by two American Marine Geologists William Ryan and Walter Pitman of Columbia University, who discovered that a Great Flood in the Black Sea area happened around 5600 B.C. (7,600 years ago), and that their discovery was later confirmed by other Geologists.

They found evidence of a violent Great Flood happened as a result of a cataclysmic event that transformed the Black Sea area and transformed the basin from smaller freshwater lake to a larger saltwater sea, killing all the lake's freshwater shellfish.

The new sea settled into two layers; a brackish upper layer and a deeper salty layer.

They tested a core samples of sediments from deep in the Black Sea, which showed an abrupt change from light-colored sediments deposited when the basin was fresh water lake, to darker organic-rich sediments laid down after the inflow of salt water, as evidence of a sudden transition from Lake to Sea.

Also they did Mollusk shells radiocarbon dating from the submerged shoreline divide into two groups, older freshwater species and younger saltwater species. The splits proofs that sea-water flooded the basin about 7,600 years ago.

They also used sophisticated sonar and simple dredge, discovered the shoreline and the beaches of the ancient freshwater lake about 500 feet below the surface and miles from the modern shore.

Notice: Scientists know that on Earth, everything was once covered with water, for several times throughout very ancient times, because they have found Sea Shells and other sea life fossils with different age periods, in deserts and high mountains far from the Sea.

The Ark's Resting Place:

According to the Koran, the Ark came to rest on the Judi, but the Koran did not specify the exact location.

First of all, nobody knows for sure on which high places the Ark came to rest.

But there are some popular likely places that the Ark probably came to rest on it, which is explained as follow:

The Resting Places in Kurdistan of Iraq:

First: The Guti (Judi) Land:

Modern scholars found that the Judi name as was mentioned in the Koran is the same as the name Guti, which was the name of the Kurdish most ancient ancestors.

In Arabic, the word Guti becomes Juti, because the Arabic language (the language of the Koran) do not have the letter **G**, so it uses the letters **J** or **K** instead of **G**; and the word Juti is very close to Judi.

The original Main land of ancient Guti is located in Kurdistan of Iraq, so it is probably the Ark came to rest on a mountain in Kurdistan of Iraq. Some of the people of the Ancient Guti moved and settled in some near-by other parts of Kurdistan.

Also the vast majority of settlements that were built after the date of the Great Flood were found in North of Mesopotamia, including Kurdistan of Iraq, Turkey and Syria and later in South of Iraq.

Notice: The Mountains of Kurdistan of Iraq and Turkey were known to people in the First Millennium B.C. as Ararat Mountains, but later became known as Taurus Mountains.

Second: The Sumerians and Mount Nisir.

In 1872, British Archeologists have found the Epic of Gilgamesh in the Ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh, which dates to the old Babylonian time of King Hammurabi in the eighteenth century B.C.

The origin of the Epic was dated to the ancient Sumerian Era in the third millennium B.C. The Epic mentions the Great Flood story but with a different name for Noah, the story has some similarities with the Holy Bible story of the Great Flood.

Also the Epic mentions that the Ark came to rest on Mount Nisir (Neseer) in Kurdistan of Iraq, and the Assyrians believed that Mount Nisir was located between the lower end of the Lower Zab River and the Tigris River, east of ancient Assur, where the mountain ranges of Kurdistan rise sharply from the flat country of Mesopotamia bordering the Tigris.

The Resting Places in Kurdistan of Turkey:

First: Ancient Mount Judi.

There is a Mountain in Kurdistan of Turkey near the **Syrian-Iraqi border** and near the **Tigris River**; since the ancient times the people in that region believed that Noah's Ark came to rest on their Mountain, so when the Koran in the seventh century C.E. (A.D.) mentioned the name of the Ark's resting place as Judi, so some Muslim scholars called this Mountain as Mount Judi, which is also part of the Ararat Mountains as was known to people in the first millennium B.C. when the Bible's editors in the first millennium B.C. wrote the name Ararat.

Ancient Mount Judi is located near the ancient Judi (Guti) Land, and is considered as one of the most likely location for the Ark, because of the followings:

1) Ancient Mount Judi is located near the wide plains of Mesopotamia, and near a Major River (Tigris River) which makes transportations very easy to south of Mesopotamia and to the Sea.

Also north of Mesopotamia has a great source of water with its many Rivers, which made it as a good place to start a new life.

2) Ancient Mount Judi was located in the middle of the ancient settlements that were dated to the periods after the Great Flood; those settlements were mostly in Kurdistan of Iraq, Turkey and Syria and south of Iraq (Sumerians); and also some settlements were in eastern Asia Minor and Palestine.

Second: Mount Ararat.

The First Book of the Old Testament of the Bible (in the Genesis of the Torah) mentions that the Ark came to rest on the Ararat Mountains, but did not specify the exact location.

In 1955, A French adventurer called Fernand Navarra while searching for Noah's Ark, found three fragments of a wooden beam embedded in solid ice on Mount Ararat (Agri Dagi), located in Eastern Kurdistan of Turkey near the Armenian-Iranian border; but later the wood was dated to be only 1200 years old, which was belong to some Armenian-Christian Monks who built a small Monastery or a retreat on the lower parts of the Mount and who believed that the Ark probably rested on the nearly 17,000 feet high Mount Ararat, which is the highest Mount in the Ancient Ararat Mountains.

The reason many people believed that the Ark probably rested on Mount Ararat, is because the Mountain is the highest in the region.

But the Mountain is the least likely place in the region for the Ark to rest, because the Mountain is very high, cold, very rugged and far from the plains for the people and animals to start a new life.

Third: Boat shaped ground:

There is another less popular Mount as a likely resting place for the Ark; it is located eighteen miles south of Mount Ararat; part of the ground was shaped naturally like a boat, which makes some people believe that probably the ship rested on the boat shaped ground. Geologists believe that the ground was shaped naturally and has nothing to do with the Ark.

Archeology, History and the very Ancient Settlements:**First: (Before the Great Flood):**

No body knows where Noah lived before the Great Flood; the Koran mentions that Noah lived in a Mountainous area; so, probably Noah lived in North of Mesopotamia before the Great Flood, because according to Archeology, they found that the majority of the people's settlements (mostly dated between 6500-5600 B.C., and some of them before that date) which were settled before Noah's Great Flood of 5600 B.C., were located there in North of Mesopotamia; because of the many water resources (Euphrates, Tigris and other rivers), and the Land of North of Mesopotamia was fertile, which was very suitable for farming.

Second (After the Great Flood):

Also according to Archeology, the vast majority of the early settlements after the Great Flood (after 5600 B.C.) were found in North of Iraq, Kurdistan of Turkey and Syria and in South of Mesopotamia (South of Iraq), which later became known as the Sumerian Civilization after 4000 B.C., which also became known as the World First Civilization.

Also the World **First Writing** started with the Sumerians in **3500 B.C.**

Since no body knows where the Sumerians came from; so it appears that the Sumerians were one of the First Descendants of the Children of Noah in the centuries after the Flood.

The date of the Great Flood according to the modern discoveries in the Black Sea area was about 7,600 years ago (5600 B.C.).

Notice: The year 3500 B.C., was also called as "the beginning of History", which means that History began with the Writing; and the time **before** the writing periods was called as "the Time before History", because nothing was written before 3500 B.C., and every thing

became known through other means of Archeology, like the discovered Artifacts (as in jars, tools, statues) and bones, Fossils, stones, settlements and some other Geological things other than writings.

The accuracy of the dates of any old items discovered, were done through Radiocarbon dating and through some other scientific means.

Noah's Long Age:

Noah's age as **950** years was considered as the longest for any other known human in Islam. Noah is the only person in the Koran who his age was mentioned.

According to the Bible, Noah's elder son Shem (Sam) was 600 years old, which shows that many people of the past were aging to hundreds of years; also in the past there were less diseases and cleaner environment than we see today.

Then God changed the Human biological system to a lot lesser age after the Great Flood.

So, according to the above information, Noah and his three sons Shem (Sam), Ham and Japheth (Yafeth) probably started their new life from one of the above likely locations and later the people spread around the world from there.

Noah and his three sons became the fathers of Mankind after the Great Flood.

Since God wanted Noah and his descendants to be the fathers of Mankind, so all the other believers who were on the ship became childless and died without children.

Notice:

The reason that God made the Great Flood World-Wide is probably because Noah spent hundreds of years trying to convince the people to worship God alone without any result except for small number of people who believed him.

So, God wanted only the descendants of Noah to inherit the Earth and start from a God-worshipping family.

There are many Verses in the Koran about Noah and the Great Flood, but these are some of them, as follow:

First: “And indeed, We sent Noah (as our Messenger) to his people, and he dwelt among them a thousand years less fifty years (Nine hundred fifty years); and the Flood overtook them while they were wrongdoers.” (Koran 29:14).

Second: And indeed We (God) sent Noah to his people (and he said): “I have come to you as a plain Warner.”

“That you worship none but God; surely, I fear for you the torment of a painful day.” (11:25-26).

“And they (the leaders of his people told their people) have said: “You shall not abandon your gods, nor shall you abandon **Wadd**, nor **Suwaa’**, and (also don’t abandon) **Yaghuth** nor **Ya’uq**, nor **Nasra!** (These are the names of their Idols).” (Koran 71:23).

Third: They said (the leaders of his people): “O Noah you have disputed us and you much prolonged the dispute with us, now bring upon us what you threaten us with, if you are indeed of the truthful.”

He said: “Only God will bring it (the punishment) on you, if He wills, and then you will not escape.” (Koran 11:33).

Fourth: “And Noah said: “My Lord! Leave not any of the unbelievers on the Earth! “If You (God) leave them, they will mislead Your Servants (the people) and they will beget none but wicked disbelievers.” (Koran 71:26-27).

Fifth: And it was revealed to Noah: “none of your people will believe you except those who have believed already. So don’t be sad because of what they used to do.” (Koran 11:36).

Sixth: “And (so Noah) set himself to building the Ark, (and as he was constructing the Ship with some of the believers) whenever some of his people (unbelievers) passed by him, they mocked at him. He said: “Behold, if you mock at us, so do we mock (when the Flood comes) at you likewise for your mocking.” (Koran 11:38).

