

Islam Notes

Islam is a monotheistic religion based on the teachings of Muhammad. The central belief in Islam is that there is only one God (Allah) and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.

History

In the first several centuries AD, the Arabian world was made of many warring tribal communities.

These tribes were polytheistic and organized around their own patron deity.

Mecca was a prominent city and served as an oasis for warring tribes.

In the center of Mecca was a sanctuary called the Kaaba, which contained 360 pagan idols.

The head deity was Hubal, the moon god, maintained by the Quraysh tribe.

In 570 AD, Muhammad was born into the Quraysh tribe.

Muhammad's dad died before he was born, and his mother died when he was six years old.

He lived with his grandfather until he was 10, when his grandfather died, and then lived with his uncle as a shepherd and camel driver.

At age 25, he married Khadijah, a wealthy widow who had hired him to take care of her caravans.

In 610 AD, the angel Gabriel visited him in a cave at Mount Hira, where he often meditated.

This led to a series of angelic visits, where he was called to preach the message that there was only one God, Allah, and that all tribes should be united together in peace.

Muhammad preached this message for 13 years and gained only 70 followers.

His people rejected him, persecuted, and tried to kill him. Jews and Christians rejected him as messiah.

In 621 AD, his wife died.

In 622 AD, he fled to Medina (Yathrib) with his close friend, Abu Bakr, and became a mediator there as their prophet.

In Medina the angel changed his message to one of violent jihad ("striving") against all unbelievers.

He was told that his message was to be called Islam (submission to the will of Allah) and that its followers were to be called Muslims (obedient servants of Allah).

Muhammad was then taken to heaven on a winged horse. He met Moses, Elijah, and Jesus. He then was given a glimpse of hell and brought back to earth.

Between 624 and 627 AD, Muhammad, leading Medina, fought Mecca in a series of battles.

"Then they surrendered and the Apostle confined them in Medina... Then the Apostle went out to the market of Medina and dug trenches in it. Then he sent for them and struck off their

heads in those trenches as they were brought out to him in batches. There were 600 or 700 in all, though some put the figure as high as 800 or 900.” (Sirat Rasul Allah, p. 464.)

“The Prophet cut off the hands and feet of the men belonging to the tribe of Uraina and did not cauterize [their bleeding limbs] till they died.” (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Vol. 8, Bk. 82, Hadith 795.)

In 630 AD, He went back to Mecca with 10,000 men and defeated it. Most converted with no resistance.

Muhammad went into the Kaaba and removed the idols except for his family god.

Muhammad moved throughout the Arab world killing non-converts and uniting all the Arab tribes under his religion.

In 632 AD, Muhammad died a sudden but natural death in the arms of Aisha, one of his twelve wives.

The Qur’an says you are allowed to have only four wives (Qur’an 4:3). It also says you are not allowed to marry a woman until she reaches puberty (Qur’an 4:6). Aisha was six years old when he married her.

Muhammad is considered the greatest and final prophet of Allah. He lived a sinless life in the last 22 years of his life and is seen as the model of how a Muslim is supposed to live.

After Muhammad’s death, the Muslim Arabs fell back into their tribal warring and civil wars, which would, over the next several centuries, lead to about 150 sects.

At the same time, they began to move outside of Arabia, first seizing control of Israel in 638 AD.

By the 700s AD, an Islamic state had moved into central Asia, northern Africa, Spain, and France.

The expansion happened mostly by force and sometimes by peaceful proselytizing.

During this time Islam had become a more clearly defined religion, an elaborate system of ritual, doctrine, law, and they were clearly different from those of non-Muslims.

Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians were not always forced to convert, but they suffered from restrictions. They were oppressed, forced to pay a special tax, forbidden to wear certain colors, and prohibited from marrying Muslim women.

In 732 AD, Charles Martel, the ruler of the Franks, stopped the Muslims from invading Europe.

In Asia the Abbasid dynasty rose to power (750–1258). This is called the golden age of Islam. During this time the Muslims continued many attempts at a conquest of Europe.

Also during this time the Muslims invaded India and began a brutal genocide of the Indian people. Historian K. S. Lal in his book *Theory and Practice of Muslim State in India* claims that between the years of 1000 AD and 1500 AD, the population of the Indian subcontinent decreased from 200 to 170 million.

Responding to the threat in Europe, in 1095 AD, Pope Urban II called for the First Crusade from Western Europe, which captured much of Syria. The crusades lasted from 1095 to 1289 AD.

In the 1200s AD was the Mongol invasion, which brought an end to the golden age of Islam. By 1300, the Mongol empire covered most of Asia and Eastern Europe.

By the late 1200s, the Mongol leaders had converted to Islam and continued the Islamic conquest.

In the 1300s, the Black Death devastated Asia and Europe, weakening all empires and bringing an end to the Mongol empire.

