
UNIT 22 ISLAM

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22.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to

- explain the pre-Islamic conditions prevailing in Arabia and the advent of Islam
- discuss the meaning of Islam and its sources and tenets
- describe major schools of Islamic thought and sects
- explain the social organisation
- describe the Islamic society in India.

22.1 INTRODUCTION

In the plurality of Indian culture and civilisation Islam played a crucial role. The life style of the Islamic society is shaped by the tenets of Islam. As a student of sociology you should be interested to know the belief of that society. You would also be interested to know the movements and the conditions leading to the emergence of various sects in that society. We should also know the organisational arrangements of that society through which the belief system operates in daily life. Towards this effort in this unit, we shall discuss the tenets of Islam, the movements schools of thought and sects in the Islamic society in a socio-historical perspectives. We shall also touch upon the social organisations of that society briefly (for details see the course ESO-02, Unit 16 on, Muslim Social Organisation provided above Islam). We shall begin our analysis with an introductory note on the pre-Islamic conditions prevailing in Arab society to know the historical context of emergence of Islam. We shall also describe the meaning of Islam, its sources and tenets. Apart from this, we shall highlight the major schools in Islamic thought and its various sects. Various

social institutions like marriage, divorce, institution governing inheritance in communities following Islam will also be discussed in this unit. An attempt will be made in this unit to analyse the influence of Islamic teachings on social structure. Lastly, we will describe briefly the Islamic society in India.

22.2 THE ADVENT OF ISLAM

Before the advent of Islam, the Arab Society was confronted with many social problems. It was a tribal society. It was centred around a tribe or a kindred. It was a patriarchal society in which all rights were available to the male members and female members were not entitled to any right and were treated like a commodity. They were exchanged and even offered to the guest for sexual pleasure. Over all, the Arab society was confronted with many such evils and the society reached to the point of degeneration. Social reformers and people of wisdom started thinking of bringing reform in the Arabian society. Prophet Mohammad was also perturbed by the decadence in the religious life of the Arabs. He sought an opportunity of chastening their morals by placing before them new values of life. He tried to bind people on the bases of faith rather than on the old bond of blood. This new community was the community of Islam which was based on the brotherhood. The word Islam literally means "Absolute submission to God's will", but this does not imply any idea of fatalism. In its ethical sense, it signifies striving after the ideal of righteousness. The word Islam is also derived from a root word which means "peace". Thus, the true Muslim submits to God's will and obeys His Commandments, and lives at peace with his fellow men.

22.3 TENETS OF ISLAM

Islam does not profess to be a new religion formulated by the Prophet Mohammad but is the continuation of all former religious principles decreed by God through His revelations to all prophets including Moses and Jesus. Islam demands faith in:

- God
- The Angels of God
- The Book of God
- The Apostles of God.
- The Day of Judgement or Resurrection

22.3.1 Islamic Concept of God

Every Muslim believes in God's oneness, that He is one and has no partner, that He is omnipotent, all-owerful, eternal and is every-qualified with the attributes of supreme greatness. All are humble unto Him. All should seek exaltation through Him and humility unto Him, for they all are mere subordinate creatures seeking His favour and most favoured by Him are the pious ones who obey His commandments.

22.3.2 The Angles of God

God has created the Angles. All Muslims must have faith in their existence but they are not to be worshipped. They are created and are free from carnal desires.

22.3.3 The Book of God

It is the belief of Muslims that God has sent Books in different ages in which God revealed. Muslims believe in *Holy Quran* which was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.

22.3.4 The Messengers of God

As Muslims believe in the Books revealed by God, they also believe in the messengers sent by God in different ages to reclaim mankind from infidelity, idolatry and superstition. The Holy Quran makes no distinction between the Prophets sent by God but according to them Prophet Muhammad is the last Prophet of God.

22.3.5 The Day of Judgement or Resurrection

The Muslims also have belief in the Day of Judgement. The dead shall rise from their graves, and every individual shall give an account of his or her own actions. Muslims also have belief in Heaven and Hell.

22.3.6 The Duty of a Muslim

Apart from these beliefs, a Muslim should do the following duties.

