

A Muslim Perspective



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What is Islam?

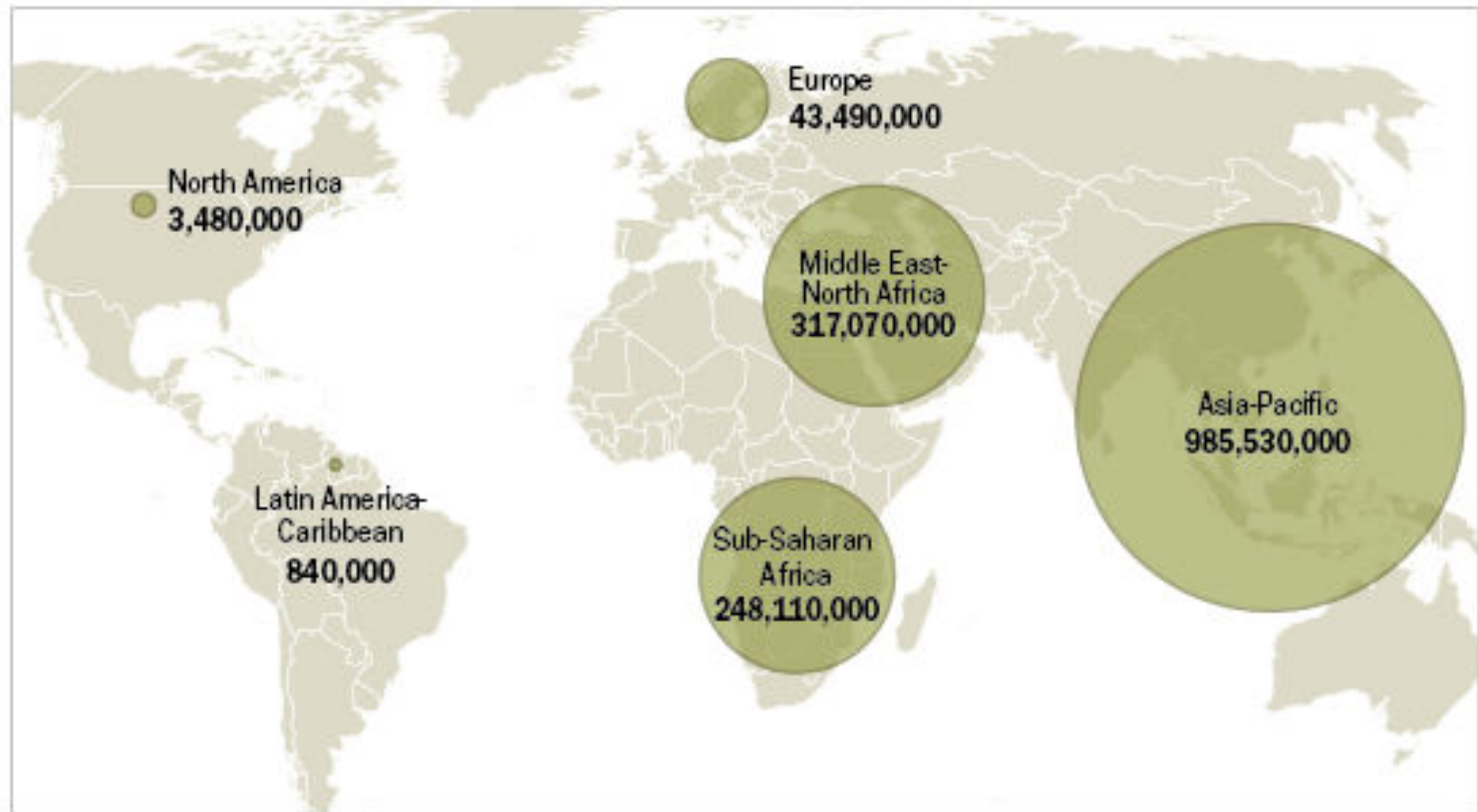
- Name of a Religion
- Arabic Root word meaning “peace and submission” or a total surrender of oneself to God
- Originated with the teachings of Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) – Muslims believe that God revealed the Qur’an to Prophet Mohammed - regard Prophet Mohammed as the founder of a new religion, the restorer of the original monotheistic faith of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and other prophets
- As a historical phenomenon, Islam originated in Arabia in the early 7th century.
- Islamic texts depict Judaism and Christianity as prophetic successor traditions to the teachings of Abraham.
- Pervasive – touches each & every aspect of an individual’s life

