religions, re-moulding the souls of races, and building up a whole new world—the world of Islam.

The closer we examine this development the more extraordinary does it appear. The other great religions won their way slowly, by painful struggle and finally triumphed with the aid of powerful monarchs converted to the new faith. Christianity had its Constantine, Buddhism had its Asoka, and Zoroastrianism had its Cyrus, each lending to his chosen cult the mighty force of secular authority. Not so Islam. Arising in a desert land sparsely inhabited by a nomad race previously undistinguished in human annals, Islam sallied forth on its great adventure with the slenderest human backing and against the heaviest material odds. Yet Islam triumphed with seemingly miraculous ease, and a couple of generations saw the Fiery Crescent borne victorious from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas and from the desert of Central Asia to the deserts of Central Africa..

- A. M. L. Stoddard Quoted in Islam: The Religion of All Prophets Begum Bawani Waqf Karachi, Pakistan p. 56

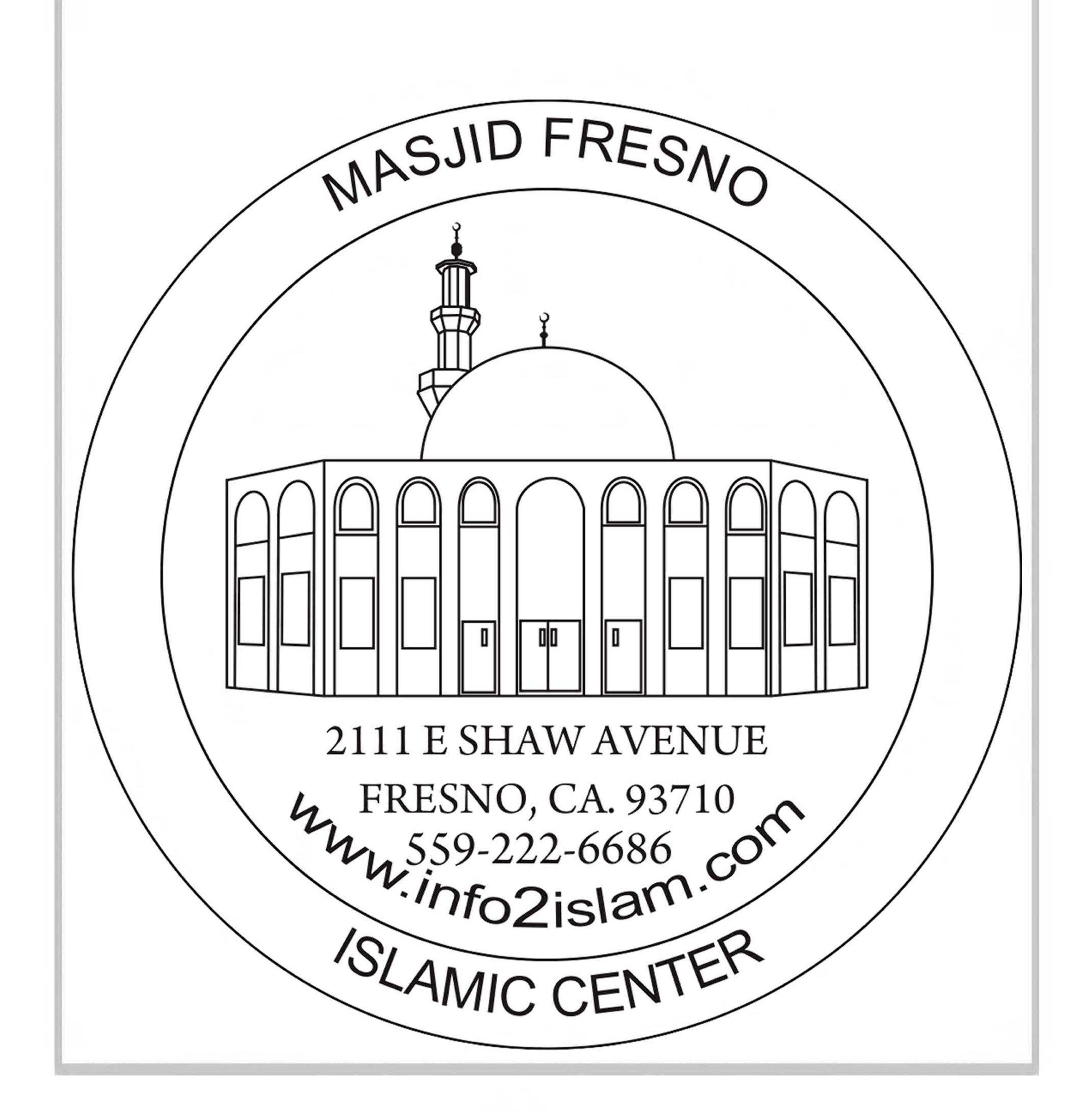
Islam is a religion that is essentially rationalistic in the widest sense of this term considered etymologically and historically. The definition of rationalism as a system that bases religious beliefs on principles furnished by the reason applies to it exactly... It cannot be denied that many doctrines and systems of theology and also many superstitions, from the worship of saints to the use of rosaries and amulets, have become grafted on the main trunk of the Muslim creed. But in spite of the rich development, in every sense of the term, of the teachings of the Prophet, the Quran has invariably kept its place as the fundamental starting point, and the dogma of unity of God has always been proclaimed therein with a grandeur, a majesty, an invariable purity and with a note of sure conviction, which it is hard to find surpassed outside the pale of Islam. This fidelity to the fundamental dogma of the religion, the elemental simplicity of the formula in which it is enunciated, the proof that it gains from the fervid conviction of the missionaries who propagate it, are so many causes to explain the success of Muhammadan [Muslim] missionary efforts. A creed so precise, so stripped of all theological complexities and consequently so accessible to the ordinary understanding might be expected to possess and does indeed possess a marvellous power of winning its way into the consciences of men.