- i) Recital of the creed
- ii) Prayer to God five times a day — at dawn, midday, mid-afternoon, directly after sunset, and an hour-and-a-half later. A special midday congregational prayer with sermon is binding on Fridays.
- iii) Paying the *Zakat* or legal alms which is a form of charitable tax.
- iv) Fasting during the month of “Ramzan”, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar.
- v) *Haj* i.e. Pilgrimage to the ‘Holy Kaba’ in Mecca once in a life time by those who can afford it.

Through these practices of devotion, a Muslim becomes the master over his passions and desires and attains, through worship and observance of Islamic rules, the apex of dignity, human conduct and elevation of mind.



Mohammedan mother teaching a child to read the Holy Quran, the main scripture of Islam.

Thus according to Islam, a Muslim must have faith in the above mentioned beliefs and must practise the above mentioned practices in order to surrender before the “Will” of God and hence attain a place in the Heaven after his death.

Activity 1

Prepare a two hundred word note on the duty of a Muslim performed by your Muslim friends/colleagues/persons known to you. Exchange your note with other students in the Study Centre, if possible.

22.4 MAJOR SCHOOLS OF THOUGHTS, MOVEMENTS AND SECTS

No religious beliefs and practices operate in isolation. It has to encounter the world around. In this process it influences others and also get influenced. Let us know how Islam encountered the world. Even though the Quran being a guiding principle for the Muslims to carry out their life according to its teachings but as it migrated to other parts of the world its institutions were affected by conditions in different regions during the centuries of their existence. There is a *principle of movement in Islam*, and Muslim institutions and the Muslim way of life have changed in terms of space and time. Let us try to understand the nature and scope of this principle of movement in Islam.

In the absence of a clear and categorical answer from the Holy Book (Quran), the absolute word of God, the prophets’ decisions — His percepts, His acts and practices’ negative as well as positive — were regarded as decisive. An inherent conservatism canonised the *Sunna* — Custom, usage of the ancients; any stepping aside from it was a *‘biddat’* innovation and had to win its way by its merits, in the teeth of strong prejudice. Islam did exchange this practice and replaced it by the traditions of Prophet Muhammad. After the death of Prophet Muhammad, *four* schools came into being to interpret and provide guidance in dispensing justice. As a matter of fact the use of judicial opinion was seriously questioned and its scope precisely defined in the ninth century A.D. Under the *Abbasids* the sources of Muslims law were discussed, and the four schools founded in this period defined the scope of legal friction and equity in the development of Muslim law. These four schools are discussed below briefly.

22.4.1 Major Schools in Islamic Thoughts and Movements

i) Abu Hanifa (AD 699-766)

He founded a School of Islamic jurisprudence and opined that when *Quran* and *Sunna* are silent about a problem, this school emphasized the role of *‘Qiyas’*, reasoning by analogy, to guide the people to carry out the activities.

ii) Malik Ibn Anas (AD 713-95)

Another School of Islamic law was founded by Malik Ibn Anas. According to this school *Quran*, *Suna* and *Ujma* (all religious scriptures) should become the basis of the interpretation of new situation.

iii) Ash-Shafi (AD 767-820)

This School was founded with the intention that the traditions of Prophet Mohammad should become the main source of the interpretation instead of individual opinion, *istihsam*, as well as *istislah*. He fell back on the principle of agreement, *ijma*.

iv) **Ahmad Ibn Hambal (AD 780-855)**

This School minimised the role of *ijma* and *Qiyas* in the interpretation of law and stressed the Quran, and Sunna as the primary roots of Islamic law.

v) **Ibn-i-Taimiyya (13 Century)**

After these schools, certain movements were started to interpret and provide solution to the problem arising out of changing situations to the Muslims. Ibn-i-Taimiyya in the 13th Century provided the basis of the reorientation of Islamic belief and practices according to Quranic injunctions and the traditions of the Prophet.

22.4.2 Sects in Islamic Society

Followers of Islam are divided into various sub-divisions in terms of sects. Broadly speaking the Muslim world is divided into two fairly defined sections of Islam, namely, *Sunni* and *Shiah*, the first being by far the larger and more influential.

