

Islam

Chapter 12

Islam

- ◇ Islam literally means “surrender” or “submission”
 - ◇ Follower of Islam is a Muslim, meaning “one who submits” to God
- ◇ Holy language of Islam is Arabic
- ◇ Apx 1 Billion Muslims worldwide, 2nd largest World Religion
 - ◇ And one of fastest growing religions
- ◇ Much in common with Judaism and Christianity
 - ◇ All worship the God of Abraham and Moses
 - ◇ Belief in God’s revelations and Prophets (even accept Jesus Christ as a prophet)

Faith and Good Works

- ◇ Judaism: Orthopraxy
- ◇ Christianity: Orthodoxy
- ◇ Islam: Both
 - ◇ Leads to activist and militaristic groups
- ◇ Core Beliefs
 - ◇ Belief in One God – Allah
 - ◇ Belief in the Prophet – Muhammad
 - ◇ Belief in the Qur'an (Koran)

“God has promised
those of you who
believe and do good
works to make them
masters in the land...”
Qur'an 24:55

Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, the Founder of Islam

- ◇ Serves both as God's human instrument in bearing His revelation and
- ◇ As the model or ideal whom all believers should emulate
- ◇ Information regarding teachings and life of Muhammad come from the Qur'an and the hadiths
 - ◇ Source of Islamic law
 - ◇ Guidance on everything from hygiene, dress, eating, marriage, treatment of wives, etc.

The Hadith: Traditional report recording a saying or action of Muhammad
Sets Muhammad's life and teaching as an example of how Muslims should act

Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, the Founder of Islam

- ◇ Born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia in 570 A.D.
- ◇ Orphaned at a young age, raised by an Uncle
- ◇ Following family work, he became a merchant – Caravan work
- ◇ Began to work for a wealthy widow named Khadijah, whom he later married
 - ◇ Together they had six children, though no male heir
 - ◇ After Khadijah's death, Muhammad married several other women in polygamous marriages
 - ◇ Thirteen wives – to form political alliances and provide livelihood for widows
 - ◇ Four concubines
 - ◇ Most controversial is Aisha - marriage contracted at age 6, consummated at age 9 or 10

The Qur'an

- ◇ Ancient Trade Cities center of thriving cross-cultural contact
- ◇ At the age of 40, received vision of Angel Gabriel with writings which he was commanded to recite
 - ◇ Surah 96:1-5
- ◇ Muhammad would continue to receive divine revelations over a period of 22 years, 610-632
- ◇ Recitations first committed to memory; later written down and compiled according to length
- ◇ Published as “The Qur'an” meaning the recitations