Islam

- Second largest religion after Christianity.
- According to a 2011 study, Islam has 1.62 billion adherents, making up over 23% of the world population
- Islam is the predominant religion in the Middle East, Africa, North Africa and some parts of Asia.
- Large communities of Muslims are also found in China and Russia.
- Other parts of the world host large Muslim immigrant communities; in Western Europe, for instance, Islam is the second largest religion after Christianity, where it represents 6% of the total population.

Regional Distribution of Muslims

Population by region as of 2010



Percentage of world Muslim population in each region as of 2010



Population estimates are rounded to the ten thousands. Percentages are calculated from unrounded numbers. Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life • Global Religious Landscape, December 2012

Who is a Muslim?

- A person who believes in and consciously follows Islam is called a Muslim
- Most Muslims are of two denominations, Sunni or Shia
- Approximately 85% are Sunni and 15% are Shi'a with a small minority belonging to other sects.

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Sunni / Shia

- The historic background of the Sunni–Shia split lies in the schism that occurred when the Islamic prophet Muhammad died in the year 632, leading to a dispute over succession to Muhammad as a caliph of the Islamic community spread across various parts of the world which led to the Battle of Siffin.
- Sunnis believe that Abu Bakr, the father of Muhammad's wife Aisha, was Muhammad's rightful successor and that the method of choosing or electing leaders (Shura) endorsed by the Quran is the consensus of the Ummah (the Muslim community).
- Shias believe that Muhammad divinely ordained his cousin and son-in-law Ali (the father of his grandsons Hasan ibn Ali and Hussein ibn Ali) in accordance with the command of God to be the next caliph, making Ali and his direct descendants Muhammad's successors.

Muslims

- Today there are differences in religious practice, traditions and customs.
- Although all Muslim groups consider the Quran to be divine, Sunni and Shia have different opinions on hadith.

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- SUNNI
- SHIA
- SUFI
- SALAFI
- MUSLIM

Islam Philosophy

A Muslim's duties as described in the **Pillars of Islam** are:

1) Shahadah: To recite at least once during their lifetime the **shahadah** (the creed: "*There is no God but God and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah*").

Most Muslims repeat it at least daily.

As the most important pillar this testament is the foundation for all other beliefs and practices in Islam

Pillars of Islam

2. To perform the **salat** (prayer) 5 times a day, if possible. This is recited while orienting one's body with qibla (the shorter of the two great circle routes towards the Kaaba at Mecca)

The five prayers are:

Fajr (Morning Prayer) which is performed some time between the break of dawn and just before sunrise.

Zuhr (Noon Prayer) offered from just after midday to afternoon.

'Asr (Afternoon Prayer) offered from late afternoon until just before sunset

Maghrib (Sunset Prayer) offered between sunset and darkness

Isha (Night Prayer) offered at night time, often just before sleeping.

Salah is compulsory but some flexibility in the specifics is permitted - sickness

Salat



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Pillars of Islam

3) Zakat: To donate regularly to charity through **zakat** or alms giving.

Personal Responsibility for Muslims to ease economic hardship for others and eliminate inequality.

Zakat consists of spending a fixed portion of one's wealth for the benefit of the poor or needy

e.g govt giving money in certain countries to the poor.

Pillars of Islam



4) Sawm - to fast during the lunar month of Ramadan. This is believed to be the month that Muhammad received the first revelation of the Qur'an from God.

Muslims must abstain from food and drink from dawn to dusk during this month and are to be especially mindful of other sins.

Allow Muslims to seek nearness to Allah and to atone for their sins.

Refrain from violence, anger, envy and greed, lust, hard language and try to get along with each other better than normal.