In the 1400s to 1700s, three major Muslim empires formed: the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East, the Balkans, and Northern Africa; the Safavid Empire in Iran; and the Mughal Empire in South Asia.

On September 11, 1683, the Ottoman empire put Vienna under siege. And on September 12, 1683, the Polish, Austrian, and German armies defeated the Muslims.

The Muslim threat to Europe came to an end. The 1700s would give birth to the Enlightenment in Europe an Islamic free Europe.

Centuries of no conflict with the Islamic world came to an end on September 11, 2001, when Osama Bin Laden continued the conquest with his terrorist attack on the United States.

Today Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world. In 1982, there were 450 million Muslims in the world, but today there are approximately 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide (1 out of 4), making it the world's second largest religion.

This growth has more to do with Muslim births and fear than actual conversions.

U.S. population growth is at 1.9, and Europe's is at 1.3. The Muslim world's population growth is at 8.1. Most Islamic growth in the west is a result of immigration.

Many Muslim civilians want to leave the Islamic religion, but know they would be imprisoned or killed by their Islamic governments, and sometimes families, if they do.

There are about 36 countries in the world today where you can legally be put to death for leaving Islam.

“If somebody [a Muslim] discards his religion, kill him.” (the Hadith, Volume 4, Book 52, Number 260. Also, see Volume 9, Book 84, Number 64)

Writings

Qur'an (words of Allah as dictated to Muhammad) contains 114 chapters called surahs, arranged by the longest surah to the shortest surah.

Forty percent of the Qur'an was written in Mecca (peace), and 60 percent was written in Medina (violence).

Naskh is the law of abrogation, which states that if there are contradictory passages in the Qur'an, later revelation supersedes earlier revelation.

“We [Allah] do not abrogate a verse or cause it to be forgotten except that We bring forth [one] better than it or similar to it. Do you not know that Allah is over all things competent?” (Surah 2:106)

Earlier peaceful Meccan Surahs:

“Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth not aggressors.” (Surha 2:190)

“And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, [speaking of the Bible, a reference to Christians and Jews].” (Surah 29:46)

Later violent Medina Surahs:

“Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture - [fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled.” (Surah 9:29)

“Make war on them until idolatry shall cease and Allah’s religion shall reign supreme.” (Surah 8:39)

“And fight them until there is no more Fitnah (disbelief and polytheism: i.e., worshipping others besides Allah) and the religion (worship) will all be for Allah Alone [in the whole of the world]. But if they cease (worshipping others besides Allah), then certainly, Allah is All-Seeing of what they do.” (Surah 8:39)

“Indeed, the penalty for those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger and strive upon earth [to cause] corruption is none but that they be killed or crucified or that their hands and feet be cut off from opposite sides or that they be exiled from the land. That is for them a disgrace in this world; and for them in the Hereafter is a great punishment.” (Surah 5:33)

Chapter 9 is the last chapter written by Muhammad:

“When the sacred months have passed slay the idolaters wherever you find them, be it during a lawful period or a sacred one, and take them, captive, and confine them, to castles and forts, until they have no choice except being put to death or acceptance of Islam; and lie in wait for them at every place of ambush, at every route that they use. But if they repent, of unbelief, and establish prayer and pay the alms, then leave their way free, and do not interfere with them. Allah is Forgiving, Merciful, to those who repent.” (Surah 9:5)

Hadith (Muhammad’s words and deeds) is seen as equal in inspiration to the Qur’an.

There is no official collection. Most sects contain at least 40 volumes in their collection.

The Bible is also seen as the word of Allah, but it is considered corrupted and cannot be trusted.

Defense for the Qur’an

The most popular proof Muslims give for the inspiration of the Qur’an is the Qur’an’s literary beauty and eloquence.

“This Qur’an could not possibly be authored by [any] other than Allah.” (Surah 10:37)

Is Islam a Religion of Peace or Violence?

The Qur’an advocates both peace and violence. However, Naskh says that later revelation supersedes previous revelation. The latter parts of the Qur’an are violent.

The Qur’an teaches that Muhammad was sinless and is the ultimate example of what a Muslim should be like. He lived a life of violence.

What about the Crusades?

The Crusades were not carried out to spread the Christian faith but to stop the destruction of sacred places in Jerusalem and the murder, torture, enslavement, robbery, and harassment of Christian pilgrims traveling to the Holy Land.

The teachings of Jesus never advocated violence against others or forced conversions.

What about the extermination of the Canaanites in the First Testament?

This was a judgment against specific people groups (seven nations) in a specific land (Canaan) for specific sins of idolatry, murder, rape, child sacrifice, and bestiality.

The Canaanites were not put to death for having a different religion or being a different ethnicity; the Israelites were not allowed to touch the neighboring nations, who also had the same religion and ethnicity as the Canaanites.