(They mocked at him because Noah was building a big ship far from the Sea.).

Seventh: “Then We (God) inspired (revealed to) him (Noah), (saying): Construct the Ship under Our (God) eyes, and under Our inspiration (guidance) (through the Angels). Then, when Our command comes, and water gushes forth from the Oven, take on board two (male and female) of each kind (of animals) and your family, except those thereof against whom the word has already gone forth, And don’t address Me in favor of those who have done wrong. Verily, they are to be drowned.” (Koran 23:27).

Notice: The Oven was a hole in the ground for baking bread; and also became God’s signal to Noah to begin boarding the Ark when the water gushes forth from the Oven.

Eighth: (Thus it was) Till when Our commandment came to pass and the Oven gushed forth water, We (God) said: “Load therein two of every kind (of animals), a pair (male and female) and your household, except him against whom the word has gone forth already, and (also board the ship) those who believed him (Noah), And none believed with him, except few (of his people)” (Koran 11:40).

(Those few people who believed in Noah’s Message and boarded the Ship, died later after the Flood as a childless, because God wanted only the descendants of Noah to inherit the Earth.).

Ninth: “Then We (God) opened the Gates of Heavens (World-wide very dark and thick clouds with Torrential rains) with Pouring Water, and caused the Earth (World-wide gushing of underground water) to gush forth springs so that the waters (of Torrential rains and gushing springs) met for a matter of predestined purpose.” (Koran 54:11-12).

Tenth: And he (Noah) said (unto his followers): “Embark in this (Ship)! In the Name of God, (He will) be its run (moving course) and its (resting) anchorage (through the Angels). Surely my Lord is indeed Much-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”

(The Ark started sailing through Huge Waves).

“And it sailed with them through waves that were like Mountains.”

(**Notice:** Before the Ark began Sailing through the huge waves, those Waves were probably still in the far distance and coming from the far and fast-rising Sea waters, but because those Waves were approaching their ship, then Noah very loudly cried out and begged his fourth son to board the ship with them; Noah’s fourth son was with the unbelievers outside the Ark looking at the Ark. The Ark was fully covered or sealed to protect it from the huge waves, and the Ark had some doors that were sealed during its sailing.).

“And (suddenly) Noah (from the Ark) cried out to a son of his, who had kept himself apart (from his father):

“O my dear son! Embark with us, and don’t remain with those unbelievers!”

“He (the son) answered: “I shall take refuge to a Mountain that will protect me from the water (Huge Waves).”

(Noah) Said: “Today there is no protection (for anyone) from God’s Judgment, except (for) those who have earned (His) Mercy!”

“And a Wave (the Wave arrived) rose between them and (the son) was among those who were drowned.”

(Then the Ark sailed through Huge Waves. The Ark stayed floating in the Flood for sometime, then after the water began to subside, the Ark finally came to Rest on a Mount that the Koran called Judi.)

And it was said (God said): “O Earth! Swallow up your water, and O Sky! Withhold (cease) your rain (Be cleared of Clouds)! And the waters sank into the Earth, and the will (Decree or Commandment) of God was fulfilled (done). And it came to rest upon (Mount) Judi.”

(Koran 11:41-44).

Eleven: “And so We (God) saved him (Noah) and those (who were) with him in the fully-laden Ark.” (Koran **26:119**).

Twelve: “And We (God) carried him (Noah) on a (Ship) made of Planks and Nails.” (Koran 54:13).

Thirteen: “But they (Noah’s people) denied him, so We (God) saved him and those with him in the Ship (Ark), and We made them (Noah and his sons) inherit the Earth, while We drowned those who denied Our Signs (Noah’s Miracles); then see what was the end of those who were warned” (Koran10:73).

Fourteen: “And, indeed, (it was for this reason that) Noah invoked (cried unto) Us (God), and how excellent was our response: for We saved him and his household from that awesome calamity.”

“And We (God) made his (Noah) descendants (offspring) as the Only Survivors (Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth and their descendants).” (Koran; 37:75-77).

Fifteen: “(And) Verily, when the waters (of Noah’s Flood) rose beyond all limits, it was We (God) who carried you (Mankind) (to safety) in the floating Ark, so that We might make all this a (lasting) reminder to you all, and that every wide –a wake ear might consciously take it in.”

(Koran 69:11-12).

(So, these Verses 11-12, of Surah 69, mention that God carried all Mankind in the Ark, which means that Noah and his three sons were considered as the whole Mankind, because all other people in the world were drowned, so God reminding all the generations of Mankind after Noah that all of them were originally carried on one single ship, and this is considered as one of the big Signs of God to Mankind).

Sixteen: (Thereupon) It was said: “O Noah, go down (Disembark the Ship) with peace from Us and blessings on you and on the people who are with you.” (Koran 11:48).

Seventeen: “And We left him thus to be remembered among later generations: Peace be upon Noah throughout the worlds of Mankind and Jinn.” (Koran 37:75-79).

Third: Prophet **Ebraheem (Abraham)**

Abraham (Ebraheem) means “**the Father of Multitude**”, which means the father of many nations as was promised by God. The name of **Abraham** is written as **Ebraheem** or as **Ibrahim**

Friend of God:

Abraham was called “**Friend of God** (Allah)”, because he was communicating with Allah like friend.

Abraham’s name originally was **Abram**, which means “High Father” and then God changed it to **Abraham**, which means the “**Father of Multitude**” (or Father of many Nations). Also the name of Abraham’s wife was originally called **Sarai**, which means “My Princess” and then God changed it to **Sarah** (Sara), which means “**Princess**”.

The Birth Place of Abraham according to Archeologists and Modern Scholars:

According to Archeology and Modern Scholars, Abraham did not live in Ur of the Chaldees (Chaldeans) in south of Mesopotamia.

But Abraham most likely lived in a city near Harran (or Haran) which was called in the ancient times by the name Urhay (present day it is called the city of Urfa in Kurdistan of Turkey near the city of Harran), for the following reasons:

1) In the **1920s**, American and British Archeologists did not find anything in Ur of the Chaldees that relate to Abraham, like his life style, names and customs, and they considered the ancient city as a very sophisticated place for Abraham as a nomad to have lived in it.

2) In the **1930s**, French Archeologists have found some documents dated to between 2000-1800 B.C. in the ancient city of **Mari** (today located in Iraq on the Euphrates River near the Iraqi-Syrian border).

And in the documents it was found the names of Four Ancient Cities existed and located in the Harran region at the time of Abraham and before his time, and those cities have similar names relating to the names of the family of Abraham and his forefathers, as follow:

First: The name of the ancient city of **Harran** or **Haran**, which was the name of the **brother** of Abraham.

Second: The name of the ancient city of **Nahor** near Haran, which was the name of the **second brother** of Abraham and also was the name of Abraham’s **grandfather**.

Third: The name of the ancient city of **Terah** (today called Tell Turahi) in the same region, which was the name of Abraham’s **father**.

Fourth: The name of the ancient city of **Serug** (located west of Harran, and today called Surug and the Assyrians called it Sarugi); which was the name of Abraham’s **great grandfather**.

3) Archeologists have found some documents in the ancient Mitanni city of Nuzi (today located fifteen kilometers south of the city of Kirkuk in Kurdistan of Iraq), which dated to 1500 B.C. that the customs of the Hurrian people was exactly like the customs of Abraham, his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob.

In the Third millennium B.C. the Hurrian people were documented as were living in East Anatolia, Kurdistan of Turkey and Kurdistan of Iran, north of Syria, and west Kurdistan of Iraq; and then starting in 1900 B.C. they moved to other parts of Kurdistan of Iraq and into west of Syria.

By 1800 B.C., the Hurrians were fully established in all North Mesopotamia; and in 1500 B.C. they founded the Mitanni (also called Hurri-Mitanni) Empire, which stretched from

Kurdistan of Iran in Azerbaijan and Kurdistan of Iraq, to all of Syria and Kurdistan of Turkey all the way to the Gulf of Eskenderun on the Mediterranean Sea.

4) The city of Urfa (in present Kurdistan of Turkey near the Syrian border), which possesses a name very similar to Ur, has a local Folklore since the ancient times proclaiming it as the place where Abraham grew up.

Also Urfa (Ur) stands on the plain of Aram, which is the Paddan-Aram that has been repeatedly referred to in the Holy Bible as the place where the parents of Abraham's wife Sarah came from, and where Abraham's son Isaac and grandson Jacob would seek out their wives.

Notice:

1) In the ancient Mari documents, the name of Urfa was listed as Urhay.

2) The Holy Koran (Quran) also mentions that Abraham's father Terah was also called **Azer (Aazar)**, because Terah was supporting his people in their idol worshipping, and also because he was making and selling them wooden Idols, so, Terah was supporting his own business of selling Idols.

The word Azer means Supporter and Defender.

Terah in Hebrew is called Taarekh.

Father of Three Religions:

Abraham is the Father of the three Divine, Heavenly and Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Also he is the Patriarch of all the Prophets that came after him, which includes Musa (Moses), Esa (Jesus) and Muhammad.

When Abraham was young, he did not like his people worshipping Idols, so one day while every body was a way for a feast, Abraham took an ax and destroyed their Idols; his people made a huge fire to punish Abraham, then they threw him in it, but God ordered the Fire to be cool and safe on Abraham.

As a result of this, Abraham and his family moved to a nearby city called Haran or Harran; his father died there and after that God ordered Abraham to go to the land of Canaan (present day Israel and Palestine).

Hajar and Ishmael (Ismail); Sarah and Isaac (Is'haaq):

His wife called Sarah, she was barren.

He became old without having children from Sarah, so she gave Abraham her servant Hajar so that he can marry her and have some children.

Later Ishmael, (in Islam he is called Esmaeel or Ismail) was born from Hajar.

Later the Angels gave the good news from God to Abraham and Sarah that a child miraculously is going to be born from his wife Sarah.

Isaac (Es'haaq) was born to Sarah, while she was about ninety years old and Abraham was one hundred years old.