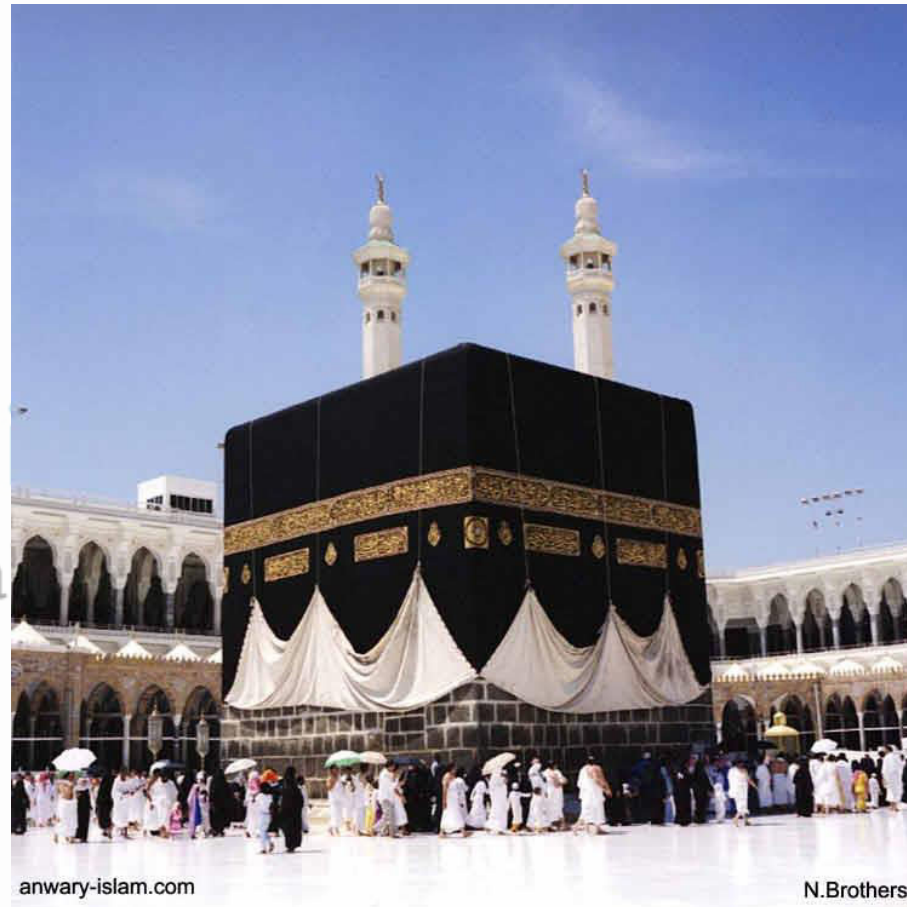
Pillars of Islam

5) Hajj

This is a pilgrimage that occurs during the holy Islamic month of Zilhaj in the city of Mecca.

Every able bodied Muslim is obligated to make this pilgrimage at-least once in his or her lifetime.

Mecca



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Additional Pillar

Jihad (struggle) is probably the most misunderstood religious word in existence.

It is often mentioned on TV and radio during news about the Middle East, where it is implied to be a synonym of "holy war" - a call to fight against non-Muslims in the defense of Islam.

The vast majority of Muslims have an entirely different definition of **Jihad**. It is seen as a personal, internal struggle with one's self.

The goal may be achievement in a profession, self-purification, the conquering of primitive instincts or the attainment of some other noble goal.



"#MyJihad
is to build
friendships
across the
aisle."

- What's yours?



Muslim Life



- **Calendar:**

- Muslims follow a lunar calendar which started with the **hijri**, a 300 mile trek in 622 AD when Muhammad relocated from Mecca to Medina. *Moharrum* is the Muslim New Year, the beginning of the first lunar month. Currently we are in 1435 Hijri.

- **Separation of church and state:** Originally, in Islamic countries, there was no separation between religious and civil law, between Islam and the state.
- Muhammad and his successors were both religious and political leaders.