Many prophets were sent to the Canaanites, and they were given over 400 years to repent.

The Bible forbids slaughter and bodily mutilation.

The Bible list the deaths of the Canaanites as facts and does not brag or glorify in the death or mutilation of the Canaanites like the Islamic writings do.

Yahweh treated Israel the same way when they committed the same sins as the Canaanites before them (Deut. 13:16; Josh. 7; 2 Kgs. 17; Amos 1-2).

Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay for all sins of all people to include all nations in His kingdom. No prophet in Islam has ever done that.

Beliefs about God

Allah (“the God”) is the sovereign creator of all things.

Allah is not triune in nature but is a single being.

Allah is unknowable and impersonal.

Allah is a moral God with moral demands who will hold people accountable for their deeds.

Allah is merciful to whomever he pleases.

“Surely Allah does not love any ungrateful sinner.” (Surah 2:276)

“Surely Allah does not love the unbelievers.” (Surah 3:32)

“Surely Allah does not love him who is proud.” (Surah 4:36)

“Surely He does not love the extravagant.” (Surah 6:141)

Beliefs about the Material Realm

Allah is the sovereign creator of all creation.

This world is a good and orderly world.

Beliefs about Humanity

Humans were created to serve Allah and are morally accountable to Allah.

Humans are born good without any sin.

Humans have the ability to choose good or evil.

Beliefs about the Problem with the World and Humanity

There is no sin nature to overcome.

Sin is seen as individual deeds, not as a deep corruption of one's heart and motives.

One sins morally and socially by disobeying the Qur'an.

Humanity's problem is their forgetfulness of who Allah is and what he demands.

Fear of eternal torment is a constant theme in the Qur'an.

Beliefs about the Solution to the Problem

One must remember Allah through constant reciting of the Qur'an.

One's good deeds must outweigh one's bad deeds.

Obedience to the Qur'an and teachings of Muhammad is necessary.

“Then those whose balance (of good deeds) is heavy, they will attain salvation: But those whose balance is light, will be those who have lost their souls, in Hell will they abide.”
(Surah 23:102-3)

A person's life will be examined, and they will be permitted to spend eternity in paradise (Qur'an 4:57) or Hell (Qur'an 4:56; 14:48-51).

Allah then chooses if one will go to paradise, for there is no guarantee of paradise.

“To Allah belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Whether you show what is within yourselves or conceal it, Allah will bring you to account for it. Then He will forgive whom He wills and punish whom He wills, and Allah is over all things competent.” (Surah 2:284)

The five pillars of faith must be performed throughout your whole life.

The Five Pillars of Faith

Shahada (“the testimony”): “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.”

Salah (“worship”): Pre-memorized prayers five times a day facing Mecca.

Zakat (“that which purifies”): A tithe of 2.5 percent of their income to the mosque.

Sawm (“fasting”): Fasting during the month of Ramadan (ninth month of the lunar calendar) (Qur'an 2:183-185).

Hajj (“pilgrimage”): A pilgrimage to Mecca once in one's lifetime (Qur'an 2:196). The pilgrimage occurs from the 8th to 12th of Dhu al-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic calendar.

The Kaaba is a cube-shaped stone structure made of granite. It is approximately 43 feet high, with sides measuring 36.2 feet by 42.2 feet.



- First day: The ritual of Tawaf (“going about”) involves walking seven times counterclockwise around the Kaaba. At each pass they are to kiss or touch the black stone (*Hajar al-Aswad*), a pre-Muhammad meteorite.
- Second day: Pilgrims arrive at Arafat, a barren and plain land some 20 kilometers east of Mecca, where they stand all day in prayer and repentance and seek the mercy of Allah.
- Third day: Pilgrims perform symbolic stoning of the devil (*Ramy al-Jamarat*) by throwing seven stones at only the largest of the three pillars, known as Jamrat al-Aqabah, from sunrise to sunset. After the casting of stones, animals are slaughtered to commemorate the story of Abraham and Ishmael. The meat is sent to the poor. All male pilgrims shave or trim their hair.
- Fourth and fifth days: Pilgrims again throw seven pebbles at each of the three pillars all day in the stoning of the devil.

In paradise, all males and females will be given houris (eternal virgins). These houris can be female or male but are mostly described as female. They are described in many places in the Qur’an and Hadith in very erotic and sexual ways.

The Qur’an and the Haddith describe men getting many female houris and the women getting one male houri. All females upon their entrance into paradise will be made a houri.

— Qur’an 30:21; 37:48; 44:54; 52:20; 55:72; 56:22, 36; 78:33.

— Muhammad al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 55 “Prophets,” hadith 544.

— Muhammad al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 54 “The Beginning of Creation,” hadith 476.

— Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj Nishapuri, Sahih Muslim, Book 31 “Pertaining to the Merits of the Companions,” hadith 6012.

— Al-Tirmidhi, Jami` at-Tirmidhi (Surah Waaqi’ah, 35–37).

— Al-Tirmidhi, Jami` at-Tirmidhi.

— Ibn Majah, Sunan ibn Majah.

— Qur’an, sura 56 (Al-Waqia), ayat 35-36.

Dying as a martyr in jihad is the only guarantee of paradise.

The martyr may choose 70 of his family and friends to be in paradise.

“Verily, Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their properties; for the price that theirs shall be the Paradise. They fight in Allah’s Cause, so they kill (others) and are killed. It is a promise in truth which is binding on Him in the Taurat (Torah) and the Injeel (Gospel) and the Qur’an. And who is truer to his covenant than Allah? Then rejoice in the bargain which you have concluded. That is the supreme success.” (Surah 9:111)

“The prophet said ‘nobody who dies and finds good from Allah (in the Hereafter) would wish to come back to this world even if he were given the whole world and whatever is in it. Except the martyr who, on seeing the superiority of martyrdom, would like to come back to the world and get killed again (in Allah’s Cause).’ The prophet said, ‘a single endeavor (of fighting) in Allah’s Cause in the afternoon or in the forenoon is better than all the world and whatever is in it.’ (Sahih Al-Bukari, Vol. 4, Bk. 52, Hadith 53.)

“The Messenger of Allah was asked about the best of deeds. He observed: Belief in Allah. He said: What next? He replied: Jihad in the cause of Allah.” (Hadith: Book of Faith vol. 1:148)

Beliefs about Jesus

Jesus is not Allah but a prophet.

Jesus was born sinless of the virgin Mary.

Jesus did not die on the cross and certainly not for sins.

Jesus will come back to judge the world.

“O People of the Scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, was but a messenger of Allah and His word which He directed to Mary and a soul [created at a command] from Him. So believe in Allah and His messengers. And do not say, “Three”; desist – it is better for you. Indeed, Allah is but one God. Exalted is He above having a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And sufficient is Allah as Disposer of affairs.” (Surah 4:171)

“They have certainly disbelieved who say, “Allah is the Messiah, the son of Mary” while the Messiah has said, “O Children of Israel, worship Allah, my Lord and your Lord.” Indeed, he who associates others with Allah – Allah has forbidden him Paradise, and his refuge is the Fire. And there are not for the wrongdoers any helpers.” (Surah 5:72)

“And [for] their saying, “Indeed, we have killed the Messiah, Jesus, the son of Mary, the messenger of Allah.” And they did not kill him, nor did they crucify him; but [another] was made to resemble him to them. And indeed, those who differ over it are in doubt about it. They have no knowledge of it except the following of assumption. And they did not kill him, for certain.” (Surah 4:157)

Sharia Law

Sharia Law is the immutable divine law of Allah and is the application of the teachings and examples of Muhammad as found in the Qur’an and Hadith. It is the absolute governing Law over a Muslim’s life.

Freedom of speech is not allowed.

The testimony of a woman is worth only half of that of a man.

Females can inherit property but cannot purchase property.

Men are allowed to have as many as four wives. Women are allowed to have only one husband.

Only married men (not married women) can have sex with his slaves and temporary wives.

Only women are killed for adultery.

Women may be beaten by their husbands.

Female circumcision is allowed.

- The World Health Organization calls it female genital mutilation, which includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons and is considered a violation of the human rights of girls and women.
- The procedure is carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15 and has no health benefits for girls and women.
- Procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems urinating, and later cysts, infections, as well as complications in childbirth and increased risk of newborn deaths.
- More than 200 million girls and women alive today have been cut in 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Women not wearing the burka are allowed to be raped as punishment.

Homosexuality is punished by death.

Sharia Law mandates hudud (“boundary”) punishments, which involve lashings, amputations, beheadings, stoning, and executions.

Symbols



Star and Crescent symbol represents either Sun and Moon or Moon and Morning Star. The two appearing together is a prominent ancient Sumerian icon. The modern image was developed during the Hellenistic period (300–100s BC) and is often associated with moon goddesses. The adoption of star and crescent as the Ottoman state symbol started during the reign of Mustafa III (1757–1774). By the 1970s, the symbol was re-interpreted as the symbol of Islam by Muslim communities.

Witnessing to Muslims

Genuinely befriend and love them.

Be prepared to defend the trustworthiness of Scripture.

Respect their gender distinctions. Men and women should not speak directly to each other.

Stay away from peripheral issues like Israeli-Palestinian conflict or any geopolitical issue.

Be honest about the Crusades and how what happened was wrong.

Challenge them to read the Bible and be willing to read the Qur’an.

Emphasize the relationship and hope that you have in Jesus Christ.