A MUSLIM CATECHISM
(For beginners and young children)

by
MUHAMMAD RAFEEQ

President-General, Trinidad Muslim League Inc., 1955-1959
Former Imam, Jinnah Memorial Mosque, St. Joseph, Trinidad,
British West Indies

Published by:

THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE

WOKING — SURREY — ENGLAND

www.aaiil.org
A Muslim Catechism

by

Muhammad Rafeeq

Price

NINEPENCE
First Edition, OCTOBER 1961
FOREWORD

The need for a Muslim Catechism is greatly felt in all English-speaking countries where thousands of Muslim children attending schools have no proper text-books from which to learn about their religion. For this reason teachers are at a loss to impart Islamic religious instruction effectively. The object of this work is to fulfil this need in simple language.

It is intended to bring out this Catechism in two parts followed by a booklet entitled "Teach Yourself Islam". This is Part 1 of the Catechism, and it is hoped that the other part will follow shortly, insha Allah.*

I wish to express my thanks to S. Muhammad Tufail, Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England, for his valuable suggestions in this connection and for his assistance in its first publication in The Islamic Review of June 1961. Had it not been for the ready co-operation of Mr. Tufail this Catechism would not have been published so easily because of my failing sight.

MUHAMMAD RAEEEQ.

Eastern Main Road,
 Curepe, Trinidad, W.I.
20th September 1961.

* God willing.
A'oozu billaahi minashaytaa-nir rajeem  
(I seek the refuge of Allah against the accursed devil)  
Bismillaa-hir Rahmaa-nir Raheem  
(In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful)

A M U S L I M C A T E C H I S M

(1) Islam

1. What is the name of your religion?  
The name of my religion is Islam.

2. What is the meaning of the word Islam?  
The meaning of the word Islam is: Peace; or submission to the will of Allah.

3. Who gave the name Islam to your religion?  
Allah gave the name Islam to my religion in the Qur'án.

4. What does Islam teach you?  
Islam teaches me to serve and obey Allah, and to practise good and avoid evil.

5. How many pillars are there in Islam?  
There are five pillars in Islam.

6. Name the five pillars of Islam.  
The five pillars of Islam are: (1) Faith in One God (Allah). (2) Prayer. (3) Fasting. (4) Zakat or Charity. (5) Hajj or Pilgrimage to Mecca.

7. What does Faith in Allah mean?  
Faith in Allah means, to believe that Allah exists and controls the Universe.

8. What is Prayer?  
Prayer is outpouring my heart, glorifying Allah and asking for His Grace and favours and showing patience in difficulties.

1 This is called Ta'ooz.  
2 This is called Tasmiah.
9. What is Fasting?
    Fasting is keeping away from food, drink and all manner of evil thoughts and action during the daytime in the month of Ramadhan.

10. What is Zakat or Charity?
    Zakat or Charity is giving away 2½% of my savings every year to the needy.

11. What is Hajj or Pilgrimage.
    Hajj or Pilgrimage is going to the Holy Ka'ba in Mecca at least once.

12. How many articles of Faith are there in Islam?
    There are seven articles of Faith in Islam.

13. Name the seven articles of Faith in Islam.
    The seven articles of Faith in Islam are as follows: (1) Belief in Allah. (2) Belief in His Angels. (3) Belief in His Holy Books. (4) Belief in His Prophets. (5) Belief in the Last Day. (6) Belief in the pre-measurement of good and evil. (7) Belief in Resurrection after death.

(2) Allah or God

14. What is the Arabic name for God?
    The Arabic name for God is Allah.

15. Who is Allah?
    Allah is our Creator; He is the Creator of matter and soul, the Creator of Universe and all the things we see around us.

16. Can you see Allah?
    No. I cannot see Allah; because He is a Spirit and has no form.

17. Can Allah see you?
    Oh yes! Allah sees and hears everything; and knows what we do openly and what we do secretly.

18. Are there any gods besides Allah?
    There is only one God.

19. Has God any partner or family?
    No, God has no partner or family; He has no mother, no father, no son, no daughter.
20. Does Allah need any help from anyone?
   No, Allah does not need any help from anyone to do anything.