Muslim Life

- **Suicide:** This is forbidden. The Qur'an clearly states: "*Do not kill yourselves as God has been to you very merciful*". Only Allah is to take a life. Since death must be left up to Allah, physician induced suicide is not allowed.
- On the other hand, Muslim physicians are not "*encouraged to artificially prolong the misery [of a person who is] in a vegetative state.*"

Qu'ran



- For Muslims, the Qur'an is the literal word of God; it is the central Religious text of Islam.
- Muslims believe that the verses of the Qur'an were revealed to Prophet Muhammad by God through the angel Gabriel on many occasions between the years 610 and his death on July 6th 632 AD.
- The Qur'an was written down by Prophet Muhammad's companions while he was alive, although the prime method of transmission was orally.
- From textual evidence, modern Western academics find that the Qur'an of today has not changed over the years.

Masjid

- A masjid is a place of worship for Muslims
- The word *mosque* in English refers to all types of buildings dedicated to Islamic worship, although there is a distinction in Arabic between the smaller, privately owned masjid and the larger, "collective" masjid (*masjid jāmi`*).
- Although the primary purpose of the masjid is to serve as a place of prayer, it is also important to the Muslim Community as a place to meet and study.

Masjid



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Islamic Holy Days:

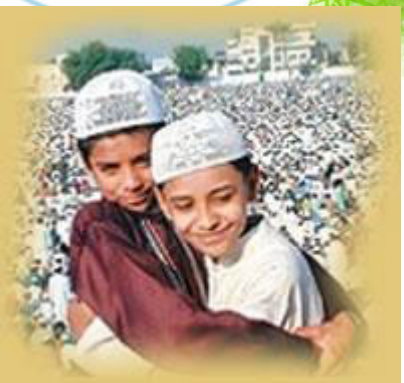
The main holy days are listed below. They are scheduled according to a lunar calendar and thus happen about eleven days earlier each month.

- *Al-Hijra/Muharram* is the Muslim New Year, the beginning of the first lunar month.
- *Mawlid al-Nabi* is a celebration of the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, the founder of Islam in 570 AD.
- *Ramadan* is the holiest period in the Islamic year; it is held during the entire 9th lunar month of the year. It is a time at which almost all Muslims over the age of 12 are expected to fast from sunup to sundown.
- *Id al-Fitr* (a.k.a. "*Id*") is the first day of the 10th month -- i.e. the day after the end of Ramadan. It is a time of rejoicing. Houses are decorated; Muslims buy gifts for relatives.
- *Id al-Adha* (a.k.a. the *Feast of Sacrifice* or *Day of Sacrifice*) occurs during the 12th month of the Islamic year. This is the season of the Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca).



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Family Life

- The basic unit of Islamic society is the family and Islam defines the obligations and legal rights of family members.
- The father is seen as financially responsible for his family, and is obliged to cater for their well-being.
- Common for children to live with parents as adults until married – misunderstood as an unhealthy dependence.
- Support and finance children – reciprocal responsibility.
- Marriage in Islam is a civil contract which consists of an offer and acceptance between two qualified parties in the presence of two witnesses. The groom is required to pay a dowry (mehr) to the bride, as stipulated in the contract.
- In most Muslim countries, the process of divorce in Islam is known as talaq, which the husband initiates by pronouncing the word "divorce".



Women In Islam

- Women in Islam are guided by primary Islamic sources of personal law, namely the Quran and hadiths.
- Hijab
- Marriage
- Property
- Education
- Employment



Common Characteristics

These two characteristics are responsible for the retention and maintenance of a social structure based on discrimination, acceptance of injustice, exploitation and abuse as part of one's **FAITH**.

Concept of faith is very complex – logic, reason, facts, historical evidence, role models, upbringing

What causes one to have faith is a baffling concept

Faith

Hidayat (inspired guidance) – comes from Allah

overwhelming consequences

all perceptions and experiences are then looked through this looking glass

In therapy the concept of FAITH – highlights difficulties towards change.

akin to the concept of KARMA – sum of all that an individual has once done and the effects of his deeds that actively create present and future experiences.

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Finishing Thought

"Who are the learned?"

Those who practice what they know."

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Prophet Mohammed

Your Turn.....