The name Ishmael means "God Hears".

Sacrificing his Son:

Then one day God ordered Abraham through several dreams to sacrifice his son so that to test Abraham and see how strong his faith was in Him (God); then while Abraham was about

to sacrifice his son, God sent an Angel to stop him and sacrificed a Ram instead, because he passed the test.

Notice: The Koran did not mention the name of the son that Abraham attempted to sacrifice. Muslims believe that Abraham tried to sacrifice Ishmael.

The Bible says the sacrifice was Isaac.

Building the Kabah:

God ordered Abraham and Ishmael to rebuild al-Ka'bah (God's first house of worship on Earth), which at first was built by Adam but later was destroyed by the Great Flood.

Ishmael lived in Mecca and married to Arabian lady and became the father of some of the Arabs.

The Prophet Muhammad was from the descendants of Ishmael.

Jacob, the Father of the people of Israel:

Isaac had a son called Jacob (Ya'qub), who became the father of the people of Israel.

God called Jacob as "Israel", which means "God has striven or God has saved or God perseveres", which was originated from the Hebrew name "Yisra'el (Yisraa'eel)".

The Hebrew People (Israelis) became the "Chosen People" of God by the Covenant of Jacob. The Hebrew name of Jacob called "Ya'aqub", which means (God) has protected.

The Time of Abraham:

It is hard to know the exact date when Abraham was born and lived, but from some events in Archeology and the Holy Bible, we can find the close date to the time of Abraham.

In the Modern Time, some Archeologists and modern scholars from their historical discoveries set the date of the **Exodus** of Moses and the Israelites from Egypt to be around 1223 B.C., which happened during the last year of King Mernepteh reign (successor of King Ramesses II).

Then some of those Archeologists and Modern Western Scholars believe that the Prophet Joseph was living during the reign of the Hyksos (because some of the things in the story of Joseph matches the time of the Hyksos) Kings of Egypt between 1650-1541 B.C.; then according to the Bible, Abraham was 100 years old when Isaac was born and Isaac was 60 years old when Jacob was born, and Jacob was 90 years old when Joseph was born, which is a total of 250 years, then Abraham's date of birth most likely becomes around **1900 B.C.**

The Hyksos were Semitic and Asiatic (most likely Hurrians) people who migrated to Upper Egypt in the 18th century B.C., and were able to rule Egypt from 1650-1541 B.C.

At the time of the birth of Abraham in the ancient city of Urhay (Urfa), the Subari or Hurrian People were in control of the region, with their Hurrian language and culture.

In the Bible, the Hurrian People were called Horite.

In 1500 B.C., the Mitanni People, who were originally from the Subari people, controlled the Harran area and they also spoke the Hurrian language.

Notice: The Holy Bible does not mention to which group or nations Abraham was belong to. The Holy Bible mentions only that Abraham was from the descendants of Shem (Sam), who was one of the three sons of the Prophet Noah.

The story of Abraham and the Resurrection of the Dead, as in verse 260, Surah 2:

One day Abraham asked God to show him how he resurrects the dead, as follow:

And (remember) when Abraham said: “O My Lord! Show me how you give life to the dead.” He (God) said: “Do you have no faith?” He (Abraham) said: Yes (I have faith), but I want to be stronger in faith (by seeing it).” He (God) said: “Take four birds, then cause them to incline towards you (first teach them to obey you, then slaughter them, cut them into pieces and mix them), and then put a portion of them on every hill (around yourself) and then call them, they will come flying to you. And know that God is All-Mighty, All Wise.” (Koran 2:260).

Fourth: Prophet & King **Dawud (David) (1030-960 B.C.)**

The name Dawud from the Hebrew name “**Dawid**”, which means “**beloved or kinsman**”.

Some of David's important events in summary:

1) He was Prophet and Second King of Israel.

The first King was King Saul, who established the Kingdom of Israel in 1025 B.C. in part of Canaan

2) The holy book of Zabur was revealed to him; Zabur was probably the same as the book of Psalms (Saams) in the Bible.

3) He was a Singer, and he sang to praise and honor Allah (God).

The Koran mentions that whenever David sang, God subjected the Mountains and the Hills to give Glory at evening and sunrise sing the praises of God with him.

Also God subjected the Birds to give glory of God with him.

4) David and Goliath (Jalut):

When he was young, he became famous for killing a Giant man called Jalut (Goliath).

5) God (through the Angels) taught David the Skills and Techniques of Iron smelting and working in making weapons and armor out of Iron.

6) The "Six Pointed Star of David" became the Symbol of Judaism today.

7) The Bible mentions that David had one hundred wives.

He ruled for Forty years (1000-960 B.C.)

8) David conquered the town of Jebus from the Canaanites people and built it into a big city and it became his capital and called it Jerusalem.

The word Jerusalem was derived from two Hebrew words ir-Shalom (Irshalom or Urshalom), which means the city of Peace; also called the city of David.

The reason David made it his capital because it was the site of the first Temple of God.

The First Temple of God, was built by Isaac and Jacob, and was located in Jerusalem on the same place of Mount Moriah (Temple Mount), which became known in Islam as **al-Aqsa Mosque** (The Farthest Mosque).

The Bible Scholars believe that Isaac and Jacob built the First Temple of God on Mount Moriah, because it was the same location where Abraham attempted to sacrifice his son Isaac, but God sent a Ram instead after Abraham showed his willingness to do what God ordered him to do.

So they believe that Mount Moriah in Jerusalem became Holy Place because it was the place of Abraham's attempt to sacrifice Isaac; also many Bible scholars believe that the famous large Rock under the Golden Dome Mosque is more likely was the original site where Abraham attempted to sacrifice his son Isaac.

Muslim tradition says that the **Rock** was the starting point of the Prophet Muhammad and the Angel Gabriel ascension to Heavens during the Prophets Famous **Night Journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and then to Heavens** (Israa' and Mi'raaj), and coming back the same way.

Notice: The Koran did not mention the name of the intended Sacrifice, whether Isaac or Ishmael; but according to Islamic Tradition, the intended Sacrifice was most likely Ishmael and it was done in Mecca.

So Jerusalem became as a Religious Center for the Three Abrahamic Religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

These are some of the Verses from the Koran about David:

1-“So they (Believers) routed them (unbelievers) by God’s leave and David slew Goliath.”
“And God gave him (David) dominion and wisdom, and taught him of that which He (God) willed.” (Koran 2:251).

2-“And indeed We gave (true) knowledge unto David and Solomon, and they (used to say) said: Praise be to God, Who has preferred us above many of his believing servants.” (Koran 27:15).

3-“Verily, We caused the Mountains (including hills) to hymn the praises (Glorify their Lord) with him (David) in the evening and at sunrise. And (likewise) the birds in their assemblies (together) they all would Glorify Him (God) with David (those birds that heard David Glorify God, they also Glorified God with him).”
“And We strengthened his dominion, and bestowed upon him Wisdom and sagacity in judgment.”
(Koran 38:18-20).

4-And indeed We bestowed grace on David from us (Saying): “O you Mountains, (sing) Glorify the praises of God with him (David)! and (you) birds also! ”
“And We (God) made the Iron soft for him (David); saying (to David): you make perfect coats of mail, and balance well the rings of chain armor, and perform righteousness. Truly, I see all that you do.” (Koran 34:10-11).

“And We taught him (David) the art of making metal coats of mail (for battles), to protect you (the Believers) in your fighting. Are you then grateful?” (Koran 21: 80).

Fifth: Prophet & King **Sulayman (Solomon) (973-920 B.C.)**

The word Sulayman from the Hebrew name “**Shelomoh**”, which means “**his peace**”.

He is the son of David.

God gave Solomon **Wisdom** and Solomon became well known for his wisdom.

God (Allah) gave Sulayman Special and Extraordinary Powers.

And these are some of the Special powers in summery:

First: Controlling some of the Jinn (Genies or Spirits Beings):

God gave him control over the Jinn (by the help of the Angels) including the evil or rebellious Jinn (Devils) and some of them became part of his army and used them in his construction plans, in building the Temple, Palaces, making Statues, also diving under Sea to bring Jewels, like Pearls and others.

Second: Controlling the Wind:

The Koran mentions that God gave Sulayman complete control over the Winds.

Muslim Scholars believe that Sulayman was using the Winds for Rain and also probably was travelling with the Wind.

The Koran did not say clearly that Solomon was travelling with the Wind.

A verse in the Koran says that the Wind at Solomon's command was travelling in the Morning equal to the distance of travelling about one month by a Camel Caravan, then the wind coming back in the evening, which also equal to the distance of travelling about one month by a Camel Caravan.

So, many Muslim scholars from their understanding of the Verse, that Solomon and some of his people sometimes were travelling in the morning through the Wind, which equal to the distance of travelling about one month by a Camel Caravan, then Solomon coming back in the evening through the wind, which also equal to the distances of one month travel by a Camel Caravan.

Third: Knowing the Language of the Animals:

God taught him the Language of some animals including the Birds and even the Ants, as was mentioned in the Koran.

Fourth: Sulayman's Army:

God mentions in the Koran that Sulayman's Army were from the Men, the Jinn (Jenn) and the Birds.

The Birds were used for sending Messages, find water for the Army, watching the movement of the enemy armies, and many other tasks for the birds.

Building the Temple of God:

Sulayman built the Temple (Bayt al-Maqdis or Holy House) in the city of Jerusalem (al-Quds) by the order of God. He built it on Mount Moriah (Temple Mount), on the hill of Zion.

He used some of the Jinn and some of the Men in building the Temple.

Solomon and the Copper Industry:

As God helped Sulayman in the Copper industry, with so many copper mines, it became a big export for Israel to many countries of the world at that time.

Sulayman's Horses:

He was a great horse trader and breeder, importing horses from Egypt and Asia, and exporting them to neighboring states. He had 12,000 Horses.

Sulayman and Balqis:

Sulayman had a long story with the queen of Shaba or Saba (present day Yemen), and with the Bird Hoopoe, who brought the news to Sulayman that the people of Shaba were worshipping the Sun.