1) **The Sunni**

The Sunnis are the ardent followers of the faith in the *Sunna* or Traditions. But they differ from the Shias in points other than belief in tradition. They made the position of the *Khalifa* a matter for selection or choice by the selected people of the community. They assert that Muhammad never intended that a *Khalifa* should succeed him in any other way.

ii) **The Shiah**

This is another sect of Muslims who only differ from the *Sunnis* in terms of hereditary right of the descendents of Muhammad to be the only legitimate *Khalifa*. They say that the three *Khalifas* — Abu Bakr, Omar and Osman were imposters and usurpers, and only Ali and his heir should have followed the Prophet as leaders or Imam of the faithful. They emphasise the right of Ali from the fact of his nearness of relationship, he being not only the Prophet's *cousin*, but the husband of Fatima, the only surviving daughter of Prophet Muhammad.



A mosque (L) and the Holy Kaaba (R)

Check Your Progress 1

i) Describe the meaning of Islam in five lines.

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ii) Mention duties expected of a Muslim.

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

iii) Indicate the major sects of Islam and points of difference among them in five lines.

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22.5 SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AS VIEWED BY ISLAM

The belief system of the religious organisations are operated through certain social institutions. As a student of sociology, you should be interested to know the very nature of these institutions. There are three main *bases* of the Muslim social institutions:

- Family
- Marriage, divorce
- Institutions governing inheritance

In Unit 16 of ESO-02 we discussed the institutions of family, marriage and the laws of inheritance among the Muslims in India. In this section we shall try to present a broad view of these institutions within the Islamic religious and social order.

22.5.1 Family

Family has existed in all societies though it takes different forms in different cultures. The institution of family in Islam should be studied in the light of Islamic way of life and Islamic culture. Islam has given full importance to family and laid down certain rules and regulations to maintain its shape and to stop it from disintegration. About one third of the Quran and many traditions of the Prophet are related to the family and to process how a family can work properly and smoothly and how every member of the family can have equal rights.

In Islam the family is an extended family — taking within it members from three or four generations. Its structure has generally three folds. The first and most close consists of the husband, the wife, their children, their parents who live with them and their *servants*. The second group of the family consists of a number of close relatives with whom marriage is prohibited. It is not necessary for them to live together. They have claims upon each other. This relationship emerges from blood relations, relations by marriage and foster nursing. Relations based on blood include the following categories:

- Father, mother, grand-father, grand-mother and other direct ascendants.
- Direct descendants that is, sons, daughters, grand-sons, grand-daughters etc.,
- Relations of the second degree (such as brothers, sisters and their descendants).
- Father's or mother's sister (not their daughter or other descendants),

The relations based on relations by marriage include:

- Mother-in-law, father-in-law, grand-mother-in-law, grand-father-in-law,
- Wife's daughter, husbands' sons or their grand or great grand daughters or sons respectively,
- Son's wife, son's son's wife, daughter's husband, step mother, step father.

It is significant to mention there that a number of religions decrees asked people to consider their slaves and servants as part of the family and should be give them proper treatment.

The family, with all its contributory and co-existing factors, forms the nucleus of the total Islamic order. Those relations which are not included in these three folds forms the outer layer of the family. As they are included in the second or third lines of the inheritors, they too have their rights and obligations.

a) Objectives and Functions of Family

The main objective of family is the preservation of human society and civilisation. The whole socio-cultural structure is based on it. It is just like a mechanism which is self-sustaining in order to ensure social, ideological and cultural stability over entire society. The main functions and objectives of the family as described in *Qur'an* and *Shariah* are as follows:

i) Preservation and Continuation of Human Race

The mechanism of preservation and reproduction is based on the survival of human race and culture, and continuity in the functioning. For this purpose nature has provided differences, both psychological and physiological, between the sexes. Both the sexes are complimentary to each other. This process of procreation and all the facts effecting it, can only function when the whole process will have stable structure. Men, women and child, they all have a definite role to play while living in a society. They all need a stable and lasting institution so that they can perform their roles well. The family is considered as the main institution which can take care of the whole process. The Quran says:

“O Mankind, be conscious of your duty to your Lord, who created you from a single soul, created of life nature, his mate, and from the two created and spread many men and women“ (Holy Quran Ayat. - 4:1).

