

1. What is Islam and who are Muslims?

Islam is not a new faith. Muslims believe that it is the same truth that God revealed through all His prophets to every people. For a fifth of the world's population, Islam is not just a personal religion, but a complete way of life.

Muslims come from all races, nationalities and cultures across the globe. They have varied languages, foods, dress, and customs; even the way they practice Islam may differ. Yet they all consider themselves to be Muslim.

Islam is a qualitative term - the quality of accepting God's supreme authority above one's own. As such, being a Muslim does not mean having to give up one's culture or traditions; rather it means adopting the simple and logical principles of Islam to better one's life and attain peace.

Less than 15% of Muslims live the Arab world; a fifth are found in Sub-Saharan Africa; and the world's largest Muslim community is in Indonesia . Substantial parts of Asia , and almost all the Central Asian republics, are Muslim. Significant Muslim minorities are found in China , India , Russia , Europe , North America and South America .