



ISLAM IN A NUTSHELL

What is Shari'a?

Shari'a is an umbrella term for the rules and regulations that guide proper behavior for a Muslim. On judgment day Muslims believe their deeds will be placed on a scale, good and bad, and more good deeds may help achieve paradise. These deeds are based on shari'a. The laws of shari'a are derived from the example of Muhammad and his lifestyle. In a nutshell, if Muhammad allowed it or did it, Muslims can also. If he didn't do it, neither can a Muslim. In essence, Muhammad provides the example of acceptable behavior (Sura 33:21).

Every situation in life is judged to be either allowed, favored, neutral, disliked, or forbidden based on shari'a. Islam, through shari'a, controls literally all aspects of life, not just religious worship and practice, which is why Islam is more than just religious belief.

Contrary to what you may have heard, shari'a says:

- Jihad is warfare to establish Islam as the supreme religion worldwide; required of men.
- The penalty for apostasy from Islam is death.
- Women are given half the respect of men.
- A woman must submit to her husband's physical desires whenever he calls, and cannot refuse. Spousal rape is unknown.
- There is no penalty for killing a non-Muslim.

What are the authoritative texts of Islam?

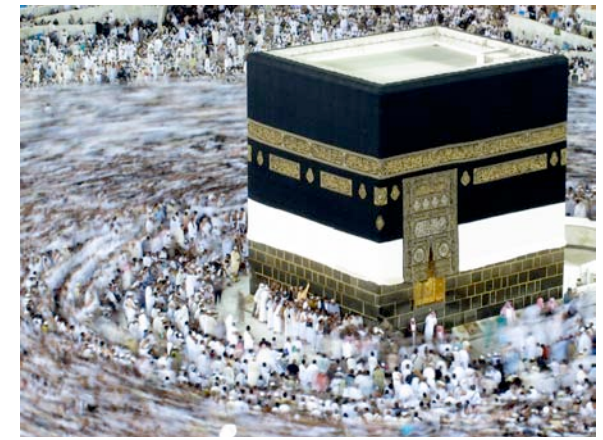
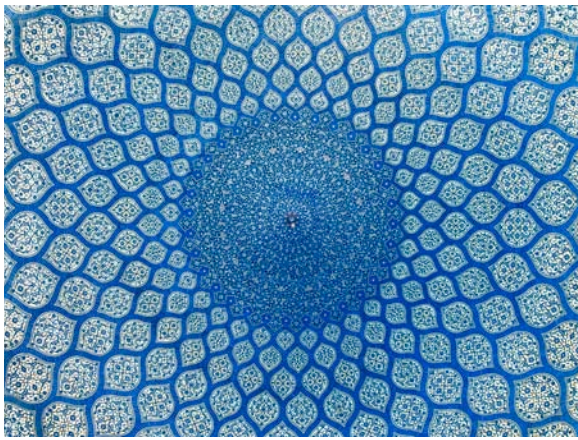
Qur'an: Believed to be the literal words of God dictated to Muhammad by Gabriel. Many versions existed in 7th century. Standardized by caliph Uthman by arbitrary selection of one version and ordered destruction of all others. Today's Qur'an is a further refinement based on a version called the 1924 Cairo Edition.

Hadith: Collections of traditions of Muhammad. Oral traditions were passed down for 200 years until recorded. Six collections are of primary importance: al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, an-Nasa'i, al-Tirmidhi, and Ibn Maja. Several hundred thousand traditions were sifted to eliminate false or inauthentic traditions.

Sira: Muhammad's earliest biography by Ibn Ishaq is the 'Sirat Rasul Allah', the biography of the prophet of God. Compiled by Ibn Ishaq before his death in 765 AD and revised by Ibn Hisham prior to 833 AD. It paints the most authentic picture of Muhammad's life. Available in English as "The Life of Muhammad."

Tafsir: Commentary on the Qur'an. Two collections are of primary importance: Al Tabari, written in the 10th century, and Ibn Kathir, written in the 14th century. Provides authoritative interpretation for verses of the Qur'an.





What Is Islam?

Islam is a political, social, legal, financial, religious ideology practiced by 1.5 billion people in the world. It is much more than just a religion. It is an all encompassing way of life. Every action in life is regulated by the rules of Islam, what we know as shari'a.

Islam means 'submission' or 'to submit' – to the will of Allah as revealed in the Qur'an and the life of Muhammad. **Islam** does not mean 'peace.'

Muslims submit by Allah primarily by completing the **Five Pillars** of Islam:

Shahada: The Confession of Faith. One first becomes a Muslim by confessing, with pure intentions, that "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

Zakah: Required tithing. Muslims must donate 2.5% of their accumulated wealth annually for the poor and needy. Reality: Some Zakat today funds terrorist organizations.

Salah: Ritual Prayer. Generally, 5 times per day. Prescribed words and actions; ritualistic. Times: Before sunrise, early noon, mid afternoon, sunset, nighttime.

Sawm: Fasting for Ramadan. During the month of Ramadan Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset: no food, drink, sex.

Hajj: Pilgrimage to Mecca. At least once in a lifetime, all those able must visit Mecca and participate in prescribed rituals.

What Is the Qur'an?

Also spelled Koran, Muslims believe it to be the literal words of God, an exact copy of which exists in heaven with Allah. It contains 114 chapters (Sura), and is slightly shorter than the New Testament. It is arranged by longest chapters toward the front, shorter ones toward the back.

Muhammad did not write the Qur'an, for he was illiterate according to tradition. His close companions memorized what they could as he recited what was given to him by Gabriel. They also wrote parts on sticks, bones, bark, animal skin, etc.

After he died, Abu Bakr, his first successor, ordered Zaid ibn Thabit to collect the Qur'an into one volume after many of those who had memorized it were killed in battle. But other companions already had their own collection of the Qur'an. Different versions became the standard in various major cities of the Arab world.

The third successor, Uthman, had to quell a virtual civil war: different cities were fighting as to who had the correct Qur'an, because of vast differences from one to another. He chose the collection of Zaid ibn Thabit arbitrarily as the standard and ordered all other Qur'ans burned if they differed.

Muslims today believe the Qur'an they possess is the same one given to Muhammad. Islamic tradition and history show this to be false. There were many versions destroyed by order of Uthman.

Who is Muhammad?

Born in 570 AD, he began receiving revelations in 610 AD from the supposed angel Gabriel as he meditated in a cave outside Mecca. Gabriel gave him the words of the Qur'an as they existed in heaven and told Muhammad to 'recite' exactly as he was told. These recitations later became the written Qur'an of Islam.

At first Muhammad thought he might be possessed by a demon, but his wife and uncle convinced him otherwise. He began preaching in Mecca, which worshipped 360 gods, that only one god was worthy of worship: Allah. Thus was born Islam.

Facing persecution in Mecca, he fled to Medina in 622 AD, an event known as hijra, which marks the start of the Islamic calendar. He died in 632 AD, 10 years after moving to Medina.

Muslims claim Muhammad performed miracles but he disavowed the ability to do so in the Qur'an (Sura 17:90-93).

Muhammad did not know what Allah will do with him on judgement day, even as Allah's best representative. He had no assurance of his salvation (Sura 46:9).

Muhammad made many false prophecies, never made a prediction of a future event that can be verified, and was even deceived by Satan to put verses into the Qur'an. Muslims are following a false prophet and must be warned of the consequences.