Then Sulayman sent a message to Balqis through the Bird Hoopoe telling them to abandon the worship of the sun and become Self-Submitted (Muslims) to God or they would face a huge army of Jinn, birds and Men.

The story between Sulayman and Balqis is long and interesting.

Later Balqis became Muslim and married Sulayman.

The Bible mentions that Solomon had 700 wives and 300 Concubines.

Some Verses from the Koran about Solomon's special powers that God gave him:

1-“And unto each of them (David and Solomon) We (God) gave sound judgment and knowledge.”

(Koran 21:79).

2- “He Said (Solomon) (during prayer): My Lord! Forgive me my sins, and bestow on me sovereignty (Kingdom) such as shall not belong to anyone after me. Verily, You are the bestower.”

“So We (God) subjected to him the Wind; it blew gently (sped gently) by his order (command) to where-ever he intended (willed).”

“And also (subjected under Solomon's command) the Devils (or rebellious forces) from the Jinn, (including) every kind of Builder and Diver (that We made to work for him).”

“And also others (other devils) linked together in chains.” (Koran 38:35-38).

Those disobedient devils were put in chains.

3-“And unto Solomon (We subjected) the Stormy Wind, running (sped) by his command towards the land which We (God) had Blessed; We (God) who have the knowledge of everything.”

“And of the evil ones (Devils or rebellious forces) of Jinn (We subjected them to him) there were some who dived (into the Sea for pearls and other things) for him (Solomon) and performed other work besides that; but it was We who kept watching (guarding) them (through the Angels).”

(Koran 21:81-82).

4-And Solomon inherited David. And he (Solomon) said: “O people! We have been taught the language (speech) of birds, and have been given (in abundance) of all (good) things: this, indeed, is an evident of manifest favor (grace) (from God).”

And (one day) there were gathered (assembled) together before Solomon his armies of the Jinn and of men, and of birds, and they were led (set) forth in orderly ranks (in battle order marching forward).

Till, when they reached the valley of Ants, an ant exclaimed: “O you Ants! Enter your dwellings, lest Solomon and his soldiers crush you, without (even) being aware (of you)!” Thereupon (Solomon) smiled joyously, laughing at her (ant) speech (amused at her speech).” (Koran 27:16-19).

5-“And to Solomon (We subjected) the Wind, whose morning course (from sunrise till mid-noon covered the distance of) was a month's journey, and its evening course (midday to sunset) was (also) a month's journey.”

“And We (God) caused the fountain of molten copper to gush forth (flow) for him.”
(Solomon had many Copper Mines).

“And (We gave him) certain of the Jinn, who worked before him (Solomon) by permission of his Lord.”

And whosoever of them (Jinn) deviated (refused to work) from Our command, We shall cause him to taste of the torment of the blazing fire."

“They (Jinn) made for him (Solomon) what he willed (desired): (making) Sanctuaries and Statues, Basins as large as Reservoirs, and (Cooking) Boilers (Cauldrons) built (fixed) into the ground. (Koran 34:12-13).

6-“An Efreet (strong flying Jinni) of the Jinn said: I will bring it (The large throne of the Queen of Shaba) to you (Solomon) before you rise from your place (council-seat). And verily I am strong enough to do it and trustworthy for such work.”

(But) One with whom was knowledge of the Scripture said: “I will bring it to you within the twinkling of your eye! (It means: “close your eyes, and when you open your eyes, then you will see the Throne in front of you)” Then when he (Solomon) saw it truly placed before him, he said: “This is by the grace of my Lord.” (Koran 27:39-40).

7-“Then when We (God) decreed death for him (Solomon), nothing showed (informed) his (Solomon) death to them (Jinn) except an earthworm which kept (slowly) gnawing away at his stick (Staff). And when he fell down to the ground, the Jinn saw clearly that if they had known the Unseen (and future) they would not have stayed (continued) in the humiliating suffering.” (Koran 34:14).

Notice: In the above Verses of 39-40 of Surah 27, there is something that needs explanation: Part of the Verse says: “(but) One with whom was the knowledge of the Scripture said: “I bring it to you (Solomon) within twinkling of your eye!”

Some Scholars believe that person was likely a Prophet who lived during the time of David and Solomon.

God wanted to show the people that God’s power has no limits and happens instantly. The people at that time were amazed at the powers of some Genies, who were able to fly long distances very fast and also while carrying very heavy materials; also those Jinn were doing amazing job for Solomon in building the Temple of God, diving deep in the Sea, making large basin, statues, palaces, doing Magic or Sorcery and many other things.

Also the Jinn (invisible Beings) were amazed at their own powers compared to the Human powers.

So, God wanted to teach the Jinn and the Humans, including Solomon a lesson, that God’s power has no limit and that God can grant a pious person like that Prophet more Divine powers than the physical powers of the Jinn; and also the power of Jinn in nothing compared to the powers of God.

Chapter Ten:

(Islam in America)

First: History of Islam in America

The beginning of the African American Muslims, as follow:

Some other developments concerning Islam between African-Americans happened before the Nation of Islam was founded in 1930, but the Nation of Islam is considered as the most important development.

The Founder of Nation of Islam:

Wallace Fard who was believed to have been an immigrant from unknown Muslim country, founded Nation of Islam in Detroit in 1930, which was a mix of Islamic and Christianity teachings and black nationalism and claimed prophetic vision from Allah (God) directed specifically toward Black Americans, and his followers called him “God in person”, but he was vanished mysteriously in 1934.

Nation of Islam had its own prophet:

Elijah Pook, who was an associate of Wallace Fard, changed his name to Elijah Muhammad and assumed control of the Nation of Islam in 1935 and established himself as the “messenger of God”, and began an economically focused separatist movement that promoted the social power of black communities and rigorous obedience to rules derived from Islam.

Nation of Islam was a Separatist Black Movement:

Nation of Islam called for the establishment of separate black state, and they favored political and economic independence for African American.

The split of Nation of Islam in 1975:

The original Nation of Islam underwent great changes after the death of its founder Elijah Muhammad in 1975, and split into two groups as follow:

First: American Muslim Mission (Sunni Orthodox):

The majority of the Nation of Islam was led by stages to Orthodox branch of Islam centered in Chicago and took the name ‘American Muslim Mission’ which was led by Warith (Wareth)-ad-Deen Muhammad (the son of Elijah Muhammad).

Second: Nation of Islam:

The second group was a dissident minority faction (in the 1990s, they had more than fifty thousand members), led by Louis Farrakhan, which retained the name “Nation of Islam”, as well as the sect’s original anti-white and separate doctrines and the belief that Elijah Muhammad is their prophet, and they remained like this until the year 2000.

. But in the year 2000, Louis Farrakhan announced officially that the Nation of Islam is integrating to the main stream of Orthodox Islam after renouncing (officially rejected) the unorthodox doctrines of the Nation of Islam.

. Today the African American Muslims became popularly known as the **Black Muslims of America**.

Malcolm X:

He is the most well-known Muslim in the history of African American Muslims.

- . He joined Nation of Islam in 1947 while he was in prison, and was released in 1953.
- . He followed the Nation of Islam and turned religious minister
- . Born Malcolm Little; he then changed the name “Little” with “X”, which means unknown African Ancestors.
- . He was a brilliant, vigorous and effective agitator.

. He became the spokesman of the Nation of Islam and traveled in the U.S. from coast to coast; and in several years he was able to increase the membership in the Nation of Islam from several hundreds to fifty thousand members.

. He convinced the famous U.S. boxing champion Muhammad ‘Ali to convert to Islam in 1964.

. Also in 1964, Malcolm broke within the Nation of Islam after his pilgrimage to Mecca in the same year and founded a separate organization, which followed the Orthodox branch of Islam.

Then he abandoned his slave name and changed his name to a Muslim name and became known as **Al-Hajj Al-Shabazz**. He was killed in 1965.

Second: The Muslim Immigration to America

The Muslims Immigrated to U.S. as follow:

1-Between the years 1875-1906:

The first Muslim immigrants, who came to the U.S., first started arriving **individually** from Turkey, Syria (including Lebanon and Jordan) and Palestine, Morocco and Yemen, and work as laborers between the years 1875-1906.

2-Between the years 1907-1914

The **first major groups** of Muslim immigrants came to the U.S. in the beginning of the 20th century until before World War I (1907-1914), also arrived from Turkey, Syria (including Lebanon and Jordan) and Palestine, and resided near factories in major cities like Detroit, Chicago and the state of New Jersey, and worked as a factory workers and peddlers.

3-Between the years 1919-1921

After World War I, from 1919-1921, Muslims a cross the Middle East and North Africa, began arriving in the U.S. as laborers.

4-Between 1947 and 1960

Between the years 1947-1960, Palestinians, Egyptians, Iranians and Eastern Europeans Muslims arrived and many were well educated.

5-From 1961 to present time

From the 1961 to present, Muslims from Asia (primarily, the Indian subcontinent like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), Iranians, the Arabs and Africans arrived, most were educated professionals, or came as students and remained.

. Also since 1976 tens of thousands of Muslim refugees arrived in the U.S., from Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Somalia and Bosnia

Third: Some Statistics about Islam in America

Mosques:

In the year 2000, there were more than **1200** Mosques and Islamic centers in the U.S. In addition to the above Mosques, also there are many other places of worship that has been used regularly by the community, like Colleges, many other temporary or permanent large houses, office suites and rented halls, which have been used for worship just like a temporary mosque.

. Even some of the temporary rented halls are in some churches, which are used for Friday sermon only.

Schools, Associations and Publications:

Also, in the year 2000, there were more than 165 Islamic schools; 425 Muslim Associations and 85 Muslim publications.

Business, Vote and Service:

There are more than 200,000 Muslim businesses in the U.S.

. Also, in the year 2000, there were more than 700,000 Muslims vote, and more than 10,000 Muslims in the service or armed forces of the U.S.

Muslim Concentrations in the U.S in the Top Ten States:

Also, in the year 2000, the population of Muslims in the state of California was about one million Muslims; and in the state of New York was about eight hundred thousands.

