

AL-ISLAM, THE RELIGION "BELIEFS AND PRACTICES"

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The Religion (Way of Life), of Al-Islam is based on Five Pillars and Seven Fundamental Principles. The first Pillar (1) The belief in one God, whose proper name for Muslims is Allah, and that Muhammad ibn Abdullah is the Slave/Servant and Final Messenger/ Prophet of Allah.

Note: Muhammad ibn Abdullah was born in 570 A.D. on the Arabian Peninsula. At age 40, about 610 A.D., he began to receive the Revelation Quran from Allah which lasted for a period of 23 years.

The first Pillar of Al-Islam is identified as "Sha-ha-da" or Confession, which stated: "There is no deity (God) worthy of worship besides Allah and Muhammad (PBUH) is the Messenger of Allah."

The Holy Quran (Muslims' Holy Book), reinforced Allah's Oneness in many verses: 55:26-27, "All that lives in the earth and in the heavens shall pass away, but forever will remain the countenance of thy Lord."

13:110 says, (O Muhammad)! "I am a mortal man like you. It has been revealed unto me that your God is the One and Only God. Therefore, whoever looks forward to meeting their Lord, let them do righteous deeds and let them not associate unto anyone or anything a share of worship due to their Lord."

21:25 "And we sent no Messenger before thee (O Muhammad), but we inspired him, saying: There is no God save Me (Allah), so worship Me."

112:1-4 Says, (O Muhammad)! "He is Allah, the One God. Allah, the Eternal, the Uncaused Cause of all that exists. He begets not, and neither is He begotten; and there is nothing that can be compared with Him."

The Second (2) Pillar of Al-Islam is "Salat" or "Prayer". For Muslims who are mature and sensible, five prayers per day are prescribed. These prayers are: Fajr (Morning), Zuhr (Noon), Asr (Evening-before sunset), Maghrib (Evening-after sunset), and Isha (Night).

Allah addresses the ritual of prayer in the Quran; 4:103 "Verily, for all believers, prayer (Salat) is indeed a sacred duty prescribed at certain times of day."

30:18-19 "And unto Him (Allah), is due all praise in the heavens and on earth, glorify Him (Allah) in the afternoon as well, and when you enter upon the hour of noon. He it is who brings forth the living out of that which is dead, and brings forth the dead from that which is alive, and gives life to the earth after it is lifeless: and likewise will you be brought from death to life."

76:25 "Glorify Allah when you reach the evening and when you rise at morning."

29:45 "Recite what is sent of the Book by inspiration to thee, and establish regular prayer for prayer restrains from shameful and unjust deeds. And remembrance of Allah is the greatest thing in life without doubt. And Allah knows the deeds that ye do."

The institutional ritual of Salat (Prayer) develops discipline, punctuality and responsibility in the practicing of Muslim. It is also a means of purifying the heart, restrains negative desires, lewdness and corruption. It also produces humility.

The Third (3) Pillar of Al-Islam is Zakat or Alms/Poor Rate. This word, "Zakat" is also an act of worship, which also represents an action of purification of wealth or material possessions. Zakat or Alms-Giving to donate a portion of your income/wealth to the Muslim community or Masjid one attends. It is also a means of multiplying one's wealth or finances. Allah has placed an enormous reward on Zakat (Poor-Due) and other charitable acts. Allah tells us in His Word Quran 2:261, "The likeness of those who spend their wealth in Allah's way is as the likeness of a grain which grows seven ears, in every ear a hundred grains. Allah gives increase manifold to whom He will. Allah is Infinite, All Knowing."

57:18 "Surely, those who give alms both men and women and lend unto Allah a goodly loan, it will be doubled for them and there will be a rich reward."

There are also stern warnings to those who refuse to obey Allah and pay the Poor-Due (Zakat) of severe punishment. Allah says in his Word Quran: 9:34 "And for those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, give them tidings (O Muham-

mad), of a painful doom."

"Saum" or "Fasting" is the Fourth (4) Pillar of Al-Islam. This is another prescribed means of worship, it is required of all mature Muslims for a typically 30-day period (from sunrise to sunset) during the month of Ramadan.

