

Lecture 3—Basic Facts about Islam

Introduction: Is Islam fundamentally violent?

Basic History

610—First revelation to Prophet Muhammad.

622—Hijrah, migration to Medina.

630—Conquest of Mecca, Islam gains stronghold.

632—Death of Prophet Muhammad.

650—Standardization of the Quran by Uthman

656—First Fitna, civil war within Islam

Key Vocabulary

- **Surahs**—144 chapters in the Quran
- **Sunnah**—ethical examples from the prophet
- **Hadiths**—historical records of the prophet’s actions, especially Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.
- **Ummah**—the worldwide Muslim community.
- **Sunni:** Majority branch (80-90%) that believes in electing the Caliph through community consensus; dispersed authority structures.
- **Shia:** Minority branch, holds that leadership should descend from the prophet’s family, starting with Ali. Mostly Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Bahrain.

The Five Pillars

1. Shahada (Faith): “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His prophet.”
2. Salat (Prayer): Performing five daily prayers facing Mecca.
3. Zakat (Charity): Giving a fixed portion of wealth to the poor.
4. Sawm (Fasting): Fasting from dawn to dusk during Ramadan.
5. Hajj (Pilgrimage): Pilgrimage to Mecca at least once, if able.

Lecture 4—How to Engage with Islam?

Where is Islam today?

- **In the world:** 2 billion or 26% of world population.
- **In Canada:** 1.8 million Muslims or 4.9%
- **In Edmonton:** 86,120 or 6.16%
- There are 32 mosques, masjid or Islamic centers in Edmonton.
- Do you want to visit a Mosque? Masjid Al Fatima, near the Costco at 91st street and 23rd Ave. Friday, March 1 at 1:00.

So is Islam Violent?

- Which sect? Which group?
- Which strain of the Quran or the Hadiths?
- How desperate is someone to enter paradise?
- Is this Islam or is it politics?

Attack Points

- Your Bible was twisted by the Jews and Christians.
- The Crusades
- The Trinity is nonsense.
- Why would your God kill His own Son? Cosmic child-abuse?
- Deuteronomy 18; John 14-16

Why does Islam appeal?

- Moral structure. Is the West better?
- A God of Majesty and Total Justice
- Triumphalism—Intellectually, Morally and in Power

What should I emphasize?

- A fundamentally different view of sin—is your God holy enough that He judges every sin?
- A fundamentally different view of mercy—how can Allah forgive?
- The Missing Cross

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