Themes of early prophetic message

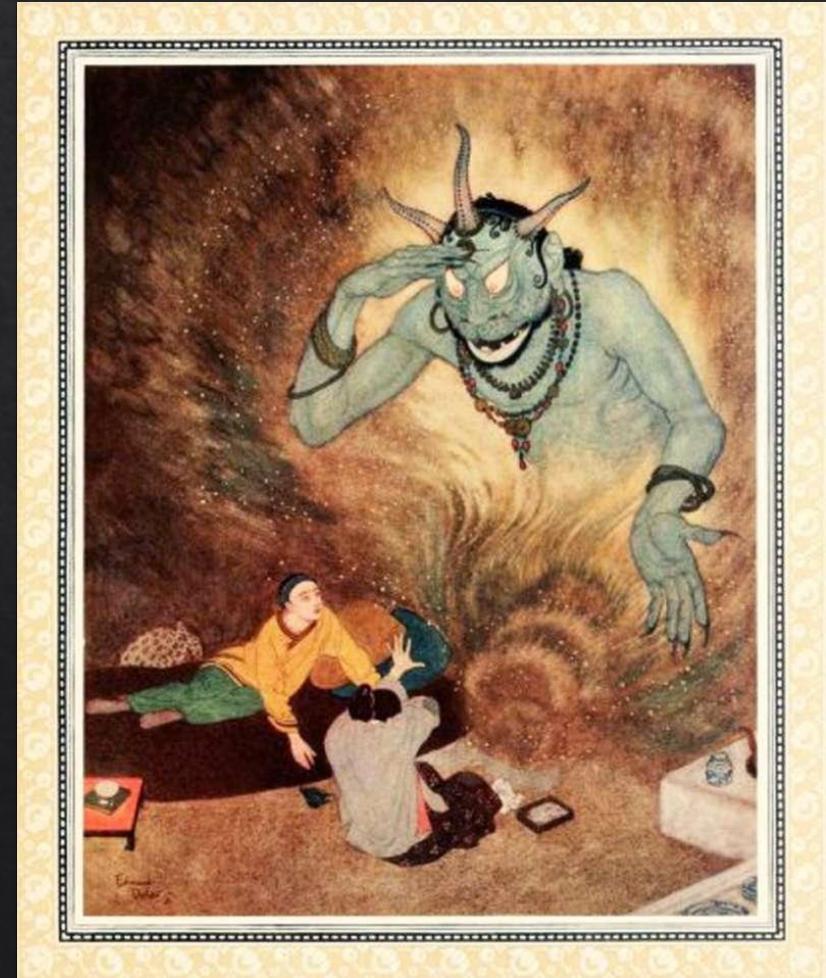
- ◆ Role of Muhammad as Last Prophet and Warner – admonish people to repent and obey God or suffer at Day of Judgement (see Surah 22:49-50; compare to Jewish prophets Jeremiah and Amos)
- ◆ Only one God exists, **Allah**
 - ◆ Commands people to believe in this one God and to submit to God's holy will
- ◆ A day of judgment will come
 - ◆ Those submitted to God will be rewarded forever and others punished eternally
- ◆ Generosity to the poor, widows, and orphans; presence and goodness of God in the natural world; and the prophetic call of Muhammad

Pre-Islamic Arabian Religion

- ◆ Tribal culture was polytheistic and animistic
- ◆ Consisted of worship of tree and mountain spirits, and Jinn

supernatural creatures, shape-shifting otherworldly beings, jinn were spirits that haunted the deserts of Arabia. Their bodies are composed of fire. Jinn are not intrinsically malevolent—in some tales they grant wishes and give help to humans in need—but running afoul of an angry jinni is a hair-raising experience.

- ◆ Jinn and other demons retained in Islamic belief



Spread of Islam

- ◆ Muhammad begins preaching in Mecca
 - ◆ monotheism and the destruction of idols
 - ◆ Denounced usury and other unscrupulous practices
 - ◆ All believers belong to a single universal community transcending tribal bonds
- ◆ Teachings threatened the religious and economic foundations of Meccan society/undermined tribal authority
- ◆ Ridiculed Muhammad as a deranged poet who had performed no signs or miracles
- ◆ Persecution escalated and Muhammad's position in Mecca deteriorated after the death of his uncle and Khadija in 619



Night Journey (621 A.D.)

- ◇ Gabriel awakens Muhammad and purifies him
- ◇ Riding a Buraq (mythical winged creature) Muhammad is taken to Jerusalem where he meets Abraham, Moses, and Jesus
- ◇ He officiates in prayer – establishing his primacy among God's messengers
- ◇ From there he ascends all seven levels of heaven until he reaches the throne of God
 - ◇ He is commanded to pray 50 times a day, but Moses advises Muhammad to plead for a reduction to five



The Hijrah (622 A.D.)

- ◆ Muhammad and his followers forced to flee Mecca
- ◆ Known as Hijrah (migration or flight) – central event in early Islamic history
 - ◆ Muhammad's message favorably received in Medina
 - ◆ Islam took on political form with the establishment of the Islamic community-state (Umma)
 - ◆ Islam begins to be institutionalized
- ◆ Islamic calendar start with this date
 - ◆ A.H. 1
 - ◆ Follow lunar calendar
 - ◆ AD 2022 = AH 1444



Life of Muhammad

Episode 2 “Holy Wars”

Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, the Founder of Islam

- ◇ Muslims organized raids on Meccan caravans
 - ◇ Continued until the Muslim military victory over Mecca in the Battle of Badr (624)
 - ◇ Turning point in the fortunes of Islam
- ◇ Many Arab tribes converted to Islam while Muhammad controlled Medina
- ◇ Gained control of Mecca in 630 C.E.
 - ◇ Removed idolatrous images from the city, leaving only the sacred cubic building and its holy stone
 - ◇ Kept Mecca as the destination for Muslim pilgrimage and maintained some of its religious sites

Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, the Founder of Islam

- ◇ Raised armies to conquer the northern regions of Arabian peninsula, taking on the Christian Byzantine Empire
- ◇ Died in Medina in 632
 - ◇ Without a male heir and without naming a successor (or **caliph**)
 - ◇ Caliph would lead the community in its political and religious life

History of Islam

From the Death of Muhammad to the Abbasid Caliphate

After Muhammad's Death (632-661)

- ◇ Crisis of Succession:
 - ◇ No designated successor;
 - ◇ political and religious uncertainty.
- ◇ Division of Islam:
 - ◇ Shia (family leadership) vs. Sunni (non-hereditary leadership).
- ◇ Caliphate Periods:
 - ◇ Rightly Guided Caliphs (632-661)
 - ◇ Umayyad Dynasty (661-750)
 - ◇ Abbasid Empire (750-1258)

Rightly Guided Caliphs (632-661)

◊ Abu Bakr:

- ◊ Unified Arabian Peninsula;
- ◊ Wars of Apostasy.

◊ Umar ibn al-Khattab:

- ◊ Expanded territory; extended Muslim rule into Syria, Egypt, and Persia
- ◊ leadership selection process through a council

Rightly Guided Caliphs (632-661)

◆ Uthman ibn Affan:

◆ Umayyad clan; assassination triggered instability.

◆ Ali ibn Abi Talib:

◆ Muhammad's cousin/son-in-law;

◆ civil wars;

◆ Shia-Sunni split.

The Rise of Muawiyah and the Founding of the Umayyad Dynasty

◆ **Assassination of Ali (661):**

- ◆ Ali was assassinated by the Kharijites, a radical group dissatisfied with his leadership. This marked the end of the Rightly Guided Caliphate and ushered in a new era of Islamic governance.

◆ **Muawiyah I's Ascension (661):**

- ◆ After Ali's death, Muawiyah, governor of Syria and a member of the powerful Umayyad clan, claimed leadership.

◆ **Significance of Muawiyah's Rule:**

- ◆ He negotiated with Hasan ibn Ali, Ali's son and the Prophet's grandson, to abdicate in exchange for peace and a promised return to elective leadership. However, Muawiyah established hereditary succession, breaking from this agreement.

Umayyad Dynasty (661-750)

- ◇ Capital at Damascus; Islam became an empire.
- ◇ Expansion:
 - ◇ North Africa, Iberian Peninsula, parts of India; Battle of Tours (732).
- ◇ Inequality:
 - ◇ Arab Muslims favored;
 - ◇ dhimmi (Jews, Christians) as second-class citizens.
- ◇ Decline:
 - ◇ Revolution led to Abbasid rise.

Abbasid Caliphate (750-1258)

- ◇ Cultural Flourishing: Persian influences; support for arts and scholarship.
- ◇ Legal and Religious Development: Sharia law; Ulema as religious elite.
- ◇ Golden Age: Arabic as a unifying language; intellectual progress.
- ◇ Decline: Ended with Turkish and Mongol incursions; Ottoman Turks took over.

Essential Teachings of Islam

- ◇ God is One
 - ◇ Muslims are strict monotheists -- Teaching that there is only one God forms the basis and the center of the religion
 - ◇ Arabic word for God is Allah (compare El in Hebrew)
 - ◇ God has a central role in the religion of Muslims and Islamic countries
 - ◇ Called to prayer (adhan or azan) 5 times a day by a Muazzin

Call to Prayer (Azan)



Essential Teachings of Islam

- ◇ Angels and spirits
 - ◇ Created by God to serve God and humans
 - ◇ Muhammad received the Qur'an through the archangel Gabriel
- ◇ Prophets
 - ◇ The Qur'an states that God has revealed the divine will at key points in human history through prophets
 - ◇ All the prophets call for submission to the will of God and preparation for an impending judgment
 - ◇ Muhammad is the culmination and conclusion of the entire line of prophets

