[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Allah-eser-green.png)**Islam**

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**Islam**) is a [monotheistic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monotheistic) and [Abrahamic religion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abrahamic_religion) articulated by the [Qur'an](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quran), a [book](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_holy_books) considered by its adherents to be the [verbatim](http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/verbatim) word of God ([Arabic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic_language): الله‎ [*Allāh*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allah)) and by the teachings of [Muhammad](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad), considered by them to be the last [prophet of God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prophets_of_Islam). An adherent of Islam is called a [Muslim](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muslim).

Muslims believe that God is [one and incomparable](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tawhid) and the [purpose of existence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purpose_of_life) is to submit to and serve [Allah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allah) (God). Muslims also believe that Islam is the complete and universal version of a [primordial faith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/One_true_faith) that was revealed before many times throughout the world, including notably through [Adam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam), [Noah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noah), [Abraham](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_view_of_Abraham), [Moses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_view_of_Moses) and [Jesus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_in_Islam), whom they consider [prophets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prophets_in_Islam). They maintain that the previous messages and revelations have been partially [misinterpreted or altered](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tahrif) over time, but consider the Arabic Qur'an to be both the unaltered and the final revelation of God. Religious concepts and practices include the [five pillars of Islam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Pillars_of_Islam), which are basic concepts and obligatory acts of [worship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worship), and following [Islamic law](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sharia), which touches on virtually every aspect of life and society.

Most Muslims are of two [denominations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_schools_and_branches), [Sunni](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunni_Islam) (75–90%), or [Shia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shia_Islam) (10–20%). About 13% of Muslims live in [Indonesia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indonesia), the largest Muslim-majority country, 25% in [South Asia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Asia), 20% in the [Middle East](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East), and 15% in [Sub-saharan Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam_in_Africa). With about 1.6 billion followers or 23% of [earth's population](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_population), Islam is the [second-largest religion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Major_religious_groups) and one of the [fastest-growing religions in the world](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claims_to_be_the_fastest-growing_religion).

Islam's most fundamental concept is a rigorous monotheism, called [tawhīd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tawh%C4%ABd). God is described in chapter 112 of the Qur'an as: "Say: He is God, the One and Only; God, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him."([112:1-4](http://www.usc.edu/org/cmje/religious-texts/quran/verses/112-qmt.php#112.1-4)) Muslims and Jews repudiate the Christian doctrine of the [Trinity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trinity) and divinity of [Jesus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_view_of_Jesus), comparing it to [polytheism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polytheism). In Islam, God is beyond all comprehension and Muslims are not expected to visualize God. Muslims believe that the creation of everything in the universe was brought into being by God’s sheer command, “‘Be’ and so it is,” and that the [purpose of existence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Purpose_of_life) is to worship God. He is viewed as a personal god who responds whenever a person in need or distress calls him. There are no intermediaries, such as [clergy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clergy), to contact God who states, "I am nearer to him than (his) [jugular vein](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jugular_vein)."

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:An_angel_presenting_Mohammed_with_a_town.jpg)

An [angel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angel) presenting [Mohammed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohammed) (upper left) and his companions with a miniature city. In the [Topkapi Palace Library](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Topkapi_Palace_Library), [Istanbul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Istanbul).

Belief in angels is fundamental to the faith of Islam. Angels' duties include communicating [revelations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revelation) from God, glorifying God, recording every person's actions, and taking a person's [soul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soul) at the time of death. Muslims believe that angels are made of light. They are described as "messengers with wings—two, or three, or four (pairs):

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:FirstSurahKoran.jpg)

The [first sura](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Fatiha) in a Qur'anic manuscript by [Hattat Aziz Efendi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hattat_Aziz_Efendi)

The Islamic holy books are the records which most Muslims believe were dictated by God to various prophets

The Qur'an is more concerned with moral guidance than legal instruction, and is considered the "sourcebook of Islamic principles and values".[[46]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam#cite_note-48)

Muslims identify the prophets of Islam as those humans chosen by God to be his messengers.

Belief in the "Day of Resurrection", [*Yawm al-Qiyāmah*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qiyamah) is also crucial for Muslims. They believe the time is preordained by God but unknown to man. Muslims believe all mankind will be judged on their good and bad deeds. The Qurʼan in Surat al-Zalzalah describes this as, "So whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it (99:7) and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will see it (99:8)." The Qurʼan [lists several sins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_views_of_sin) that can condemn a person to [hell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hell), such as [disbelief](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kafir) in God, and dishonesty; however, the Qurʼan makes it clear God will forgive the [sins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_views_on_sin) of those who repent if he so wills. Good deeds, such as charity, prayer and compassion towards animals will be rewarded with entry to heaven.

According to Muslim theologians, although events are pre-ordained, man possesses free will in that he or she has the faculty to choose between right and wrong, and is thus responsible for his actions.

**The Five pillars of Islam** are five basic acts in Islam, considered obligatory for all believers. The Quran presents them as a framework for worship and a sign of commitment to the faith. They are (1) the [shahadah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shahadah) (creed), (2) daily prayers ([salat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salat" \o "Salat)), (3) almsgiving ([zakah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zakah" \o "Zakah)), (4) fasting during [Ramadan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramadan) and (5) the pilgrimage to Mecca ([hajj](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hajj)) at least once in a lifetime. The [Shia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shia_Islam) and [Sunni](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunni_Islam) sects both agree on the essential details for the performance of these acts.

[](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mosque.jpg)

[http://bits.wikimedia.org/static-1.23wmf14/skins/common/images/magnify-clip.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mosque.jpg)

Muslim men [prostrating](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostration) during prayer in a mosque.

Ritual prayers (Salat), must be performed five times a [day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day) to focus the mind on [God](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God). This is seen as a personal communication with him that expresses gratitude and [worship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worship). Salat is compulsory