“Your Women are a tillage for you; so come in to your tillage as you wish and take care of what is for you, and be conscious of your duty to God and know that you shall meet him” (Holy Quran Ayat - 2: 223).

Here “take care of what is for you” means the children expected from this relationship, their education, upbringing, moral training and socialisation.

ii) Protection of Morals

Islam forbids non-marital sex in all its forms. But marriage is a substitute which enables men and women to fulfil their urge which is quite natural and procreative.

iii) Psycho-Emotional Stability—Love and Kindness

To maintain psychological, emotional and spiritual fellowship is the another important objective of family. The relationship between husband and wife is spiritual and not of selfishness. This function of marriage and family is emphasised in the Quran in a number of ways. At one place, the relationship of husband and wife is described as that of body and garment. “They are like garment to you and you are (like) a garment to them” (Holy Quran-Ibid-2-187).

This expresses and emphasises their closeness and oneness much more grand than legal equality. As cloth protects the body in the same way husband protects the wife and they become guardians to each other.

iv) Socialisation and Value Orientation

Family is supposed to be the basic organ of socialisation. And this is referred by prophet at various places in *Hadith* when he has said that “of all that a father can give to his children; the best is their good education and training”.

Although to take care of one’s children, and younger brother and sister is the primary responsibility but the family covers a number of relatives far or near. Quran and *Shariah* has emphasised at several places at the care of parents and of the relatives who are poor and weak.

v) Social and Economic Security

Social and economic rights of the family members are saved by the institution of family, which is an important part of the Islamic system. The Prophet has said:

“When God endows you with prosperity, spend first on yourself and your family”.

The husband is legally directed to look after his family even if the wife holds the property. Blood relatives should be helped and it is emphasised at a number of places. Any social contribution and *Zakat*, poor relatives have first claim over it.

22.5.2 Marriage and Divorce

For the preservation of family and to make this institution function smoothly, marriage is enjoined and encouraged vigorously. The Prophet emphasised the necessity of marriage saying “To live in marriage is to observe my way. He who turns away from this way is not of me”.

The Islamic view of marriage is that it is a means of reproduction and not the means of satisfying sexual desire. This is made clear by a very short saying of Prophet:

“Marry and generate”

The Arabic word for marriage is “*nikah*” which means uniting. Except for some special reason, every Muslim is supposed to marry.

Box 2

Quran declares marriage as a contract, a contract between husband and wife. The marriage contract is entered into by the agreement from both the parties, that is the parties of husband and wife. This agreement is made in the presence of some witnesses, and this is only essential while making a marriage contract. At the time of marriage, a particular amount is settled for the woman which is called *mehr*, but the marriage is also valid even if the *mehr* is not settled or the amount of the money to be given is not fixed.

a) Prohibited Marital Ties

The Quran makes certain marriage relationship unlawful□:

“Forbidden unto you are your mothers, and your daughters, and your sisters, and your father’s sister, and your mother’s sister and your brothers’ daughters and your sisters’ daughters, and your foster mother, and your foster sister and your mother-in-law and your step daughters. And that (it is forbidden into you) that you should not marry two sisters at a time.