. The population of Muslims in other states from the highest total number of Muslims to the lowest, as follow:

Illinois, New Jersey, Indiana, Michigan, Virginia, Texas, Ohio and Maryland

Muslim Organizations:

There are many Muslim organizations in the U.S., and each organization with specific purposes have been formed, such as to influence politics, or confronts discriminations or deal with women's rights, or distribute charities, or educates people about Islam.

Also Muslim organizations seek to provide services and forum for discussion among Muslims and also between Muslim and non-Muslim Organizations in North America. Some of the Organizations were specialized in certain Islamic matters.

Other activities include that some organizations hold Annual Convention, collect Zakat (Alms-giving), publishes magazines, open schools for Muslim children and summer activities for Muslim Students.

Some Muslim organizations emphasis on educating the public on Islam through publications, internet, Radio and T.V

These are some of the most well-known Organizations:

1) The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), which is considered as the largest Islamic Organization in America. Established in 1982 and located in Plainfield, Indiana.

ISNA acts as an umbrella group for many local Mosques and Associations.

2) Muslim American Society (MAS): It includes most predominately black Sunni Muslim mosques.

3) Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA): Founded in 1971.

A National Shura Council from ISNA, MAS, ICNA and some other organizations was formed, which answer questions concerning Islamic Religious Matters.

4) The Muslim Student Association (MSA), which was founded in 1963, has branches in many U.S. College campuses.

5) The Islamic Assembly of North America (IANA).

- 6) International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT): It is an Islamic think tank, founded in 1981.
- 7) Islamic Medical Association ((IMA); founded in 1967.
- 8) Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS); founded in 1972.
- 9) Muslim Youth of America (MYA).

Muslim Organizations with political function:

- 1) The Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR), founded in 1994, and deals with politics, discriminations and the media. Its main office is in Washington D.C.
- 2) The American Muslim Council (AMC); founded in 1990, and deals with discrimination, voter registration and in political lobbying for Muslims in America.
- 3) Muslim Political Action Committee (MPAC); founded in 1988.
- 4) American Muslim Alliance (AMA), founded in 1992, and its interests similar to AMC.

These Muslim Political Organizations: CAIR, AMC, MPAC and AMA, and some other organizations have formed the American Muslim Political Coordination Council (AMPCC) in 1998.

Fourth: The Total Muslim population in the U.S

There is no exact estimate of the total population of Muslims in the U.S.; but various Islamic sources estimate the population of Muslims in the U.S. in the year 2005, to about **Seven Million Muslims**'

The population of the Muslims in the U.S. has been divided as follow:

First: African-American

The total population of the African American Muslims in the year 2005 is about 2.8 million members, or about 40 % of the total Muslim population in the U.S.

Second: The Arabs

The Arab-Muslims population is about 1.4 million Muslims, or about 20 % of the total Muslim population in the U.S.

. The Arab-Muslims in the U.S. emigrated from 21 Arab countries.

Notice: Also there are more than three million **Arab-American Christians** in the U.S.

Third: Indian Subcontinent and Iran

The Muslims population from the Indian subcontinent (like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) and Iran makes about 1.4 million Muslims or about 20 % of the total Muslim population in the U.S.

Fourth: Africans, Asians, Eastern Europeans and Caucasians

The rest of the Muslim population in the U.S., which total about 1.4 million or 20 % of the total Muslim population in the U.S. are non-Arab Africans, Eastern Europeans, the rest of the Muslim countries in Asia (like Indonesia and Malaysia) and Caucasians or white Americans.

Modern Converts to Islam according to the statistics of the year 2000:

Every year many people convert to Islam in the U.S., Canada, Europe and other countries in North and South America.

. The total number of the Caucasian or white people who converted to Islam in the U.S., Canada and Europe in the modern times is not known, but there are some estimates to be more than one hundred thousands and some of them are women who converted to Islam through marriages.

Also there are between fifteen to thirty thousand Hispanics who converted to Islam in North America.

. Recently the first mosque was built in one of the American Indian reservations in South-west of U.S.

(Islam and other Religions)

First: Islam and the Minorities

The Koran emphasized fair treatment of non-Muslims especially those living under the Islamic rule, and it did not discourage them to have good relations with others so long as they are in peace with Muslims.

- . The Prophet Muhammad never declined an invitation to non-Muslim food parties.
- . He shared their food; mixed freely with them and never failed to extend to them his condolences in person in their tragedies.
- . The **Prophet** did this as part of the Islamic teaching, and his practice became a standard example to his followers.
- . **Muslims do recognize that sometimes the action of a ruler does not reflect the teachings of his religion.**

Examples of the Islamic treatment of the minorities:

1) Conveying the Message of Islam and not to Impose it:

Islam calls upon Muslims when they have to argue with opponents to do so in a decent way.

- . Allah (God) the Almighty made it clear to the Prophet of Islam that he was merely to convey the message, so he was not to impose it.
- . The **Prophet** called for tolerance and urged Muslims to practice it through his words and example.
- . The **Prophet** said, “He who does injustice to a non-Muslim or insults him (or her) or unduly burdens him or takes something from him against his will, I shall take his side on the Doomsday (Judgment Day),”

2) Treaties with the Christians and the Jews:

The **Prophet** concluded a treaty with the Christian tribes in Arabia when Islam dominated the whole region of Arabia. He allowed them to remain Christians. He also allowed the Jewish to remain on their religion.

3) The System of Tax called **Jizyah** (Jezya) for **Protection**:

Islam recognizes the rights of the minority; so according to Islam to ensure the minorities welfare and safety, Muslim rulers initiated a tax (Jizyah) on them, on the able people who can afford it, and this is for protecting them, since they were not obligated to join the Muslim armies.

All the non-Muslims who joined the Muslim armies were exempted from paying Jizyah.

Notice: The 19th century C.E. (or A.D.), was the last time that the Jizyah law was used in the Muslim world.

4) Protecting the Places of Worship:

The **Prophet** forbade the Muslim armies from destroying churches and synagogues.

- . Caliph Umar did not even allow the Muslims to pray inside a church after they conquered Jerusalem.

. The Jews were welcomed and flourished in Muslim Spain (Andalusia), and they consider that part of their history as the Golden Era; while they were sometimes persecuted in some other parts of Europe.

5) Freedom of Worship and Holding Government Positions:

In Muslim countries, Christians live in prosperity, hold government positions and attend their church.

- . Christian missionaries are allowed to establish and operate their schools and hospitals.
- . The non-Muslim employees held high-ranking posts in the palaces of the Caliphs and in the governmental departments. Some of them held ministerial posts; and certain non-Muslim physicians were deeply trusted by the Caliphs they served.

6) Legal Autonomy:

Non-Muslim communities within the Islamic state are granted legal autonomy in their personal affairs, Marriages, divorces and other religious legal matters.

7) The Food:

Islam allowed Muslims to eat from the food of the people of the book or Scriptures (Jews and Christians), and from their slain lawfully eatable animals.

. God says in the Koran:

“The food of those who have received the Book (Scriptures or Revelations from God) is lawful for you (to the Muslims) and your food is lawful for them.”(5:5).

. The Muslim must say the name of Allah (God) before eating or drinking any kind of food at any place at any time by saying Bismillaah (Bismellaah), which means by the name of God.

8) People of The Book (Ahl al-Kitab):

The Qur’an calls the Christians and Jews as the “People of the Book”, which means those who received divine scriptures before the Prophet Muhammad.

Also the People of the Book mean the People of the Bible, because the term Bible means **“Book.”**

- . Muslims are told to treat them with respect and Justice and do not ridicule their faith or fight with them unless they initiate hostilities.
- . The Muslims ultimate hope is that they all will join them in worshiping God and submit to His will without Trinity.

9) Criminal Offenses:

Criminal offenses committed by non-Muslims are treated in the same way as they were committed by a Muslim subjects.

10) Marriage:

Islam allowed Muslims to marry Christian and Jewish women, but does not require a woman married to a Muslim to convert to Islam.

. If such marriage is polygamous, then she has the same rights as those due to her Muslim co-wife.

Second: Religion of Moderation and Peace

According to Islamic teachings, Islam is considered as a religion of moderation and practicing Muslim can neither be a fanatic nor an extremist.

According to Islamic teachings, Islam opposes violence; Islam is a religion of peace and stresses on the sanctity of Human life.

A verse in the Koran (Qur'an) says, [Chapter 5, verse 32], that "anyone who saves one life, it is as if he has saved the whole Mankind. And anyone who has killed another person (except in lieu of murder or mischief on earth) it is as if he has killed the whole Mankind."

Allah (God) prohibits aggression. He says:

"Fight in the way of God those who fight against you, but begin no hostilities, God does not like the aggressors."

Also God made pardoning a great virtue. He says: "But who pardons and amends, his rewards will be due from God."

The Glorious Qur'an (Koran) ordered the Muslims to make peace with those who fight them if they want peace.

So, anyone who is doing violence is not practicing his or her religion correctly at that time.

Third: The Meaning of the word Jihad

The Word Jihad (ji-haad) means 'Effort', 'Strive' or 'struggle'

According to Islam, there are two kinds of Jihad, as follow:

1) The Greatest Jihad (the Self-Moral effort): which is to prevent or control the self from wrong doings (such as lust, greed, pride, dishonesty etc.).

It means Self-Purification of one's own passions and weaknesses, which then makes the person as an example to other people when helping them.

The Muslim must do Good before asking the others to do the same.

2) The Lesser Jihad:

This Jihad is Two Parts or Two Kinds, as follow:

First: The First Meaning of the Lesser Jihad is to help **Improve the Society:**

Which is to strive in any good Islamic causes, for examples: helping to improve the social condition of society, which includes family, relatives, friends, neighbors, and anybody else, by using mental and financial resources.

Second: The Second Meaning of the Lesser Jihad is to defend Islam against Aggression.

This kind of Jihad is usually declared by a High Ranking Muslim Religious Scholars (called 'Ulama' or Ola-maa), which also must have the legal authority from the majority of the Muslim people.