21. Is Jesus the son of God?
   No, Jesus is a prophet of God. God has no son.

22. Is Mary the mother of God?
   No, Mary is the mother of Jesus. God has no mother.

23. What does Allah want you to do?
   Allah desires that I should love Him, worship Him and obey His commandments.

(3) The Prophet

24. What is the name of the Prophet of Islam?
   The name of the Prophet of Islam is Muhammad.
   Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!

25. When was our Holy Prophet born?
   Our Holy Prophet was born on the 12th of Rabi' ul-Awwal in the year of the Elephant, or 23rd April 571, Christian Era.

26. What is the name of our Holy Prophet’s father?
   The name of our Holy Prophet’s father is ‘Abdullah.

27. What is the name of our Holy Prophet’s mother?
   The name of our Holy Prophet’s mother is 'Aamina.

28. Where was our Holy Prophet born?
   Our Holy Prophet was born in Mecca, a town in Arabia.

29. At what age did our Holy Prophet get his first revelation?
   Our Holy Prophet got his first revelation at the age of forty in the Cave of Hira.

30. Who made our Holy Prophet a prophet?
   Allah made our Holy Prophet a prophet and called him Rasul-Ullah.

31. What is the meaning of Rasul-Ullah?
   The meaning of Rasul-Ullah is the Messenger of Allah.
32. What do you say when you hear the name of our Holy Prophet Muhammad?
   Whenever I hear or read the name of our Holy Prophet Muhammad I say Swal-lal lá-ho ‘alai-hi wa sallam.

33. What does Swal-lal lá-ho ‘alai-hi wa sallam mean?
   Swal-lal lá-ho ‘alai-hi wa sallam means: Peace and the blessings of God be upon him.

34. Did any other prophet come to the world before our Holy Prophet?
   Yes, Allah sent prophets to every nation and country.

35. Name a few prophets who came before our Holy Prophet.
   Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus. Peace be upon them all!

36. Will prophets still continue to come after our Holy Prophet?
   No prophet will come in the world again after our Holy Prophet.

37. Is our Holy Prophet, then, the last of the prophets?
   Yes, our Holy Prophet is called Khaatam-an Nabiiyeeen — the Last or the Seal of the Prophets.

38. Why will no other prophet come again in this world after our Holy Prophet?
   Because religion was perfected by our Holy Prophet Muhammad (upon whom be peace!).

39. What did our Holy Prophet leave for our guidance?
   Our Holy Prophet left for our guidance the Holy Qur’án and his Hadith.

(4) The Holy Qur’án

40. What is the Holy Qur’án?
   The Holy Qur’án is the book of Allah which teaches man the best ways of life.

41. What does the Holy Qur’án contain?
   The Holy Qur’án contains all the precepts and commandments that are necessary for man’s guidance.
42. How was the Holy Qur’an written?
It was written in stages, as it was revealed to our Holy Prophet.

43. How was the Holy Qur’an revealed?
The Holy Qur’an was revealed to our Holy Prophet through the Angel Gabriel by Allah’s command.

44. How long did it take for the Holy Qur’an to be completed?
The Holy Qur’an took a period of 23 years to be completed.

(5) The Hadith

45. What is the Hadith?
The Hadith is a record of the sayings and deeds of our Holy Prophet.

46. How many books of Hadith are there?
There are several books of Hadith by different authors.

47. What is the relation of the Hadith to the Holy Qur’an?
The Qur’an is the word of God and no true Hadith should go against the word of God.

48. In what way does the Hadith help us?
The Hadith helps us greatly to understand the Holy Qur’an, by referring to the sayings and actions of our Holy Prophet.

(6) Muslim

49. What is a follower of Islam called?
A follower of Islam is called a Muslim.

50. What makes you a Muslim?
The declaration of the Kalima makes me a Muslim.

51. Recite the Holy Kalima.
La iláha illal láh, Muhammad ur Rasul-Ullah.

52. Give the meaning of the above Kalima.
There is no god (whatsoever) except Allah. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.
53. Is it correct to call a Muslim a Mohammedan?
   No, it is not correct to call a Muslim a Mohammedan.

