

Presenting Islam for Round Rock High School (RHHS) Students.

World Religions Fair

April 3, 4 2018

Assalaamualaikum. It means ... Reply: Wa'alaikumus Salaam

Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem. Means ...

My name is ... I am a Muslim.

Have you all met or know a Muslim, a friend, or a neighbor? Yes. Anyone who has not met or knows a Muslim?

I have a story to share with you. Everyone loves stories ... Yes? No?

It is the true Story of an Orphan boy. Long, long time ago in a distant land a boy was born as an orphan in a society and land where being an orphan was a taboo and a sign of bad luck. He grew up as an honest, truthful and trusted young man in a society where immorality, corruption and vices were rampant. He did not mix with immoral crowd. The people of the land were idol worshippers. They gave him the title of "the trusted one." At the age of forty years while meditating in solitude, he received a message from his creator through an angelic agency. The message was to worship one God, the Almighty God, and that he was a prophet of God.

He took the message to his people, but they rejected the message and ridiculed him. Over a period of several years increasing number of people joined in his ranks. This alarmed the establishment. Their ancestral faith in their idols and their trade from it was in danger. They offered money and position to dissuade him, but he did not budge. He was abused and insulted. He did not retaliate, instead stayed calm and continued his mission. They tortured some of his followers and killed some of them. They boycotted him and drove him and his followers out of the city. No one would sell food to him or to his people. Starvation led them to eat grass and leaves. Some did not survive. After a year or so, seeing that he stood firm, the elders of the town relented and allowed him back in town. They made several failed plots to kill him, but he was not deterred. Some of his followers took refuge with a Christian emperor in a near Land.

Finally, when his life was imminently threatened, he left his home city stealthily at night and moved to the neighboring city, which welcomed him. He established himself there and consolidated his authority. He drafted a constitution and united the warring tribes. His teachings spread in the neighboring lands. His home city folk would not rest until they had stamped out the new faith and its monotheistic teachings. They launched successive wars on him with superior forces and weapons, but he successfully defended himself. When he had enough number of followers, he marched on to his home city. The pagans had lost the will to fight. They surrendered without fight. He forgave them all, including his worst enemies. General amnesty was declared. He established a government based on principles of justice and tolerance. The Christians, the Jews, and the pagans were accorded protection. Soon his message spread

far and wide. People from neighboring lands visited him and accepted his message. He continued to receive revelation until the age of 63 years. Shortly after the last revelation, he died at his home peacefully.

Thus, in a short period of 23 years, he had rooted out idolatry and established a just government. He stopped tribal bloodshed and brought prosperity and civility to a very primitive people. Revolutionary social changes were implemented. Women were accorded legal status, treated with dignity and given due rights. Infanticide was strictly prohibited. The poor and the destitute were given care with respect and charitable disposition. Acts of Kindness and good deeds to others were declared as the prime means to earn God's pleasure. Today more than one billion people worldwide follow his faith and its teachings.

Historians and scholars have marveled at his revolutionary achievements without the use of force or coercion, almost single handedly and in such a short time. We still do not know how he did it, but we do know what he achieved, which is nothing short of a miracle.

What were the personal qualities he had that allowed him such a phenomenal success? He was truthful, honest, trustworthy, patient to a fault, generous, forgiving and just. He was humble and God-fearing. He was a compassionate Head of the state, an astute administrator, a judge and a jurist. He was a law giver and possessed unsurpassed knowledge and wisdom. He had full and complete trust in Almighty God.

A most astounding fact was that he received no formal or informal education and was unable to read or write.

Who was this man? He was Muhammad son of Abdullah, the messenger of God, born in Arabia 1400 years ago. The religion that he brought is Islam. The revelations brought by Angel Gabriel are preserved in the book called the Qur'an. The text is preserved unchanged, in the language of the revelation that is Arabic.

Islam. (Pronunciation). The word Islam means submission, submission to Almighty God, the One True God.

To Be a Muslim, one recites this phrase: "La ilaaha il-lal-laah, Muhammadur Rasool-ullah"

(There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God).

The Qur'an. God revealed his message to Prophet Muhammad through Angel Gabriel over a period of 23 years. It is preserved in the form of the Arabic book called the Qur'an.

Fundamentals of the Faith.

1. Oneness of God (Tawheed). God is One and unique. He has no partners, no associates, no father, and no son. He is non-physical and present everywhere. He is the creator of all, and He is uncreated.
2. Ritual prayers (Salaat) Five times every day
3. Fasting in the month of Ramadan (ninth month of Islamic calendar)

4. Charity (Zakat)
5. Hajj. Pilgrimage to Mecca where house of God (Kabah) is situated. Required once in the lifetime.
6. Belief in all the prophets of God. Abraham, Ishmael, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and others (Peace be upon them all)
7. Belief in Angels
8. Belief in the Day of Judgment
9. Belief in the life in the Hereafter
10. Belief in Heaven and hell
11. Belief in the Justice of God.
12. Belief in the divinely appointed spiritual guides (Imams).

The last two are specific to the Shia Islam. Shias believe in Imams from the family of the prophet Muhammad (p). They are 12 in number.

Dietary Restrictions in Islam.

Pork and pork products, alcohol, intoxicants, meat not slaughtered in the Islamic ritual manner, dead animal and carrion are prohibited. Only designated animal are permitted for consumption.

Holidays.

1. **Eid ul Fitr.** The festival at the end of the month of Ramadan. Charity is given in the morning to the needy. People join in congregation, families and friends get together and celebrate, and children receive gifts.
2. **Eid ul Adha.** The festival of sacrifice. It is on the tenth day of the last month of Islamic calendar. This commemorates the sacrifice of his son Ishmael that Prophet Abraham offered to God.

Denominations or schools in Islam.

There are two major sects, Sunni and Shia.

Both believe in the same Deity, God Almighty, believe in the same prophets, read the same Qur'an, and mostly follow the same fundamentals of faith.

Sunni believe that appointment of the successor to the prophet was left up to people. They consider Abu Bakr as the first Caliph.

Shia believe that Imam Ali was appointed as the successor to the prophet upon Divine instructions.

World Population and distribution of Muslims.

Total population of Muslims is approximately one and a half billion. Indonesia, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Mid-East have most of the Muslims.

Muslims in America are 3.45 million according to a latest census.

Misconceptions about Islam cleared.

1. God of Islam is the same God that Christians and Jews worship.
2. Muslims do not worship Muhammad. He was human, a prophet of God.
3. Women were given a legal and an honorable status in Islam 1400 years ago. Prophet Muhammad (p) taught that Paradise lies under the feet of the mother.
4. Islam was not spread by sword. It was the principles of kindness, generosity, and respect for others, tolerance, and the concept of pure monotheism of God that attracted people. Merchants doing trade introduced Islam to Indonesia.
5. Taking of life unjustly and suicide are grave sins.
6. Islam does not condone terrorism. It enjoins civility, kindness, tolerance, doing of good deeds to others, and respect for all.

Sorry, no time for questions.

For more information on Islam, visit www.islamquery.com.

Transcript of this presentation is on the above website.

(Reading time: 15 minutes)

Some interaction with the students suggested during the presentation. A bit of humor might keep them focused.