

# Islam in Canada

Presentation by:  
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# Historical Presence

- Four years after Canada's founding in 1867, the 1871 Canadian Census found 13 European Muslims among the population. A great number of Bosniaks (from Bosnia) came to American soil much like Christians from Europe; some came before the First World War. The first Muslim organization in Canada was registered in 1934 in Regina, Saskatchewan, consisting of immigrants from Lebanon. The first Canadian Mosque was constructed in Edmonton in 1938, when there were approximately 700 European Muslims in the country. This building is now part of the museum at Fort Edmonton Park. The years after World War II saw a small increase in the Muslim population. However Muslims were still a distinct minority. It was only after the removal of European immigration preferences in the late 1960s and early 1970s that Muslims began to arrive in significant numbers.

# History

- Islamic roots in the New World pre-dates Columbus's arrival in 1492

Famous Norwegian explorer Thor Heyerdhal proved that North & West Africans with boats made from Egyptian Reeds, sailed the Atlantic and inhabited the Americas, long before Columbus.

- He proved his point by sailing in boat (Ra II), made from reed and reached the coast of Barbados.

# HISTORY (cont'd)

- The first recorded birth of a Muslim, to Scottish parents James and Agnes Love.
- 1881 Census records 4 Muslims



# Muslim Population in Canada:

- Over 1,000,000
- Over 500,000 live in Greater Toronto
- Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver are the major Centers of Muslim settlements
- Latest census shows that Islam is the 2nd largest religion in Canada
- World Muslim Population is estimated at over a billion (23%).

# Islam:

- Linguistically, the word Islam means peace
- Ideologically, it means a Way of Life
- Religiously, it means submission to God

# Origin of Islam

- Islam's origin dates back to the first human being Adam & Eve.
- It is a continuation of the same religion of Judaism and Christianity
- It is the same message of unity of God.

# ABRAHAMIC FAMILY

- We are part of the Abrahamic family
- Abraham had two sons, Isaac and Ishmael
- Prophet Mohammad is descendant of Ishmael
- *Prophet Mohammad said: I am the nearest of all the people to Jesus, the son of Mary. The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one.* (Sahih al-Bukhari 3443)

# Mohammad (pbuh)

- You must know this man : Prophet Mohammad
- born in Makkah in 570 AC, in a merchants family
- lost his parents at an early age
- In 610 AC he received first revelation to read
- With the command from the God to proclaim 'there is no god but God,' he started a movement of educating and reforming the society
- Makkan society persecuted him and his followers
- He migrated to Madina, and formed an Islamic society, transforming the traditional Arab culture
- He defeated Meccans and led to a victory of Islam in the entire Arabian peninsula

# Who are the Muslims?

- Followers of Islam are called Muslims and not MOSLEMS



# What do Muslims believe?

- Muslims believe in one God, the same God of Abraham, Moses and Jesus
- Along with belief in oneness of God, one has to believe in messenger ship of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH)
- One becomes Muslim by declaring that:  
“There is no god but God, Mohammad is His messenger”

There are five pillars of Islam that every Muslim has to believe and practice:

1. Declaration of Faith
2. Praying Salat
3. Giving Zakat (charity)
4. Fasting in the month of Ramadan and
5. Pilgrimage to Makkah.

# Declaration of Faith

- “There is no one worthy of worship but Allah, Mohammad is His Messenger”
- The word Allah is an Arabic word for God. It is a unique word, since it is genderless.
- Description of Almighty God is described in one chapter of the Holy Quran:

***“ Say: He is Allah, the One, Allah, the eternally besought of all He begetteth not nor was begotten And there is non comparable unto Him.” ( Ch 112)***

# There are seven articles of Faith that a Muslim must believe:

1. One God, Allah
2. Angels. Who are in service to God
3. Divine Books: Revelations from God to Messengers, such as Torah, Bible, Psalms, Quran .
4. Prophets/Messengers of God: God sent His message to humanity through specially selected human beings, such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammad (peace be upon them all)
5. Fate is controlled by God, i.e. everything good or bad occurs through the power and will of God
6. Belief in the Day of Judgment
7. Faith in the resurrection after death.

