



ALEVISM



Who are we?

Britain Alevi Federation is an umbrella organisation for approximately 300.000 Alevis living in United Kingdom.

There are twelve Alevi Cultural Centres and Cemevis serving people in UK. These centres are based in London, Glasgow, Coventry, South London, Croydon, Harrow, Bournemouth, Nottingham, Doncaster, Hull, Sheffield and Edinburg.

Some basic beliefs of Alevism

God

- The Alevi word for God is 'Hakk' which means Truth.. The Arabic word for The God is Allah God (Allah) is Truth. Hakk is not a person, but more like a force or an energy. Think of 'The Force be with you!' 'May Hakk be with you'
- Everything in the universe is an expression of Hakk, just as a work of art is an expression of the artist. In this way, Alevi believe that the whole universe was 'created' by Hakk, but is not separate from it. Hakk is in the universe. The universe and Hakk are 'one'.

Humanity

- There is something of God in all living creatures and most fully in humans, as true consciousness. This can be understood as awareness of Truth in self and others.
- Because of this, men and women are equal and all living creatures are sacred. Alevi people call each other 'can' (pronounced 'jan'), meaning soul.
- Hakk (God) is made known in the universe (symbolised by Muhammad) and lived out by humanity (symbolised by Ali). So Alevi worship includes 'Allah – Muhammad – Ali'.
- So strong is this belief that all people contain the essence of Hakk, that one poet said 'I am one with Hakk'. The founder saint of Bektashism, Haji Bektash Veli, from the 13th century explains this importance with his saying "My Kaabe (temple) is the human being".
- God/Hakk is everywhere and can be worshipped anywhere. Hakk lives in the human heart. Therefore, Alevis do not fear Hakk but only bear love for Truth.
- The purpose of life is to become fully one with Hakk.

Other religions

- Alevi consider all religions and living philosophies to be different ways of reaching Hakk.
- This understanding puts reason, using our brains, thinking and questioning, above dogma (accepting Truth from someone else). As Hacı Bektaş Veli says, "the end of the path would be dark if the path is not science."
- Alevi consider all nations as one regardless of ethnic, racial, gender and linguistic differences simply because each creature carries the same sacred essence of life.
- Humanism, egalitarianism, mutual assistance, and gender-equality are the main social characteristics commonly shared by Alevi communities. Their lodge-centered social organization is based on a kind of equal society based on agriculture.
- A well-known saying in Alevism is: "everything except the cheek of a lover can be shared", which explains this egalitarianism perfectly.
- As a result, resisting against the injustice expressed with a phrase "allegiance with the oppressed (mazlum)" and "standing against the tyrant (zalim)" has become the main social attitude in Alevism.

Code of Morality in Alevism:

In Alevism, morality is the main requirement of belief. A person, who cannot control his or her behaviour, is not regarded as suitable to participate in Alevi rituals. This morality is simply explained with the motto:

"Being the master of one's hand, tongue, and loins,"

which requires Alevi not to behave immorally by using their hand (eg do not steal), their tongue (eg do not blaspheme), their loins (eg do not commit adultery). These rules summarize a strong moral system, which is described as "thinner than hair, sharper than sword." Those who do not observe these basic moral principles are regarded as *düşkün* (the sinner), and are excommunicated from the community life with a strong social isolation (ie they are separated from the lodge).

Some see Alevism as a separate religion.

Some see Alevism as a spiritual path 'yol' with influences going back into the dawn of time.

Some people see Alevism as a sect within Middle Eastern Beliefs.

Some see Alevism as a code for living, with no need for a personal 'god'.

Some see it as a mixture of these.

¹ It is also interpreted as: be master of what you produce with your hands, namely, your labour; be master of your tongue eg to preserve your culture; be master of your loins eg be responsible for your children.

*“the end of the path would be
dark if the path is not science.”*

Hace Bektash Veli



ALEVI CENTRES IN UK

LONDON IAKM CEMEVI • COVENTRY / LEICESTER CEMEVI
GLASGOW CEMEVI • CROYDON CEMEVI • SOUTH LONDON CEMEVI
BOURNEMOUTH CEMEVI • HARROW CEMEVI • SHEFFIELD CEMEVI
DONCASTER CEMEVI • HULL CEMEVI • EDINBURG CEMEVI
NOTTINGHAM CEMEVI