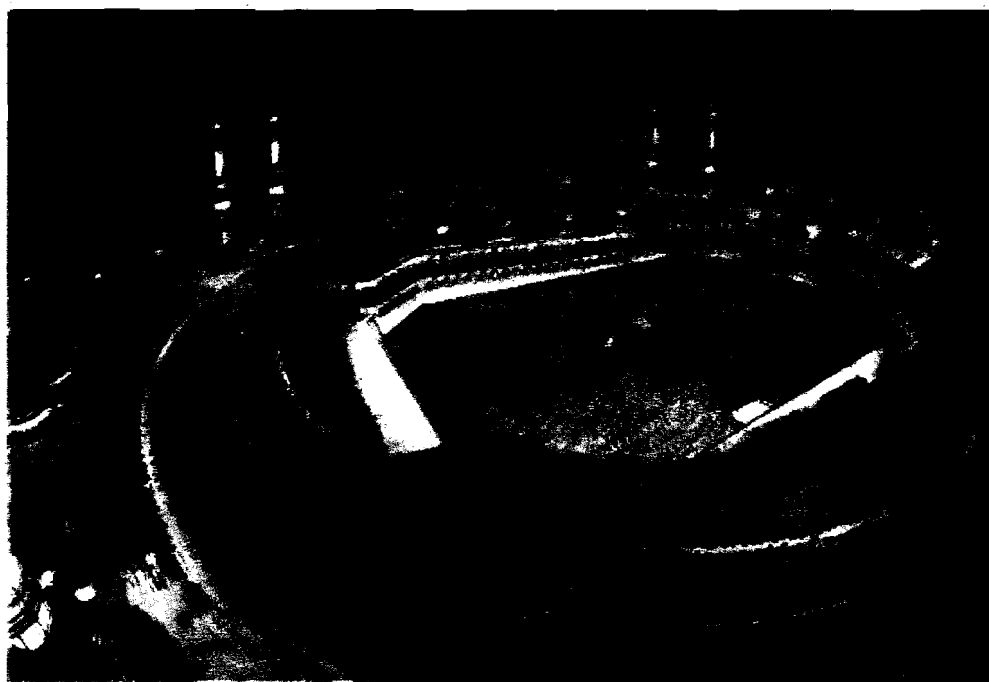
A woman should not marry a man who is already married to her paternal aunt.

b) Types of Marriage

i) Polygamy

Before Mohammad, the number of wives depended upon the will of Arabian people and their social and economic conditions. They were free to marry at any time and this marriage was supposed to be valid. The new rules which came into practice, in the time of Prophet was the check on the number of wives. Quran restricted this number to four but side by side Quran makes it necessary to treat all the four equally.

ii) Banning of Polyandry



Kaaba, the famous pilgrimage centre of the Muslims.

As a rule, Islam does not allow woman, in any case, to marry more than one husband at a time.

iii) **Muta marriage**

From pre-Islamic times, there exists another type of marriage called *Muta* marriage. The object of this marriage was to provide a man with a wife when he is away from home for any reason. The distinguishing character of this type of marriage is that this contract is purely personal and it is made without any consultation with the relatives of the woman. The children of such marriages are legitimate and they have equal share in the property of the father, but unlike the ordinary wife, the wife in such marriage has no legal right of maintenance over the husband. She does not even inherit the property of her husband, nor her husband has any share in her property.

In Iran and other Shi'ite countries, this is a very common practice to take a woman for a fixed period. This time varies from a day to a year or several years. However, all the sects of Muslims agree that this type of marriage is unlawful and illegal except *Akbarishiahs*.

c) **Divorce**

In Islam, marriage is just a civil contract. The Prophet framed the laws of marriage and divorce in such a way that it ensures the permanence of marriages without affecting the freedom of the individual. The total body of Islamic law is governed by the principle of flexibility that is why under certain circumstances it allows more than one wife, and favours the dissolution of marriage. Sometimes in married life such situations do arise when it becomes very difficult for both husband and wife to live together. In such situations either the dissatisfied husband or dissatisfied wife was compelled to exercise this right of divorce. But this step is taken as the last resort when all the attempts at reconciliation fail. The Prophet has condemned divorce in most serious terms by pronouncement that:

“Of all the things permissible the most displeasing to Allah is divorce”.

Even when divorce becomes necessary, the parties are enjoined to honour each others rights. They should separate from each other to kindness and the man in no case allowed to take back any of the gifts or property he has given to the wife.

i) **Husband's Right of Pronouncement of Divorce**

Although Quran permits husband to pronounce divorce yet a lot of limitations are put upon the exercise of this right. Certain conditions were imposed by the Prophet upon exercising the right of divorce which on one hand put a check on the use of one sided and unwise power, and on the other hand it provided enough time for the husband and wife for an agreement if they so desire. The types of divorce which are recognised by the Islamic law, the one which has got the approval of the Holy Prophet is the *Ahsan* type of Talaq. This form of divorce, involves the following conditions each of which provides a way for reconciliation or prevent from permanent break up.

- The husband, in the first place, must pronounce only *one repudiation*, the object of this limitation being, that he may subsequently, *when better sense prevails*, revoke the repudiation.
- The repudiation must be pronounced when the wife is in a state of purity, and there is no bar to sexual intercourse, it being declared unlawful to pronounce repudiation when the wife is in menses.