Fourth: The Spread of Islam

The Way Islam was Spread:

Forced Conversion is Forbidden in Islam.

. According to the Qur'an, "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:56), thus, no one can be forced to become a Muslim. While it is true that in the first centuries of Islam, the Muslim armies went to liberate people by removing the rulers that were as an obstacles which prevented the people from choosing their own religions, and the sword was the weapon that was used at that time.

. However, Islam did not always spread by the sword, because in many places where there are Muslims now, there is no record of any Muslim armies going there, for example:

- 1) In the Far East, like Indonesia and China.
- 2) In many parts of Africa.
- 3) In the U.S.A. in the year 2005, Islam has about seven million followers.

. In India, where Muslims ruled for 700 years, they are still a Minority

Notice: The Sufis had some role in spreading Islam in Africa, Central and South Asia and also in some other places.

Fifth: Some Verses from the Koran about Islam's Tolerance of other Religious Minorities:

In the following Verses, the Koran shows tolerations of other Religions including that God made a **different laws** and a **different ways of life** for **Christianity** and **Judaism** and for some other religions:

1) "To every one of you (**Islam, Christianity, Judaism and some others**), We (God) have prescribed a law (**appointed a different law to each one of you**) and (**a different**) way of life. And if God (Allah) had so willed, He could surely have made you One Single Nation, but (**He willed it otherwise**) in order to test you in what He has given you; so compete with one another in doing good deeds. The return of you (**all**) is to God; then He will inform you about that in which you used to differ". (**Koran 5:48**)

2) "Verily, those who have believed (in the Koran) as well as those who follow the Jewish faith and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in God (Allah) and the Last Day and does righteous deeds, shall have their rewards with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve." (**Koran 2:62 & 5:69**).

3) "And they (**Christians and Jews**) were commanded not, but that they should worship God by Submitting to His guidance sincerely, and they should perform Prayers; and that they should spend in Charity, and this is the Right Religion." (**Koran 98:5**).

4) "(O you Muslim believers) Do not argue with the People of the Book (Christian and Jews) otherwise than in a most kindly manner--unless it be such of them as are bent on evildoing--and say: "We believe in that which has been bestowed from on high upon us, as well as that which has been bestowed upon you (Christian and Jews): for our God and your God is one and the same, and it is unto Him that we (all) surrender ourselves." (Koran 29:46).

Some explanations:

First: In the Koran (Quran) there are some Verses that complement the true Muslim, Christian and Jewish believers; which means that the Koran complement those who are practicing their religion, performing prayers, doing charities, good deeds and prohibiting evil deeds, as was mentioned in some verses in the Koran like in the above Verses; but also there are some other verses that criticizes the non-practicing Muslims, Christians and Jewish people who are ignorant of their religions.

Second: While the Koran criticized the people who said that Jesus was the Son of God, or as a God, or that God (Allah) was one of three (Trinity) as explained in this book in subject of Christianity, about the meaning of Trinity; still the Koran did not consider the Christians and the Magians (Zoroastrians) as a non-Monotheistic Religions, and God treated them as a Monotheistic Religions (which do not associate partners with God) like Judaism, Islam and the Sabians, as explained below in Verse 17 of Surah 22 (Koran 22:17).

God treated the followers of Christianity and Judaism as the People of the **Book** (which means the People of the **Bible** or Scripture or Revelation) from God.
The Term **Book** means The **Bible**.

Notice: In early Islam, the Muslims treated the Zoroastrians like the People of the Book (Jews and Christians), even the Prophet Muhammad made a treaty with the Zoroastrians in Eastern Arabia and he allowed them to keep their Temples.

Verse 17 of Surah 22 (Koran 22:17) explained as follow:

“Those who believed (**in the Koran**), and those who are Jews, and Sabians and the Christians and the Magians (Zoroastrians) and the **Idolaters [Pagans or Polytheists who associate partners (gods) with God]**, God will decide (Judge) between them on the Day of Resurrection Verily, God is a witness over all things.”

Also in verse 1 of Surah 98 (Koran 98:1), and in Verse 82 of Surah (Chapter) 5, the Christians were separated from other religions that associate other partners with God (Allah).

Notice: Islam means **Self-Submitting to God**, which means **Self-Submitting to the Guidance of God**.

Since all the Prophets including Abraham, Moses and Jesus Self-submitted to God, so it means that the Koran treated the sincere (devotee) Christians and Jews as also Self-submitting to God, which means that they were treated like Muslims but with a **different Law and a different way of life** as expressed in the above Verse **5:48** and also in above Verses of **2:62 & 5:69 & 98:5**, and in below Verses of **5:46-47 & 5:82 & 3:113**, and some other verses in this subject.

The Religion of the Sabians (Sabiah):

No body knows for sure who are the Sabians; Some Muslim Scholars believed that they were probably a religious group between Judaism and Christianity, called Mandaeans, who followed John the Baptist (prophet Yahya), and were living in present day Iraq. Some other scholars believe that the Sabians probably are the Zoroastrians, who believe in God, the Day Hereafter and does righteous; While some other Scholars believed that the Sabians are probably some other unknown religions that believe in God, the Day Hereafter and do righteous.

(Some other Verses of toleration toward the People of the Scriptures or the Bible)

1-“We (God) bestowed on him (Jesus) the Gospel wherein is guidance and a light (Noor: which is bright white light) and confirmation of the Torah that had come before it, and a guidance and admonition for the believers.”

“Let the people (Christians) of the Gospel judge by what God has revealed in the Gospel, and whosoever does not judge by what God has revealed (then) such people is disobedience.” (Koran 5:46-47).

2-“And you will find the nearest of them (people) in affection to those who believed (in the Koran), whose who said: We are Christians”. (Koran 5:82).

3-“(But) they are not all alike among the followers of earlier Revelations (Jews and Christians), there are among them upright people, who recite God’s Scriptures during the night, and prostrate themselves in prayer”. (Koran 3:113).

(The Koran Verses of Tolerations toward all Religions)

1) “**And if your Lord (God) had so willed, He could surely have made Mankind one single Nation** (or community) (following one Religion), **but** (He willed it otherwise, and so) **they will not cease to disagree** (or they will continue holding different views including different Languages and different Religions)” **(Koran 11:118)**.

2) “O Mankind! We (God) have created you all from a male and a female, and made you into Nations and Tribes, so that you might come to know one another. Verily, the most honorable of you in the sight of God (Allah) is the one who is deeply conscious (pious believer) of Him, Verily, Allah (God) is All-Knowing, All-Aware”. (Koran 49:13).

3) Also there is a verse in the Koran says:

“And for every community (**or nation**) there is a Messenger (**throughout history**), and only after their Apostle (Messenger) has appeared [**and delivered his message**], [**then**] the matter will be judged between them with justice, and they will not be wronged”. (Koran 10:47).

So this verse show that God has sent Prophets to all the people throughout history, which means that God had set certain Rules and certain Ways of Life for each group of people in the world to test them for what they have.

These Verses describe the early fathers of Judaism, Christianity and Islam as Self-Submitted to God (Muslims in faith) and that Self-Submitting to God or Islam is the true Religion of God, as follow:

1) “In matters of faith, He (God) has ordained for you that religion (**Self-Submission to God**) which He had commanded upon Noah and unto which we gave you (O Muhammad), as well as that which We had commanded unto Abraham, and Moses, and Jesus: Steadfastly uphold the (true) faith, and do not break up your unity therein.” (Koran 42:13).

2) “Abraham (Ebraheem) was neither (was not called as) a Jew nor a Christian, but he was (called as) a Truly **Self-Submitted** to God and was not of those who associated other gods (Idolaters) with God”. (Koran 3:67).

3) “And who turns away from the religion of Abraham, except who has weak mind, Truly, We chose him in this world and verily, in the Hereafter he will be among the righteous.”
“When his lord said to him (Abraham), “Self-Submit (be a Muslim) yourself unto Me, he said, I have **Submitted myself** to the Lord of Mankind.”

“And this (**Submission to God**) was enjoined by Abraham upon his children, and (so did) Jacob: (saying), “O my children, God has chosen for you the true religion, then do not die (on any other religion) except in the faith of **Self-Submitting** to God.” (Koran 2:130-132).

4) “Or were you present when death came to Jacob, when he said to his Sons (The heads of the Twelve Tribes of Israel): what will you worship after me? They said: We shall worship your God, the God of your fathers, Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac, One God, and unto Him (God) we are **Self-Submitting** to God”. (Koran 2:133)

5) “And when Jesus became aware of their (some people of Israel) refusal to acknowledge the truth, he asked: “Who will be my helpers in God’s cause?”
The Disciples (The Twelve Disciples who later became Apostles) said: “We are the helpers (in the cause) of God (Allah); we believe in God, and bear witness that we are **Self-Submitting** to God”.

6) “The only (True) Religion in the sight of God is the (person’s) **Self-Submitting** unto Him (God)”; (Koran 3:19).

7) “If one goes in search of a Religion other than **Self-Submitting** unto God, it will never be accepted from him (or her)”. (Koran 3:85).

Al-Samaa’:

Al-Samaa’ also it is written as **as-Samaa’** (Plural “Al-Samawaat”):

The word **Samaa’** originated from the Hebrew word **Shama’**.

It means as follow:

Heaven (Plural “Heavens”) or Sky

Also the term Samaa’ or Sky applies to anything spread like a canopy (high overarching covering) above another thing.

According to Islam, God’s (Allah) Throne is located in the Seventh Heaven that He had created.

God says in the Koran that nobody can see any cracks in the Skies or Heavens.

God also says that there are so many Angels in the Heavens that the ground of the Heavens almost cracks under their heavy weight.

The Koran mentions that God adorned the nearest Sky (Atmosphere) to us (al-Samaa al-Dunya) with lights (day light) and with the beauty of our Planets.

The Koran mentions that one day in the future, God will change the Earth and the Sky, as in (Koran 14:48):

“ On the day when the earth will be changed to another earth and so will be the heavens (Skies), and they (all creatures) will appear before God, the One who holds absolute sway over all that exists.”