# Salat - 2nd Pillar of Islam

Salat is a ritual worship to be performed five times a day as follows:

- *Fajr – Morning Prayer: The range of time it is performed is from the break of dawn till sunrise*
- *Zuhr – Noon Prayer: Range of time, it is performed is from Noon until 2 to 3 hours before sunset, depending on geographic location. .*
- *Asr – Late afternoon Prayer – Range of time is 2 to 3 hours before sunset, depending on geographic location. .*
- *Maghrib – Prayer at Sunset: Range of time is from Sunset to hour and a half after sunset*
- *Isha – Night Prayer: its time begins an hour and a half after sunset and last until dawn*

# Third Pillar: Zakat

- Zakat is a compulsory charity on all adult Muslims. They must give 2.5% of all financial assets to the poor and needy.
- Such assets if in possession for one full year that is equivalent in value of 87 grams of Gold or 612 grams of Silver.
- Zakat is also counted on agricultural produce and livestock



# Fasting

- Compulsory on all adult healthy Muslims during the entire month of Ramadan, the 9th month of Islamic Calendar. Fasting begins from the break of dawn until sunset. During the state of fasting one must abstain from food, water and sexual intercourse.

# Hajj or Pilgrimage

- Performance of pilgrimage to the Grand Mosque in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, once in a life time, if financially or physically possible.

# SHARIAH

- What is Shariah?
- Shariah is a Code of Laws that Muslim practice in their daily life. Muslim's life is governed by Shariah.
- It covers all aspects of life, such as, Ritual Worship, Inter personal relationship, Work and Behavioural ethics, Commerce, Judicial system and Burial.

# SHARIAH (CONT'D)

- Literally, a road that leads to a definite place
- Sources of Islamic Shariah:
  - Quran (revealed word),
  - Hadith (Prophetic Traditions),
  - Ijma (consensus of the learned Islamic scholars), and
  - Qiyas (analogy)
- Jurisprudence/Schools of Islamic law: Hanafi, Shafi, Hanbali, Maliki, Jaffaria
- Journey within to find the route towards achieving Success herein and hereafter..

# Women in Islam

- Status of women in Islam is very much misunderstood, because of the dress code and the news of oppression in the Muslim countries and societies.
- This is due to patriarchal history and nature of societies in Asia, Africa and Middle East, even to this day. Further more many countries enact laws to protect the Patriarchy.
- There is no Islamic state as such today. While Islam is a state religion in some Muslim countries, they are not governed by Islam

# Position of women in Islam is as follows:

- In the eyes of God, both genders are equal as human beings. Value of their worship and devotion is ranked the same.
- She is regarded as a full person. Canada did not recognize woman as a person until 1929.
- In marriage, Bride's consent is asked first. If she says no, no marriage can take place.
- She can retain her maiden name after marriage.
- She is not obligated to support a family. Husband has to do so
- She is not obligated to cook and do the house work. Husband has to provide a servant.
- Education is compulsory on both men and women. She can study to the highest level possible
- She can inherit and own properties
- She can be a judge, teacher or spiritual guide and can seek elected office
- As a mother she enjoys status above the father.
- In pre Islamic Arabia, female children were buried alive in infancy. Islam stopped such acts.



# Women in Islam (cont'd)

- Women are exempt from certain ritual worship. Exemptions are:
- From Fasting and Salat during their menstrual cycle, post natal period and pregnancy.
- Friday prayer is not obligatory on women.

# Sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

- Heaven lies at the feet of the mother.”
- Do not beat or abuse your wives, I am the best of husband to my wives
- Whosoever has raised three daughters with respect and dignity, entry in to heaven is guaranteed for that person. A companion asked: I have only two daughters? He replied: It applies to you also

# Jihad and Terrorism

- Jihad means to struggle to achieve Piety, Justice, Survival and improve quality of life. It does not mean “HOLY WAR”. There is no such expression in Islam
  - Terrorism has no basis in Islam. The Quran clearly states:  
*“Whosoever kills an innocent person, it is as if he/she has killed the whole humanity and whosoever saves on person, it is as if he/she has saved the whole humanity.”*  
(CH.5, V:32)
- Mohammad Said: Greater Jihad is: the struggle against yourself*

# Suicide Bombing

- Suicide is forbidden in Islam. Any person commit suicide will be confined to Hell forever.