54. Who gave the name Muslims to the followers of Islam?
   Allah gave the name Muslims in the Holy Qur’án to the followers of Islam.

(7) Sin

55. What is sin?
   Sin is the violation of the commandments of Allah.

56. Where do you find the commandments of Allah?
   I find the commandments of Allah in the Holy Qur’án.

57. Name some of the things that are sinful to do.
   Some of the things that are sinful to do are: Lying, stealing, hatred, pride, envy and lust

58. Are we sinful by nature?
   No, we are not sinful by nature.

59. Are we born in sin?
   No, we are not born in sin; every child is born pure from its Creator.

60. How do we commit sin?
   We commit sin when we follow our low desires.

61. What does Allah do when we commit sin?
   When we commit sin, Allah punishes us for it.

62. Does Allah forgive our sins?
   Yes, Allah can forgive our sins.

63. How does Allah forgive our sins?
   Allah forgives our sins by sincere repentance.

64. What is repentance?
   Repentance is praying to Allah sincerely and asking Him to forgive us and promising never to sin again.

65. What can keep you away from sin?
   The thought that Allah is always seeing us.
(8) Goodness

66. What is goodness?
   Goodness is following the commandments of Allah.

67. How does doing good help you?
   Doing good develops my soul and gives me joy and salvation.

68. Name some religious duties that develop your soul.
   Praying, Fasting, Almsgiving and doing good to others.

69. Give some other examples of goodness.
   Obedience to my parents; speaking the truth; kindness to dumb animals; helping my near relatives, neighbours and friends.

70. How can you be good to your fellow men?
   By desiring for them everything I desire for myself.

(9) Heaven

71. What is Heaven?
   Heaven is the abode where all good people go after resurrection and judgment.

72. What is the Day of Resurrection?
   The Day of Resurrection is the day when all souls will be raised from the dead.

73. What is the Day of Judgment?
   The Day of Judgment is the day when all souls will be judged by Allah for their actions on earth.

74. What kind of place is Heaven?
   Heaven is an abode or condition of everlasting peace, bliss and joy.

75. What should be our aim on this Earth?
   Our aim should be to live a perfect life on earth in order to gain Heaven after.

76. How long will Heaven last?
   Heaven will remain for ever and ever.

(10) Hell

77. What is hell?
   Hell is an abode where wicked and sinful people go after Judgment.
78. What kind of place is hell?
   Hell is an evil abode or condition of severe torture and pain.

79. How painful is hell?
   Hell is painful as burning fire.

80. How long will a sinner remain in hell?
   A sinner will remain in hell as long as he is not cleansed from sin.

81. After a sinner is cleansed from sin, where will he go?
   After a sinner is cleansed from sin, he will go to heaven.

82. Will hell remain for ever and ever?
   No, hell will become empty after the last sinner is cleansed.

(11) Creation

83. To what order of creation do you belong?
   I belong to the order of human beings.

84. Who created human beings?
   Allah created human beings.

85. What is the name of the first man Allah created?
   The name of the first man Allah created is Adam.

86. What is the name of the first woman Allah created?
   The name of the first woman Allah created is Eve.

87. Into how many parts is man composed?
   Man is composed of two parts.

88. Name the two parts of which man is composed.
   The two parts of which man is composed are: Body and Soul.

89. Can you see your body?
   Yes, I can see my body.

90. What does your body require to live?
   My body requires all kinds of material things to live.

91. Name some material things your body needs.
   Some material things my body needs are: Food, drink and clothes.
92. Can you see your soul?  
    No, I cannot see my soul.

93. What does your soul require to live?  
    My soul, being a spirit, requires spiritual foods to live.

94. Name some spiritual foods your soul needs to live?  
    Some spiritual foods my soul requires in order to live  
    are to have faith in Allah, prayer, fasting, almsgiving  
    and doing all manner of good.