Essential Teachings of Islam

- ◇ Final Judgment
 - ◇ God will judge people by how they submitted to God's will
 - ◇ Those who submit to God's will enter heaven, and those who don't go to hell

Worship – The Five Pillars of Islam

- ◇ **Shahada (Creed):** Fundamental confession of faith
 - ◇ There is no god but God, and Muhammad is God's prophet
- ◇ **Salat (Prayer):**
 - ◇ Each Muslim says the ritual prayers, **salat**, five times a day
 - ◇ **Mosque:** Building for formal Muslim worship
 - ◇ When women pray in the mosque, they are out of the men's sight
 - ◇ Worshippers pray in straight lines facing the direction of Mecca
 - ◇ One's body is active in prayer, and the actions represent submission to God

Worship – The Five Pillars of Islam

◆ **Sawm (Fasting) –**

- ◆ Muslims are required to observe fasting during the daylight hours of Ramadan
 - ◆ No food, drink, or sexual intercourse is allowed during daylight
- ◆ Celebration of Eid al-Fitr marks the end of Ramadan

◆ **Zakat (Almsgiving)**

- ◆ The Qur'an urges all Muslims to give generously to the poor
- ◆ Shari'a made generosity a formal obligation with specific rules

◆ **Pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj)**

- ◆ All Muslims are required to participate in official pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in his or her lifetime

Jihad

- ◊ Often referred to as the “6th pillar” though does not have official status as such
- ◊ Jihad comes out quite clearly and often in the Quran
- ◊ Struggle – as individuals and community to realize God’s will, to lead virtuous lives, and to extend Islam through preaching and education
- ◊ Struggle – military struggle to defend or extend Islam through force of arms
 - ◊ Quran repeatedly commands Muslims to take up arms and fight when necessary on behalf of the community

Islamic Ethics and Religious Practices

◇ Marriage and Sexuality

- ◇ Muhammad taught that celibacy is unnatural – no tradition of celibate monasticism or clergy
- ◇ Sex is limited within bonds of matrimony or with one's slaves (24:33)
- ◇ A man may have up to four wives at one time as long as he provides for them equally and with separate living quarters

◇ Quran admonishes modesty for both men and women (24:30-31)

- ◇ Disagreement among Muslims how this is to be interpreted; not all Muslim women wear **hijab**