The explanation of the Creation of the Seven Layers of Skies or Heavens and the creation of the Earth in Six Days:

Allah (God) says in the Koran (Qur’an) that He had created the Seven-Layers of Skies or Heavens including the Earth and anything else between them in six days.

. What kind of days is only God Himself knows.

There are some Explanations about Certain Days in the Koran as follow:**1) The Speed of Light:**

God said in Verse 47, Surah number 22 (Koran 22:47) of the Koran that “**each day** of His (God) days is **equal to 1,000** (one thousand) years of our **earthly years (Lunar Year)**.”

. Some Scholars recently discovered that the **one-day** of God’s days in the **speed of light** is **equal** to the distance of **one thousand years** of our **moon** in **circling** the earth.

. So, here in this verse it shows clearly that God was calculating according to the speed of light.

The speed of light was discovered in the Modern time.

Also there is another Verse number 5 of Surah 32 (Koran 32:5) about the day equals 1,000 years of our Lunar Years.

2) The Theory of Relativity:

Also God said in Verse 4 of Surah 70 (Koran 70:4) that the **Angels** ascend to the Heaven where God's Throne is located in one day which is equals to **50,000** (Fifty thousand) years, but without comparing it to our years like He (God) did in the above Verse.

“The Angels and the Spirit (Gabriel) ascend to Him (God) in a Day the measure whereof is fifty thousand years.” (Koran 70:4).

. So, in 1905, the scientist Albert Einstein, through his Theory of Relativity found out that the **time** depends on the Mass and Velocity (the rate of Speed of action or occurrence) of the matter that it travels through in the Sky; then comparing the result of the total time of speed of travel (in certain area or place) in relation (or relatively) to something in that area.

For example, like God comparing the total time of the speed of light (travelling for 24 hours or one day) to our Lunar years (the Moon travelling around the Earth in 1,000 years) as God did in Verses 47 & 5 (Koran 22:47 and 32:5) above. Verse 5 of Surah 32, as follow:

“He (God) manages and regulates (every) affair from the heaven (Celestial Space) to the Earth; then it (affair) will go up to Him, in one day, the length whereof is a thousand years of your reckoning (our worldly time).” (Koran 32:5).

So, in the past many people did not understand these above numbers, but the Modern Theory of Relativity of Einstein support the numbers of 1,000 and 50,000 years.

. The word **Day** in the Arabic language **also means a period of time**, so probably the six days mean six periods of time, or **6,000** (six thousands) years or **300,000** (three hundred thousands) years according to the above explanations, or probably, it means that each day is relative to something even larger in the Heavens or the Universe.

In the modern times, the scientists have discovered that the beginning of the early creation of the Universe (after of the Big Bang) was about 300,000 years old, and this number is equal to six days according to the above calculations of the days of travel for the Angels. But only God knows the meaning of the Six Days in creating the Seven Layers of Heavens.

(The Seven Levels or Layers of Skies (Heavens) and the Seven Layers of the Earth)

First: The Seven Levels or Layers of Heavens

In many Verses in the Koran God mentions that He created Seven Heavens or Seven Paths in the Skies.

We do not know where the Seven Heavens are located.

Probably the Seven Levels or Layers of Heavens or Skies are invisible to us like the Angels who usually live on them.

Or probably the Seven Heavens or Seven Skies were shaped like Seven Spheres or round shapes in the deep Space around (or above) the Earth.

Or probably the Seven Layers of Heavens are just Seven Celestial Regions in the Cosmos.

But only God knows where the Seven Heavens are located or what they look like.

Second: The Seven Layers of the Earth

This Verse 12 of Surah 65 (Koran 65:12) mentions that God also created Seven Layers from the Earth too. As in 65:12: “God is He who has created Seven Heavens, and, like them, (Seven Layers) of the earth.”

The modern scientists have discovered that the earth is actually composed of seven layers, and that each layer has its especial benefit to sustain life on earth, and to protect us against excessive heat and cold of outside space.

The Seven Layers of the Earth are as follow:

This fact was discovered in the 20th century by using special instruments to find the materials of the earth under its upper crust all the ways to its Core.

First: The **Five Main Layers of the Earth** from the **Crust** to the **two** different **layers** of **Mantle** to the **outer Core** and to the **Core** of the Earth.

The boiling materials inside the earth help to prevent the Earth’s Crust from excessive freeze during the night.

Also the iron core of the bottom of the earth generates huge magnetic fields which repulses the dangerous sun radiations; without the magnetic field, the earth would become crispy surface (from the heat radiation of the sun) without life at all.

Second: The **Oceans** and other water surfaces are considered as the Sixth Layer of the Earth.

Third: The **Atmosphere** or the Air around the Earth is considered as the Seventh Layer of the Earth which is vital to the survival of life on Earth.

In the modern time, the scientists have discovered that the layers of Air or gases of the Atmosphere has a different kind of formation that protect the earth from the heat of the sun, the cold temperatures of the space outside of the atmosphere, and prevent other objects (like Meteorites) from entering our space and hit the surface of the earth; also these layers help create the weather that help sustain life on earth, also to make the dark sky look blue during day light.

The Atmosphere in the Koran:

In addition to the Seven Heavens of the Universe, some Modern Muslim Scholars believe that probably God was also mentioning the Seven Layers of the Atmosphere around the earth, to protect the earth from matters of out of the earth’s space; and also to create the weather on earth that help sustain life on it.

The following two verses mention the Atmosphere for protection and to create the day light:

1) As in verse 12 of Chapter 41 (Koran 41:12):

“And We (God) adorned the Sky nearest (Atmosphere) to the Earth with lights (day light), and (also) for Protection (for the life on earth), such is the ordaining of the Almighty, the All-Knowing.”

2) Also in Verse 32 of Surah 21 (Koran 21:32):

“We made (have set) the Sky (the Atmosphere as a Canopy) a preserved and protected (safe and well guarded or well secured) roof yet still they turn away from our signs.”

(The Beginning, Expansion and Shrinking of the Universe)

On February of 2003, the Astronomers estimated the **age of the Universe** to be about **13.7 Billion** years, and they believe that the Universe began with an enormous explosion called “The Big Bang” and that the Universe has been expanding since that time, and when it reaches the limit of its maximum expansion then it will shrink on itself.

. The Koran confirms the Astronomers’ **Expansion and Shrinking Theory**;

Allah (God) says that He has created the Universe and that he is expanding it, then at the end of the world and the Universe, He (God) will shrink and fold the Universe (Heaven or Heavens), and rolled it like a scroll, then restart the creation from anew.

In Islam and some other religions, the term Universe has being called by the name or term Heaven or Heavens.

. Allah created everything in the Universe (Heaven) in a **measured** way with a known age and time limit to everything that is living in the Universe, the stars, the earth and everything else in between them; also Allah is in control of everything in the Universe including what it seems to the eyes as empty space, but actually it is full of dark matters.

1) The verse that supports the Big Bang (or Beginning of the Universe) theory:

The Koran is very clear when it says, “Don’t the people who hide the truth (unbelievers) see that space (Sky or Heaven) and the earth were all joined together (in one unit of creation) and then we (God) split them apart?” (Koran 21: 30).

This Verse mentions that the Universe started with a Big Bang, or from a single condensed matter.

The Big Bang theory was discovered in the 20th century.

. This description close to the modern concept of the **Big Bang**

2) The Verse that Support the Expansion Theory of the Universe:

The Koran says “We (God) built (constructed) the Heaven (universe) with (creative) power and we are certainly steadily expanding it”. (Koran 51: 47).

This Verse supports the expansion of the Universe.

This fact was discovered in the 20th century.

3) The Verse of Shrinking (Big Crunch) of the Universe:

“And (remember) the day when we shall roll up the Skies (heavens) like a scrolls rolled up for books. As We (God) began the creation, We shall repeat it, (it is) a promise binding upon us. Truly We shall do it.” (Koran 21:104).

This Verse mentions that God will Shrinks the Universe and repeated again from anew.

The Scientists discovered this fact recently in the 20th century, which means that the Universe is expanding like a balloon; whenever we inflate the balloon, then the balloon becomes so thin that at one point it collapses on itself when there is no more left of it to expand anymore.

The Scientists called the Shrinking of the Universe by the Phrase “the **Big Crunch**”.

So one day in the Far future, the Universe is going to shrink and collapse on itself when the matters gets dispersed very widely in the deep space.

(Some other Verses in the Koran about Science)

In addition to the previous above verses about the Creation in Six days, the Big bang, the expansion and later the shrinking of the Universe, and about the Seven Layers of the Skies (Heavens) and the Earth, the speed of light, and the theory of relativity, there are also many other verses in the Koran which mentions science that was not known at the time of Prophet Muhammad, but became known in the modern times, because of the advances in science, and the following Verses are just some of them, as follow:

First: Human Biology

1) Water and Creation:

God said in the Koran that He created **every living thing on earth from water**, which is confirmed today by the modern scientists. (Koran 21: 30).

2) Human Creation:

God gave details about the stages and the beginning of the **creation of the fetus** and its **three stages** and its growth in the womb.

The Verse concerning the **Clot clinging** to the Uterus (Koran 96:1-3)

The wrapping of Muscles over the bones (Koran 23:14)

And the Three stages of the Baby in the Womb (Koran 39:6)

3) Born Male or Female?

Also the two verses 45 & 46 in Surah 53 (Koran 53:45-46), mention that the sex of the new born male and female is determined by the sperm cells from the Male, and that the female has no role in this process, as follow:

“He has created both sexes, male and female from a drop of semen (sperm) which has been ejected.”

Also these Verses 36 & 37 in Surah 73 (Koran 73:36-37), mention that the man (male and female) is not made from the entire semen, but only a drop of it, or small part of it. This fact was discovered in the Modern times.

Also these Verses 2 & 7-8 in Surahs 76 & 32 (Koran 76:2 & 32:7-8) mention that there is a Mixer of different Fluids in the semen and those fluids have many functions. This fact was discovered by Modern Science.

4) Fingerprints:

“Does man (a disbeliever) think that we (God) cannot assemble his (or her) bones (resurrect him)? Yes, we are able to put together in perfect order the very tips of his fingers.” (Koran 75:3-4).