# DIETARY LAWS

- **Dietary Requirements**
- **Islamic dietary laws** provide direction on what is to be considered clean and unclean regarding diet and related issues.
- The term Halal is used for what is permissible to eat and drink as well as it describes any behavior that is permissible under Islamic law, including behavior, speech, dress, manner, conduct, and dietary laws.

# DIETARY LAWS (cont'd)

- Muslims are permitted to eat all herbivorous animals and birds, provided that they are slaughtered in the name of God and the jugular veins must be cut and the blood oozes out.
- Muslims are forbidden to consume Pork and its by-products, animal shortenings, Carnivorous and dead animals or birds, all types of Intoxicants. Contamination with forbidden products to be avoided at all times.



# Death & Dying, Funeral, Burial, and Grief

- In Islamic belief and practice, death is considered as predestined, and a step towards the After Life
- Muslims recite the Qur'an or some prayers besides the dying person
- Dying person is encouraged to recite the declaration of faith. La ilaha illalla, Muhamdaur Rasulullah
- On hearing about the death of a person, the words uttered are, **Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un.**(meaning: To God we belong and to Him is our return)
- Before funeral a bath is given, and body is shrouded with simple non sewn cloth.
- Bathing dead body must be done by same sex
- Body must be handled with the utmost respect by a person of the same sex
- Burials are performed as soon as possible.  
Cremation is prohibited, unless there is need to avoid contamination
- Funeral service is performed before the burial, either in a Mosque or Funeral home or at the Cemetery.
- Mourning period is of three days. Offering condolence, visiting the family, taking food is considered acts of merit.

# Child Birth Celebration (Aqeequa)

- An informal event, depends on the cultural practices, irrespective if the infant is a boy or girl.
- the family may follow the Sunnah (Prophetic practice) and sacrifice a Lamb as a celebratory meal with friends and family;
- This is usually done on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, but there is no time limit. It can be done at convenient time.
- Shortly after the birth family member whispers the Adhan (Islamic call to prayer) into the right ear of the infant and the Iqama (Call to initiate Congregational prayer), in the left ear.
- Infant's hair is cut and the baby's hair are weighed in silver, and the equivalent of the weight of the hair's amount is given in charity
- Boys are circumcised as early as possible following the tradition of Prophet Abraham.
- No Circumcision for female child.

# Imam

Islam does not have a hierarchy of priesthood. We have no structure like the Christian diocese. Therefore, there is no regulating body to control the office of the Imams.

This is the collective term that denotes the wider Institution of the Imam, independent of individual Imams. It is neither meant as occupation, nor a rank; rather it is an office to fulfil a function.

# IMAM (Cont'd)

Imams : the confusions in the title

Basically there are three Categories of Imam:

- Imam as a Prayer Leader
- Imam as a Religious Authority
- Imam as a Minister or Clergy in the role of Chaplain

# Imam :

## Religious Authority, Sunni

- Imam is educated in theology and all religious matters
- Trained in giving the Friday Khutba (Sermon),
- Trained and skilled, in religious matters including guiding and counselling the community, in the event of marriages, divorces, deaths, funerals and the like.

# Imam : Religious Authority, Shia

- The title of Imam in Shia has a different meaning than that of Sunni.
- Imam's role and authority varies among Shi'ia groups, viz., Ithna Asharis, Ismailis, Bohras, Zaidis etc.



# Imam : Religious Authority, Shia (cont'd)

- They have a structure of community management, which includes faith leaders who are not elected, rather divinely appointed authority. Ayatullahs of Iran and Iraq are considered the central religious authority similar to Pope and Catholics.
- Shi'a community functions independently from Sunnis in theological & religious matters

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