

# History of Islam

An encyclopedia of Islamic history

## The Shariah includes Science and History

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The tenth century scholar, Imam Termidhi wrote: "Allah has indeed favored us with the Qur'an which is His boundless ocean. He has filled it with the gems of subtleties and made it a treasure of His Grace. Blessed is the man or woman to whom Allah grants, openly and in secret, some of the wisdoms which are in it."

The Qur'an has an inner dimension and an outer dimension. The inner dimension reveals the majesty and bounty of Allah. The outer dimension provides guidance so that humankind may attain its noble destiny and return to the Divine fold.

The Qur'an touches the heart at multiple levels. It is an inexhaustible ocean. As the Qur'an declares: "**For every knower there is one who knows more**". The Light of Islam, the Light of Iman, the Light of Irfan, the Light of Tawhid, and the Light of Shahada are some of the Lights that define the stations of the heart. Each one of these has its own inner dimension and its outer dimension.

The inner dimension of Islam is transformation of the self so that the veils that separate the heart from Divine presence are lifted and man realizes Divine presence in his own life. Islam also has an outer dimension that finds its fulfillment in space and time and that is the Shariah.

Shariah is a term that is much misunderstood and maligned in the world today. These are times of trial. Every trial is a Sign from the almighty so that we learn something from it and grow with it. Every challenge is an opportunity. These challenges provide Muslims an opportunity to learn the Quran, understand the Shariah, comprehend its inner and outer dimensions, and apply it with wisdom to their own surroundings.

The root word for Shariah is Shara' which means a commandment, a prescription, a regulation, a covenant. It can also mean a path, an avenue. Shariah is the evidence of Allah to His creation so that through it mankind may reinforce its faith in the Almighty. Shariah is also the compassion and love of Allah through which God reveals His works to His creation. As such its embrace is all inclusive; it includes in its fold all of creation. God almighty declares in the Quran:

**"I will show you My Signs on the horizon and within yourselves until you have certainty of faith."**

On the horizon means nature and history. There are Signs in nature. Those with insight and intellect read these Signs and benefit from them. All of God's creation follows the laws of the Shariah. The sun rises from the East. That is Shariah. The moon revolves around the earth. That is Shariah. The stars in the heavens and the far off galaxies swim in their own orbits. That is Shariah. Even as I write there is a star somewhere in the universe that is being gobbled up by a black hole. That is Shariah also. The Qur'an teaches us:

**“And the sun and the moon move in mathematically predictable orbits. And the heavens has He raised high and established a dynamic balance therein so that you do not violate that balance in your own lives. “**

Thus science is a servant of faith. The laws of nature are subject to man's understanding. Man is enjoined to interact with and reflect upon nature, understand it and use the lessons learned so to discharge his responsibility as the khalifa of God on earth.

On the horizon also means history and sociology. History is a Sign from Allah and it should be taught as such. It teaches us something of the past so that we may use it as a guide to chart a course with wisdom for the future. Those who heed the lessons of history, prosper. Those who do not, perish. The Quran admonishes us

**“Travel through the earth and witness what was the end of those who had no faith.”**

Shariah enunciates the laws of history, of the rise and fall of civilizations. The Quran teaches us:

**“Throughout time,**

**Humankind is at loss,**

**Except such as those who have certainty of faith,**

**And engage in righteous action,**

**And reinforce each other for justice,**

**And work with one another with perseverance.”**

And there are Signs within ourselves, in the beauty and perfection of the human body, the sight that enables us to see, the hearing which enables us to hear, the feet that help us walk, the arms that enable us to work, the skin that protects us, the physical heart that beats from cradle to the grave suffusing the body with life, the spiritual heart that opens up to the Light from the heavens and takes man to the very throne of Allah, in the mind that reasons, in the intellect that basks in the Light from the majesty of God's presence. Every eye that sees, every limb that walks, every mind that thinks, every heart that beats reveals the mercy and grace of Allah and follows His laws. It follows the Shariah.

It is unfortunate that Muslims themselves are oblivious to the universal, all embracing dimensions of the Shariah and have reduced it a set of do's and don'ts, to the length of moustaches and beards, which in no way reflect the omnipresence and omnipotence of the Divine Hand that guides the movement of every string in an atom, of every galaxy in a universe. Failure to comprehend the universal dimension of

Shariah has caused the Muslims to get away from the study of science and history, of sociology and mathematics, corrupted as they are by the secularization that has overwhelmed the world of man. Science, properly framed, is a Sign from from the heavens. It reinforces faith. History, properly studied, is a Sign from Allah. It reinforces faith. Sociology, properly framed is a Sign from Allah. It reinforces faith.

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