- Edward Montet

"La Propagande Chretienne et ses
Adversaries Musulmans," Paris 1890.

Quoted by T.W. Arnold in

The Preaching of Islam
London, 1913, pp. 413-414.



## WHAT THEY SAY SAY SBOUT ISLAM

## IN THE NAME OF ALMIGHTY GOD (ALLAH), THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE

Islam, as revealed to Muhammad (pbuh), is the continuation and culmination of all preceding revealed religions. It is thus the perfect religion for all times and for all peoples. Such a claim is supported by several facts. First, there is no other revealed book that is extant in its original form and content. Second, no other revealed religion has a convincing claim to provide guidance in all walks of human life for all times. Islam, however, addresses humanity at large and offers basic guidance on all human problems. Moreover, it has withstood the test of fourteen hundred years and has the potential to establish once again an ideal society, as it did under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

It was a miracle that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) could win even his toughest enemies over to the fold of Islam without adequate material resources. Worshippers of idols, blind followers of the ways of their forefathers, promoters of tribal feuds, abusers of human dignity and blood—these were Muhammad's (pbuh) people. By the time of his death, however, he had transformed them into the most disciplined nation under the guidance of Islam and its prophet. Islam opened vistas of spiritual heights and human dignity by declaring righteousness as the sole criterion of merit and honor. Islam shaped its followers social, cultural, moral, and commercial life with those basic laws and principles that are in complete conformity with human nature. As human nature does not change, Islam is applicable in all times and for all peoples.

It is unfortunate that the Christian West, instead of making an honest attempt to understand the phenomenal success of Islam, has always considered it a rival religion. During the Crusades, this opposition gained a great deal of strength and force, which led to the generation of a genre of anti-Islamic polemical literature based on ignorance and hostility and designed to distort the image of Islam. But such hostility has not prevented Islam from unfolding its genuineness to those modern scholars whose bold and objective observations have begun to set the record straight.

Lere we furnish some observations on Islam that have been made by acknowledged non-Muslim scholars of our own time. We hope that their comments will contribute to an unbiased and open-minded dialogue between followers of other religions who are interested in gaining a true understanding of Islam.

It (Islam) replaced monkishness by manliness. It gives hope to the slave, brotherhood to mankind, and recognition of the fundamental facts of human nature.

- Canon Taylor
Paper read before the Church Congress at
Walverhamton, Oct. 7, 1887.
Quoted by Arnold in The Preaching of Islam pp. 71-72.

[The] sense of justice is one of the most wonderful ideals of Islam, because as I read in the Qur'an I find those dynamic principles of life, not mystic but practical ethics for the daily conduct of life suited to the whole world.

- Sarojini Naidu Lectures on "The Ideals of Islam." Speeches and Writings of Sarojini Naidu Madras, 1918, p. 167.

History makes it clear however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that historians have ever repeated.

> - De Lacy O'Leary Islam at the Crossroads, London, 1923 p. 8

The extinction of race consciousness between Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islam and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue.

A. J. Toynbee, Civilization on Trial, New York, 1948, p. 205

I have always held the religion of Muhammad in high estimation because of its wonderful vitality. It is the only religion which appears to me to possess that assimilating capacity to the changing phase of existence which can make itself appeal to every age. I have studied him – the wonderful man – and in my opinion far from being an anti-Christ, he must be called the Saviour of Humanity. I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its

problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness. I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.

> - G. B. Shaw The Genuine Islam, Vol. 1, No. 81936

I am not a Muslim in the usual sense, though I hope I am a "Muslim" as "one surrendered to God." But I believe that embedded in the Quran and other expressions of the Islamic vision are vast stores of divine truth from which I and other occidentals have still much to learn, and Islam is certainly a strong contender for the supplying of the basic framework of the one religion of the future.

- W. Montgomery Watt, Islam and Christianity Today, London 1983, p. IX

But Islam has a still further service to render to the cause of humanity. It stands after all nearer to the real East than Europe does, and it possesses a magnificent tradition of inter-racial understanding and cooperation. No other society has such a record of success in uniting in an equality of status, of opportunity, and of endeavors so many and so various races of mankind... Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition. If ever the opposition of the great societies of East and West is to be replaced by cooperation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition. In its hands lies very largely the solution of the problem with which Europe is faced in its relation with the East. If they unite, the hope of a peaceful issue is immeasurably enhanced. But if Europe, by rejecting, the cooperation of Islam, throws it into the arms of its rivals, the issue can only be disastrous for both.

> - H. A. R. Gibb, Whither Islam London, 1932, p. 379

The rise of Islam is perhaps the most amazing event in human history. Springing from a land and a people [which were] previously negligible, Islam spread within a century over half the earth, shattering great empires, overthrowing long-established