God mentions that it is very easy for Him to bring humans back to life after death, as it is very easy for Him to create the Human Fingerprints again, which is considered as the Identity of the Humans.

The importance of fingerprints was discovered in the 19th century.

5) The Sinful Forelock:

“No indeed! If he (unbeliever) does not stop, We (God) will grab him by the forelock, a lying, sinful forelock.” (Koran 96:15-16).

This verse mentions that the brain’s section that is responsible for aggression is located in the front of the head in the Prefrontal area.

The scientists discovered this reality in the 20th century.

Second: History

1) Joseph and the King:

This Verse 101 of Surah 17 (17:101) mentions Joseph and the King of Egypt.

When the Prophet Joseph (Yousef) was in Egypt, the title of the ruler of Egypt was only “**King**”, not Pharaoh; and the title of “Pharaoh” was first started in Egypt in 1479 B.C. by King Tuthmosis III (1479-1425 B.C.), during the rule of the “New Kingdom” of Egypt; which means that Joseph lived and died in Egypt before the year 1479 B.C. (15th century B.C.).

According to the calculations of Modern Scholars, Joseph most likely lived between 1650-1540 B.C. during the reign of the Hyksos in Egypt. The Hyksos were Semitic and Asiatic (most likely Hurrians) people who Migrated to Egypt and seized power in the 17th century B.C.

The titles of the rulers of Egypt were first discovered in the 19th century by Archeologists.

2) Haman and the Pharaoh:

There are six Verses in the Koran, which mention the name of Haman with the Pharaoh of Egypt.

In the Bible the helper of the Babylonian Kings (in the 6th century B.C. during the Jewish forced exile in Babylonia) was also called Haman, while the Haman of Egypt was not listed in the Bible.

So, some people thought that the Haman of the Koran was a mistake; but the Archeological discoveries in the 19th century in Egypt found the name of Haman of the Pharaohs as was mentioned in the Koran, and the term Haman was considered as the title of the helper of the Pharaoh for the Construction projects.

3) The Mummy of King Mernepteh of Egypt:

There is a Verse in the Koran about the Sign of the discovery of the **Mummy of Mernepteh** (Reigned 1236-1223 B.C.) who was the Pharaoh King of Egypt (who succeeded King Ramesses II in 1236 B.C.) during the time of Moses.

In the Modern times, Muslim Scholars believe that the meaning of one of the Miracles of the Koran became known (revealed or proven) to us recently.

God said in the Koran that He saved the drowned body of the Pharaoh Mernepteh, so that his body becomes as a Warning Sign to the people after his time, as was mentioned in this Verse 92 of Surah 10 (Koran 10:92) as follow:

“So this day We (God) shall save (deliver from the Sea) your body (Pharaoh Mernepteh drowned dead body) so that you may become as a Sign (waning Sign) for those after you.”

So, the Scholars believe that the Mummy of the body of Mernepteh, which was discovered at the end of the 19th century and now is in the Cairo Museum in Egypt, is considered as a Sign to the people after his time including our Modern time, as was mentioned in the Koran.

Medical examination of this Mummy has shown that the body was drowned but could not have stayed in the water for long, because it does not show Signs of deterioration due to prolonged submersion; while the medical examination of the Mummy of King Ramesses did not show that he was drowned.

In the past, Muslim scholars did not understand this verse, but after the Modern Western Scholars and Archeologists discovered that the Prophet Moses lived during the Reign of King Ramesses II, and after the medical examinations of the Mummies of Ramesses and Mernepteh, then it became known that King Mernepteh was the Pharaoh of the Exodus of the People of Israel under the leadership of Moses from Egypt in 1223 B.C. and in the same year of Mernepteh's death, as explained above.

4) The Lowest Point on Earth:

These Verses 1-4 of Surah 30 (Koran 30:1-4), mention that the Sassanid Empire's Army defeated the Roman Byzantine Army (in 620 A.D.) in the lowest land on Earth, and this lowest land was around the Dead Sea.

In the year 620, the people did not understand the meaning of the verse, but in the Modern Time we do understand it, because the scientists discovered that the lowest point of land on earth is the Dead Sea itself, which is about 395 meters below Sea levels.

Third: Space

1) Matter in Space:

In many Verses in the Koran like this Verse 59 of Surah 25 (Koran 25: 59), God mentions the existence of matter between the earth and Heavens.

In the 20th century, the Scientists have discovered that the Space is not empty as we see it but composed or full of unseen dark matters.

2) Creating the Universe from Smoke matters:

God mentions that He **created the Heavens** out of **smoke** (Koran 41: 11).

In the Modern times, the Scientists discovered that the Galaxies were forming from the matters in the Smoke.

3) Orbits:

God also mentions in many verses that the planets and the **stars swim in the sky in orbits**. And mentions that the Sun is not static but moves in a definite orbit. (Koran 21:33 & 37:38 & 51:7).

The fact that the Sun orbits around another bigger stars became known in the Modern time.

4) The Atmosphere:

“We (God) made the Sky (the Atmosphere surrounding the earth) a preserved and protected roof (safe and well-guarded), yet they turn away from its Signs.” (Koran 21:32).

The Atmosphere filters the harmful light rays which comes from the sun and other sources in space, and then let only the harmless and safe and useful rays.

Also the Atmosphere destroys the Meteors that enter the Atmosphere toward the earth.

These facts became known in the Modern Time.

5) Space Travel:

God mentions **space travel**, that the Humans and the Jinn can travel through space but with power, which means the power of science, as happening today (Koran 55: 33).

As follow: “O assembly of Humans and Jinn (Genies as invisible Spirits)! If you have power to pass beyond the zones of the Heavens and the Earth, then pass beyond (them)! But you will never be able to pass them, except with Power (or authority)”. It means by the Power or Authority of knowledge.

6) The Gravity:

In these verses 2 & 10 of Surahs 13 & 31 (Koran 13:2 & 31:10), God mentions that He raised the Heavens without Visible Support that you can see (without any Pillars that you can see).

As follow: “God is He who raised the Heavens without any visible support (Pillars) that you could see.” (Koran 13:2).

Or “He (God) has created the Heavens without any visible support (Pillars) that you can see.” (Koran 31:10).

The fact of Gravity between matters in nature or Space was first discovered in the 17th century by Isaac Newton.

Fourth: Nature

1) The Pairs in Creation:

This Verse 36 of Surah 37 (Koran 37:36) mentions that God created everything in Pairs; from what the Earth produces and from themselves and from things unknown to humans. Which means that every matter was created in a two charges Negative and positive Charges, as was discovered in the Modern time, which also means that every particle has its antiparticle of opposite charge, like the Electron of anti-matter is positively charged and its Protons are negatively charged. And this fact is also true for the unseen matters in Space.

2) Roundness of the Earth:

First: This Verse 5 of Surah 39 (Koran 39:5) mentions that the Earth is Round.

The Verse mentions that God Wraps the Night in the Day then wraps the Day in the Night, and this is exactly means that the earth moving around itself; usually always one half of the earth is day while the second half is night, so when the earth rotate on itself, the half side of day change into night and the half side of the night change into day and it continues like this.

Also there is another verse that mentions the Roundness of the Earth in a different way. The roundness of the Earth was not known in the 7th century A.D.

Second: These Verses 3 & 19 & 7 (Koran 13:3 & 15:19 & 50:7), also mention that God made the grounds of the Earth spread out wide, as follow:

“And the Earth, We (God) spread it out wide.”, which means that the shape of the ground of the Earth is round and is continuously spread out wide and there is no stopping at any place because there is no edges.

3) Mountains as Stakes:

God mentions that He created the **Mountains as Stakes** (Awtaad), which are driven into the ground like those used to anchor a tent, and is proven true today. (Koran 21:31 & 78:6-7)

The Mountains as Stakes help stabilize the soil of the earth from movement which can destroy cities; the bottom part of the mountains is several times larger than the part that over the ground.

4) The Iron:

This Verse 25 of Surah 57 (Koran 57:25) mentions that God sent down Iron to Earth in which lies great force and which has many uses for Mankind.

It is became known in the modern time that the Iron found in the world came to us from outer space from the Giant Stars, and only Giant and extremely Hot Stars can form Iron, and that after the Giant Stars explode, its iron spread throughout the space in the form of Meteors.

5) No Merging Seas:

The waters of the neighboring Seas do not mix; also the Salt waters and the fresh waters do not mix, because of the difference in the density of their waters, as mentioned in the following Verse:

“He (God) has let loose (given the freedom of merging for two Seas) the two Seas meeting together, (but there is) between them a barrier which make none of them can break through (Merge).”(Koran 55:19-20).

This fact has only recently been discovered by Oceanographers.

6) The Two Waves:

This Verse 40 of Surah 24 (Koran 24:40) mentions that there is two kinds of Waves in the Sea, one Wave is under the surface of the water between two different layers of water of two different densities, and the Second Wave is on the Surface of the water of the Sea.

This fact was discovered in the Modern time.

7) The Formation of the Rain:

There are some Verses in the Koran mention some fact about Rain, which became known to us in the Modern Times, as follow:

This Verse 48 (Koran 30:48) mentions the **three stages** of the formation of the rain.

Also Verse 43 (Koran 24:43) mentions the **formation** of Rain.

This Verse 22 (Koran 15:22) mentions the **fruitful or productive winds**, which is responsible for the formation of rain.

And this Verse 11 (Koran 43:11) mentions the **Proportion of Rain**, which means that the rain is sent down to Earth in due measure, which is also was discovered in the Modern time.

It means that the amount of water that evaporate from the Earth’s surface equals to the same amount of water that come down to earth as a rain, which also means that the water continuously circulates in a balanced cycle and in a **measured** way.

8) The Ants:

There is a verse number 18, in Surah 27 (Koran 27:18) in the Koran which calls the ants by a female name not by a male name.

In the modern time, it is proven that all the Ant workers are actually females.

Also there are many other Verses that mention Science, but it needs some explanations. There are many published books about these Scientific Verses.