(12) The Bismillaah

95. Say the Bismillaah in full.  
    The Bismillaah in full is Bismillaah-hir Rahmaa-nir  
    Raheem.

96. What does Bismillaah-hir Rahmaa-nir Raheem mean?  
    In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

97. When do you say the Bismillaah?  
    I say the Bismillaah before I begin to do anything.

98. In what important book do you find the Bismillaah?  
    Every chapter of the Holy Qur’án except one begins  
    with Bismillaah-hir Rahmaa-nir Raheem.

(13) Greeting

99. How does a Muslim greet another Muslim?  
    By saying Assalaamu ‘Alaikum.

100. What does Assalaamu ‘Alaikum mean?  
     Assalaamu ‘Alaikum means Peace be unto you!

101. What is the reply to Assalaamu ‘Alaikum?  
     The reply to Assalaamu ‘Alaikum is Wa ‘Alaikum  
     ussalaam.

102. What does Wa ‘Alaikum ussalaam mean?  
     Wa ‘Alaikum ussalaam means: And unto you be  
     peace!

(14) The Calendars

103. From when does the Christian Calendar begin?  
    The Christian Calendar begins from the birth of Christ.
104. What does A.D. mean?  
A.D. means *Anno Domini* — In the year of Our Lord.

105. What does C.E. mean?  
C.E. means Christian Era.

106. What system is adopted in the Christian Calendar?  
The Solar System or calculation by the sun.

107. From when does the Muslim Calendar begin?  
The Muslim Calendar begins from the emigration of our Holy Prophet from Mecca to Medina.

108. What does A.H. mean?  
A.H. means After *Hijrah*.

109. What does *Hijrah* mean?  
*Hijrah* means the emigration of our Holy Prophet from Mecca to Medina.

110. What system is adopted in the Muslim Calendar?  
The Lunar System or calculation by the moon.

111. Name the months of the Muslim Calendar.  

112. Name some important dates of the Muslim Calendar.  
The Muslim New year: 1st Muharram.  
The Holy Prophet's Birthday: 12th Rabi' ul-Awwal.  
The Holy Prophet's Ascension or *Mi‘raj*: 27th Rajab.  
The Fasting begins: 1st Ramadan.  
The *Laila tul Qadr* (The Grand Night): 27th night of Ramadan.  
The ‘*Id ul-Fitr*: 1st Shawwaal.  
The ‘*Id ul-Adha*: 10th Zul Hijjah.

(15) Miscellaneous

113. Grace before meals. *Bismillahi wa-‘ala bara-ka-tillah.*  
In the name of Allah and with the blessings of Allah.

Praise be to Allah, Who fed us and gave us drink and made us Muslims.
115. Prayer upon entering a Mosque: *Rab-bigh fir-le zonubi waj-jah-le abwa-ba rahma ii-ka* (O Lord, forgive me my sins and open for me the doors of Thy mercy).


117. Prayer on sneezing: *Alhamdo lillah* (Praise be to Allah). Anyone hearing me says *Yar hamo kallah* (May Allah have mercy on thee!).

118. Prayer upon going to bed: *Allah hum-ma be-ismeka amuto wa ah-ya* (O Allah, with Thy name I retire and shall rise).

119. Prayer on rising from sleep: *Alhamdo lillah hil la-zeez ah-ya-na ba' da ma amaa-tana wa'alai-hin no-shoor* (Praise be to Allah, Who has given us life after death, and to Him is our rising).

120. Prayer before slaughtering a bird or animal: *Bismillah Allaho Akbar* (In the name of Allah. Allah is the Greatest).

(16) Some short chapters of the Holy Qur'án

121. Chapter 1: *Al-Fatihah*, or The Opening. 7 Verses.

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful.

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. The Beneficent, the Merciful. Master of the day of requital. Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help. Guide us on the right path. The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours. Not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray.

122. Chapter 109. *Al-Kafirun*, or The Unbelievers. 6 Verses.

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Say: O unbelievers, I do not serve that which you serve. Nor do you serve Him whom I serve. Nor am I going to serve that which you serve. Nor are you going to serve Him whom I serve. You shall have your recompense and I shall have my recompense.
123. Chapter 110. *Al-Nasr*, or The Help. 3 Verses.

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful.