There are a number of restrictions: a person who is ill, women during their monthly menstruation or pregnancy are not required to fast.

Fasting is a means of physical purification, moral elevation and spiritual perfection. It is also one of the few ways that the wealthy or those who have sustenance (food) realize how those in poverty feel.

Of Fasting, Allah (our Lord Creator) says in His Word Quran: 2:183, "O ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may ward off evil."

Fasting is another noble act of worship in Al-Islam of high merits, because those who fast the Month of Ramadan must control their sexual desires (carnal), forego their pleasures and abstain from eating and drinking for Allah's sake. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Fasting comprises half of fortitude and fortitude is half of belief. Its rewards transcend reckoning and calculation."

Fasting is the only act of worship which is not seen by anyone except Allah. It is for this reason that Muhammad, the Messenger/ Prophet and Slave/Servant of Allah said; Allah says: "Every good act will be rewarded from ten to seven hundredfold except fasting which is endured for My sake and for which I shall reward."

There are different levels of fasting which we may cover in later discussions. "Hajj" or "Pilgrimage" is the Fifth (5) and final of the

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FORMER MAYOR ED KOCH GIVES VIEWS ON BLACKS IN ADDRESS AT UNLV

By Muhammad Abdullah

On Tuesday, October 2, 1990, as part of the University of Nevada Las Vegas Barrick Lecture series, Mayor Ed Koch, former mayor of New York City, delivered a speech. Koch was invited by the B'Nai B'Rith Jewish Anti-Defamation League.

Mayor Koch gave a 50 minute speech and then opened up his address for questions and answers from the audience. His address dealt with four different areas: 1. Mideast Views; 2. Views on Politics, Domestic and Foreign Affairs; 3. Zionist Views and 4. Views on anti-defamation league locally and nationally.

Mayor Koch then fielded questions from the audience concerning various issues. When asked how he would rate Mayor Dinkins on a scale from one to ten he responded this way: "If I were overseas, I would not comment, but I am not overseas so I will make a comment...TERRIBLE!" he Said.

The former mayor cited the boycott of African-Americans of Korean merchants. He said that he disliked Mayor Dinkins' handling of this issue. He said that Mayor Dinkins' stand supported the position of the African-Americans. "The Blacks were carrying signs telling people not to buy from people who do not

look like you." They were calling the Koreans "Yellow Monkeys" and Mayor Dinkins did not take a just stand against this open racism, he pointed out.

"There have always been people to go into low income areas and set up businesses in the inner cities. In New York, it is the Koreans and in Detroit, it is the Arabs. They have a right to earn a living in a free enterprise system and should be allowed to operate without being harassed."

Koch said that he didn't like the way that Mayor Dinkins responded to a recent homicide involving the killing of a white youth which incensed the city. He said that Dinkins decided to go to the Tennis Matches rather than address the issue publicly.

Koch also charged Mayor Dinkins with "capitulating" to or yielding to the teachers and the unions. Koch said he attended a conference and was told in an address by labor leaders that "We labor union leaders are not your friends."

When asked about his views on Rev. Jesse Jackson and Minister Louis Farrakhan, he gave the following comment: "I was the only public official that attacked Jesse Jackson. I was labeled a racist. However, any Jew or Supporters of Israel would

be crazy to vote for Jesse Jackson. I was misquoted by the press. I said any Jews or Supporters of Israel would be crazy to vote for Jesse Jackson as Blacks would be to vote for George Bush. That's what I said."

During the course of Mayor Koch's address, he did say that he was a Zionist. He qualified his statement by saying that by Zionist he meant that he supported Israel's right to exist. He said he would never live in Israel and said it was a "Nice place to visit."

On Jesse Jackson, Koch said that Jackson is no longer the threat that he once was because many other African-American leaders are coming forward as viable presidential contenders. He said, "Jesse Jackson no longer can speak as the lone leader of Black People."

On Minister Farrakhan, Koch labeled him as "dangerous." He alleged that Farrakhan was reported to have said that the Jews infected Black babies with the AIDS virus.

"He (Farrakhan) is very dangerous! He feeds into a need to attack everybody as being responsible for the black condition," he said.

Mayor Koch said that he was disturbed about most whites

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