- The husband must abstain from *connubial* intercourse with his wife after pronouncing repudiation for the period of three months.

The purpose of this tradition is to avoid hasty decision on the part of the husband. The time period which is provided to the husband through disinclination arising from the wife's impurity, and by fixing a long period of abstinence, is enough to reconsider his decision of divorce. In the meantime he can repent and can take back his wife before the expiry of the term fixed. But if the time period fixed passes and reconciliation is not made, the wife becomes unlawful to him.

ii) Wife's Right of Divorce

Like every other institution women are given an equally balanced position regarding divorce. The wife can ask her husband to give her a divorce but she has to return back *mehr* (the dowry). The technical term for the wife's right to divorce is called *Khula*. The wife can take a divorce under these conditions.

- The wife can take divorce if her husband is missing for seven years and cannot be located.
- If the wife fails to return the *mehr* which is necessary in *Khula*, there is yet another way by which a wife can get separation from her husband and that is *Mubarat*. In this type no compensation is necessary and complete separation can be sought just by mutual consent of the husband and wife.
- If husband ill-treats his wife, and is abusive and brutal she should complain against her husband and she can have the formal separation by the decree of court.

If the judge finds her complaints true, he asks the husband to repudiate her. In case husband refuses to do so the judge himself will pronounce a repudiation and it will operate as valid, and the husband will be liable to pay whole of the deferred dowry. This process is known as *Tafriq* or legal reparation in the Mohammadan law, and it is based on the words of Muhammad:

"If a Woman be prejudiced by a marriage, let it be broken off"

A divorce may be granted by the court for:

- Habitual ill-treatment of the wife,
- Non-fulfillment of the terms of marriage contract,
- Insanity,
- Incurable impotency,
- Any other similar causes which in the opinion of the court justify a divorce.

22.5.3 Institutions Governing Inheritance

Inheritance exists in every society in one form or the other where institution of private property is recognised as the basis of social and economic system. Inheritance is the process in which the property of the dead person is given in the possession of the living person. Islam introduces many reforms in the laws of inheritance. Islam defined and determined in clear terms the share of each inheritor. A check was imposed on the right of the property owner. He cannot dispose off his property according to his will. The social and economic rights of women were safeguarded by allotting a definite share in the property. She becomes the co-sharer with males. In this way the dignity of women is restored. The general principle of inheritance is first laid down in the following words:

For man has a share of the what parents and the near relatives leave, and for women a share of what the parents and near relatives leave, whether it be little or much: (Holy Quran-Ayat 4, 7).

If a person dies leaving behind a son and a daughter, the property of the deceased will be divided into three parts, out of which two parts will be given to the son and one to the daughter.

i) Shares and Quranic Heirs

There is a very exhaustive description of laws relating to inheritance in Quran. The first group of heirs of those relatives who are very close to the deceased and a specific share is allotted to them by the Quran. The Quranic heirs

- Heirs by affinity,
- Husband,
- Wife,
- Blood relatives,
- True grand father,
- Sons' daughter,
- Full sister,
- Consanguine sister,
- Uterine brother,
- Uterine sister,
- Share for Blood relations.
- Share by affinity: The husband's share is one half of the property of the deceased wife. In case of children it is one fourth.
- The wife is not entitled to one fourth, if the husband dies childless, otherwise it is one eighth.

Father's share is one sixth when the deceased leaves a son or a son's son, but when the deceased is not survived by a son or grandson, his father will, in addition to this share also get a share being a *Asaba*.

Check Your Progress 2

i) How has the relationship between husband and wife been described by the Holy Quran?

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ii) Mention the nature of Muslim marriage in four lines.

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iii) Describe shares by affinity in about three lines.

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22.6 ISLAM AND INDIAN MUSLIMS

India is a plural society. There has been the coexistence of various religious groups for centuries. In the process of this co-existence the Islamic society has been significantly influenced by the indigenous norms, values, customs and traditions.

Normally, Islamic society is divided into sects i.e. *Sunnis* and *Shias* as they hold divergent views of and interpretation over Islamic texts and traditions. In India, a vast majority of them are *sunnis*. But Indian Muslims are divided into various groups which reflect the influence of Hindu beliefs and practices specially those related to caste system.