When there comes the help of Allah and the victory. And you see men entering the religion of Allah in companies. Then celebrate the praise of your Lord, and ask His forgiveness, surely He is oft-returning to mercy.

124. Chapter 112. *Al-Ikhlas*, or The Unity. 4 Verses.

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Say: He, Allah, is One. Allah is He on whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And none is like Him.

125. Chapter 113. *Al-Falak*, or The Dawn. 5 Verses.

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of the dawn. From the evil of what He has created. And from the evil of the utterly dark night when it comes. And from the evil of those who cast evil suggestions in firm resolutions. And from the evil of the envious, when he envies.

126. Chapter 114. *Al-Nás*, or The Men. 6 Verses.

In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of men. The God of men. The King of men. From the evil of the whispering of the slinking devil. Who whispers into the hearts of men. From among the *jinn* and the men.

**(17) Prohibited Foods and Drinks**

127. Name some of the foods and drinks that are prohibited to Muslims:

Some of the foods and drinks totally prohibited to Muslims are:

1. The flesh of swine (pork, bacon, ham).
2. The blood of all animals.
3. The flesh of any animal slaughtered in the name of any gods besides Allah.
4. All kinds of intoxicants and alcoholic drinks are prohibited.
What is Islam?

The following are some of the highlights of the religion of Islam:

**One God: One Humanity**

Islam looks upon the whole of humanity as one family under the universal benevolence of God — the common Creator and Nourisher of all.

**Universality of Divine Light**

Islam teaches that just as the life and light-giving rays of God's sun shine upon all alike, the light of revelation, equally indispensable for man's spiritual growth and well-being, was vouchsafed to all the nations of the world in all ages.

**Belief in all World Teachers**

As a corollary to the above, Islam enjoins faith in all the Founders of the revealed religions of the world, as much as in the Prophet Muhammad.

**Jesus Venerated as a Divine Teacher**

The Qur'an (the Scripture of Islam) speaks of Jesus in the highest terms, describing him as one of God's chosen Prophets, making it obligatory on a Muslim to venerate him as such. It refutes the doctrines of sonship, resurrection and atonement as later inventions never taught by Jesus.

**No Chosen People**

Islam rejects the idea of a chosen people, making faith in God and good actions the sole key to Heaven.

**No Priestcraft**

Islam is the common man's religion, making direct personal access to God open to all alike, without the mediation of a priest.

**No Fatalism**

Islam makes man the architect of his own destiny. Created with the highest of potentialities, man is left a free master to make or mar his own future through a life of honest endeavour or otherwise.

**Universal Human Rights**

Islam teaches the sanctity of human personality, confers equal rights upon all, makes freedom of conscience and expression man's most sacrosanct birthright which must on no account be violated, and subjects the highest and the humblest, the prince and the peasant, the king and the commoner, equally to the sovereignty of the law.

**Equality of the Sexes**

Islam puts man and woman on a footing of equality, throwing open to both alike all opportunities for self-advancement — spiritually, intellectually, morally, socially and economically.
Tolerance of Differences

Islam gives every individual the right to differ with others, and teaches toleration of, even respect for, honest differences of opinion or religious views.

A Democratic Way of Life

Islam stands for a democratic way of life, making popular will and public opinion the corner-stone of both the State and social progress, abhorring indoctrination or regimentation in any shape or form.

A Dynamic Progressive System

There is no rigidity in the Islamic system. It looks upon change and progress as the very breath of life — static-ness and stagnation being its very negation.

FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

Declaration of Faith

The very first thing essential to put one on the road to the Islamic way of life is the public declaration of the following, which constitutes the first article of Faith:

“I bear witness that there is no god but One God, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.”

Prayer

A Muslim is required to say his prayers (Salaat) five times a day — early dawn, early afternoon, late afternoon, sunset and late evening.

Fasting

A Muslim has to observe the whole of the lunar month of Ramadhan as a month of fasting, abstaining from eating, drinking and smoking between the hours of early dawn and sunset.

Zakat

A Muslim has to give away annually 2½ per cent of his wealth as charity to be spent on the poorer sections of the community.

