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HISTORY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

[Date]

Beliefs of Islam

Islam begins with the prophethood of Muhammad, that could be traced back to the 7th century in Saudi Arabia. The prophet Muhammad started preaching of Islam in 610 A.D. after the message revealed by Angle of God. He explained the teachings of Quran the divine book of Islam, which the followers of Islam believe that the flawless words of Allah (The God). Muhammad did not originate the book Quran but revealed by the angel Gabriel the teachings and guidance from Allah. According to Muhammad, he was the prophet of God as the Moses, Jesus, and other Hebrew prophets. He believed that he communicated with the same God of these messengers, as they did. Muhammad and his followers denied the existing religion of Arabia, and challenge the ruling elite class who threatened their lives. Muhammad along with his small group of followers escaped to Yathrib later called Madina, this historical migration is known as Hijra. From this year the Islamic calendar also started. In Madina, they were welcomed by the people, and Islam got strength there. With time the teachings of Islam expanded and became a whole religion. There are five basic pillars of Islam which are compulsory for every Muslim. Muslims are expected to firmly believe that 1) there is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the last prophet of Allah. The second pillar of Islam is to pray five times a day facing towards Khana Ka'aba in the Mecca. The third pillar of Islam is fasting from sun up till the sundown during the Islamic calendar month Ramadan. Forth pillar of Islam is to travel Mecca and Madina for Pilgrimage at least once in a life. While the fifth pillar of Islam is to pay charity to the poor people, that is the 2.5 percent of the total wealth earned during the year. This is also called Zakah a type of taxation to alleviate the hardships of poor Muslim community.

Islam was expanded after a hard struggle and commitment of Muhammad and his followers. The stages of Islamic expansion started from the time of Muhammad until the four Caliphs who ruled Muslims. The expansion of the Islamic state was begun through the Muslim soldiers struggled which they called jihad. The war between the muslim solidiers (dar-al-Islam the Islamic world) and the non-muslims in the land called dar-al-Harb the world of warfare. The Muslim soldiers were expert in the desert war, moved toward Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. The Islamic state was founded in Madina after the migration of Muhammad and his followers. The state of Madina was a role model of justice, peace, and prosperity. After the era of Muhammad, there were four Caliphs also called Khalifa means successor. During the rule of first Caliph Abu Bakkar, the wars and conquers continued and Islamic state moved to Africa. The rule of second Caliph Omer Islamic state expanded to African countries, Europe, and other parts of Asia. A political vacuum opened when the fourth Muslim Caliph Ali was assassinated.

Caliph was the leader of the state and also having religious authority. Caliphs were the great scholars and knew the shariah laws (Muslim laws). Before Islam, the Arab society did not provide the fundamental rights to the women, where the power of men over the women was prevailed. Muhammad changed the concept and married a woman fifteen years his senior-Khadija. She was an independent trader, Muhammad took no other wives before her death. Khadija was the first woman who accepted Islam and supported Muhammad. When the teaching of Islam reached southwest Asia and North Africa, where women were subordinate and had strict gender rules Islam provided them rights. A man has the rights to take four wives, while a woman can have one husband at a time. For a woman's adultery, there is a harsh punishment; its proof requires two eyewitnesses. Muslim law shows the dominance of man over woman. However, women were empowered, educated and a man has to treat her properly (Norton Ebooks, 2019, N.p).

# Works Cited

"Norton Ebooks." Digital.wwnorton.com. N. p., 2019. Web. 22 Feb. 2019.