22.6.1 Elements of Castes

Indian Muslims, although divided on the caste lines, yet, these divisions cannot be said to have the characteristics of a caste in the true sense of the term. These divisions are based on the basis of the occupations followed by each group. Different groups are identified on the basis of the occupations followed by them and the group does not specify the occupation as in the case of the caste system. Apart from this characteristic, other characteristics of the caste are not visible among the Muslims such as endogamy, hierarchy, untouchability, purity and pollution. There is however, a section of Sociologists in India who say that the Muslim society is divided on the caste line such as: Syed, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan. They are also of the view that the elements of caste are apparently visible in the Muslim society. Though, there is no caste system among the Muslims, there are caste-like traits apparent in their social groupings.

22.6.2 Asharaf and Arzal

Some sociologists are of the opinion that there is no caste system among the Muslims but they are divided into two categories: *Ashraf* (honourable) and *Arzal* (unclean). Ashrafs are those who claim to be descendants of early Muslim immigrants and historically were near to the seat of power. *Arzal* means new converts and common people.

In spite of difficulties in applying the caste model on Indian Muslims, it cannot be denied that Indian Muslims have developed a sort of caste-like divisions among them owing to the impact of Hindu social organisation.

Check Your Progress 3

i) Describe the elements of caste as found among Muslims in India. Use four lines for your answer.

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22.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, an attempt has been made to explain the basic principle of Islam. First of all, the pre Islamic conditions of the Arab society have been described. You must have got an idea, through this unit, about the sources and tenets of Islam. Like other world religions, there are certain sects and schools of thought in Islam also. This unit has thrown light on them. After the advent of Islam, the social institutions were reorganised around the principle of *Shariat*. This has also been covered by this unit. In the last section of this unit we discussed the Islamic society in India, briefly.

22.8 KEY WORDS

Sunna	: Customs, Usages.
Biddat	: Innovation. It sometimes it may mean deviation also
Quias	: Reasoning by analogy to guide the people to carry out the activities.
Akbarishiahs	: A practice observed by Shia Muslims, particularly so in Persia, to keep a woman as a wife for a fixed period.
Asaraf	: Honourable
Arzal	: Unclean

22.9 FURTHER READINGS

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22.10 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- i) Prophet Muhammad propagated a faith in Arab known as Islam. The literal meaning of Islam is 'Absolute submission to God's Will'. It is derived from a root which means 'peace'. As a religion, it is a continuation of former religious principles decreed by God through his revelations to all prophets including Moses and Jesus.
- ii)
 - a) Recital of Creed,
 - b) Prayer to God five times a day,
 - c) Paying the *Zakat*,
 - d) Fasting during the month of *Ramzan*,
 - e) Haj i.e. Pilgrimage to the Holy Kaba
- iii) Broadly speaking, Muslim world is divided into two major sects: *Sunni* and *Shia*. The *sunnis* are the ardent followers of *sunna* or traditions. The major difference

between these two sects is on questions of succession and *khalif*. The *Sunnis* believe that Muhammad never intended that a *khalifa* should succeed him and have equal faith in Abu Bakr, Omar, Osman and Ali as Khalifa, whereas, *Shias* believe that only Ali is legitimate successor and khalifa.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Quran declares marriage as a contract between husband and wife—the contracting parties. The contract is made in the presence of witnesses. At the time of marriage, a particular amount is settled for the woman which is called the *mehr*.
- ii) The Islamic view of marriage or *Nikah* is that it is a means of reproduction and not the means of sexual satisfaction. The meaning of *Nikah* is uniting together. Every Muslim is supposed to enter this *sacred* contract.
- iii) In the shares of affinity, the husband's share is one half of the property of the deceased wife but if she has children, it is one-fourth.

Check Your Progress 3

- i) There are certain elements of caste among the Indian Muslims. The position of Saiyad, Sheikh and Pathan is determined on the basis of birth. There is a feeling of hierarchy among the superior Muslims (*Asharaf*) and Muslims considered to be low (*Arzal*), though Islam believes in the equality of its followers.