Pilgrimage

A Muslim must perform once in his lifetime a pilgrimage to the Ka’ba in Mecca, provided he has the means to do so.

No Ritualism

All these various observances are intended to foster a sense of the Divine majesty, self-discipline, fellow-feeling and a sense of the universal fellowship of man, irrespective of caste, colour, language or station of life. Shorn of this inner content, warns the Qur’án, they carry no value with God.
My Beacon

Muhammad is my beacon,
Muhammad is my guide,
I have no fear for anyone,
While I am on his side.

He taught me how to live and pray,
To love my neighbours like myself,
And walk through life the better way,
From wrong and sin to save myself.

When I am dying, O my God,
La ilaha illal-lah,
Strengthen me to end the code,
Muhammad-ur Rasul ullah.

Muhammad is my beacon,
Muhammad is my guide,
I have no fear for anyone,
While I am on his side.

Muhammad Rafeeq.
LITERATURE ON ISLAM

The Holy Qur'an (Arabic Text), 7 in. x 9½ in., 848 pages .................................................. 1 0 0
The Holy Qur'an (Arabic Text), Pocket Size, 2¾ in. x 4 in., 494 pages (printed in Egypt) ................. 8 0
The Holy Qur'an on one page, 22 in. x 26 in. (with magnifying glass) ........................................ 1 0 0
The Holy Qur'an (Arabic Text), with English Translation and Commentary by the Maulana Muhammad 'Ali. Royal 8vo. LXX + 1275 pages:
   Leather Bound: 1st Quality ................................ 3 0 0
   Cloth Bound: 2nd Quality .................................. 2 0 0
The Meaning of the Glorious Koran, by Marmaduke Pickthall (an explanatory translation), 691 pages. Printed in U.K. ................................................................. 1 10 0
Ditto, printed in the U.S.A. .................................. 6 0
A Muslim Catechism, by Muhammad Rafeeq .................. 9
The Islamic Conception of Worship, by S. Muhammad Tufail .................................................. 6
The Islamic Conception of Freedom, Trust and Responsibility, by S. Muhammad Tufail ....................... 6
Barriers Between Muslims Must Go (there are no sects in Islam), by S. Muhammad Tufail ............... 6
THE ISLAMIC REVIEW. Annual Subscription .............. 1 10 0
Islam Our Choice (illustrated and unabridged) by Dr. S. A. Khulusi. Deals with a short history of Muslims and fundamentals of Islam. Also includes stories of various Europeans accepting Islam .................. 10 6

BOOKS BY THE MAULANA MUHAMMAD ALI
The Religion of Islam. Royal 8vo. 784 pages ............. 1 10 0
A Manual of Hadith. Demy 8vo. 408 pages .................. 1 0 0
Muhammad the Prophet. Crown 8vo. 320 pages .......... 13 0
Early Caliphat. Crown 8vo. 320 pages ..................... 13 0
Living Thoughts of the Prophet Muhammad. Crown 8vo. 142 pages ........................................... 5 0
Introduction to Study of the Holy Qur'an. Demy 8vo. ........ 5 0
The Anti Christ, Gog and Magog. 5½ in. x 7½ in. 91 pages .............. 6 0

BOOKS BY THE KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN
The Ideal Prophet. Demy 8vo. 274 pages .................. 5 0
Threshold of Truth. Crown 8vo. 196 pages ............... 6 0
Introduction to the Study of the Qur'an. Demy 8vo. ......... 1 41 pages ............................................. 6 0
Religion of Jesus and Traditional Christianity. Crown 8vo. 77 pages ...................................... 2 0
Sources of Christianity. Demy 8vo. 113 pages .......... 4 0
Message of Islam. Demy 8vo. 74 pages .................. 3 0
Human Faculties and their Development. Demy 8vo. ....... 35 pages ............................................. 1 0
Hints to the Study of the Qur'an. Demy 8vo. 37 pages .......... 1 0

Can be obtained from

The Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust
The Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England

Azeez Manzil
Brandreth Road, Lahore 7, W. Pakistan

PRINTED BY A. A. VERSTAGE, BASINGSTOKE, HAMPSHIRE, ENGLAND