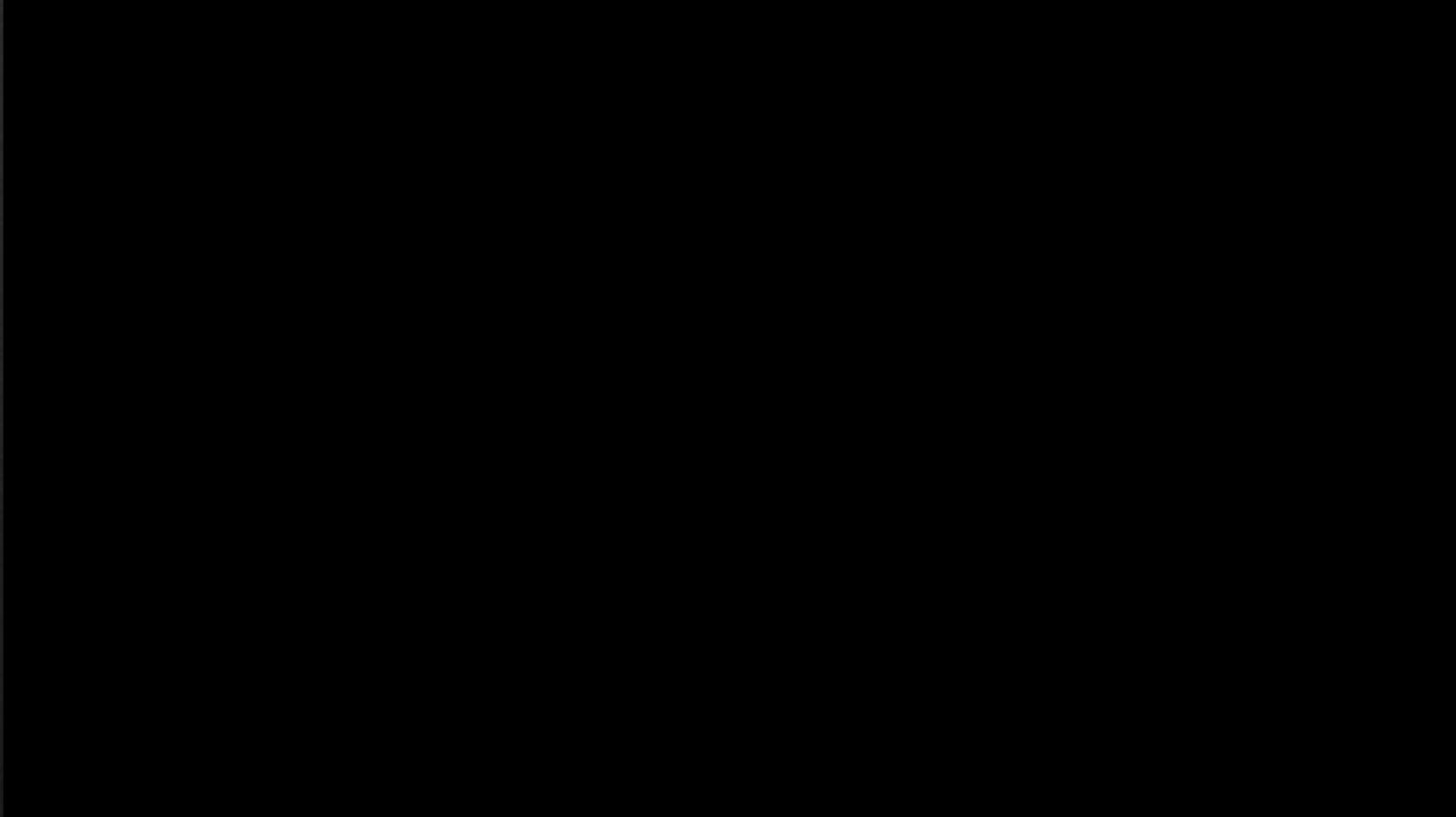
Islamic Ethics and Religious Practices

- ◆ **Dietary Restrictions**
- ◆ Only halal foods may be eaten by Muslims
 - ◆ **Halal:** Permitted foods and actions
- ◆ Foods that are haram may not be eaten
 - ◆ **Haram:** Forbidden foods and actions, such as pork
- ◆ Drinking of wine is prohibited by the Qur'an

Islamic Ethics and Religious Practices

- ◆ **Gambling and Usury Restricted**
- ◆ **Circumcision** – not mentioned in the Quran, but Muhammad stated that circumcision was a “law for men”
 - ◆ Preferred age is often seven, though varies depending on country
- ◆ Some Muslim countries, mostly in Africa, practice female “circumcision” – known as female genital mutilation (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation



FGM & Islam

- ◇ Primarily cultural; not found in the Qur'an
 - ◇ Linked to Islam due to its focus on female chastity and seclusion
- ◇ Praised in the Hadith as being noble but not required
- ◇ Considered obligatory by some sects of Islam (shafi'i)
- ◇ Widespread belief among Muslims that FGM is religious obligation

Influential Muslim Groups

- ◆ **Sufis**

- ◆ Followers of Islamic mystical movement Sufism

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◆ Wahhabi

- ◆ Modern Sunni radical movement begun by Muhammad al-Wahhab

◆ Muslim Brotherhood

- ◆ Conservative religious and political movement founded in 1929

Influential Muslim Groups

◆ Taliban

- ◆ Students of the Qur'an, a radical Sunni group in Afghanistan
- ◆ Considers Muslims who don't adhere to their strict attitudes and standards of behavior to be false Muslims and enemies of Islam

◆ The Islamic State (IS)

- ◆ Formerly known as The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)
- ◆ Tries to conquer and hold territory
- ◆ Ferocious in applying its interpretation of Muslim law to its territories

Influential Muslim Groups

- ◆ **Al-Qaeda**, founded by Osama bin Laden, launched coordinated attacks on the United States
- ◆ Bin Laden expressed strong opposition to Westernization of Muslim lands and the presence of the Jewish state of Israel