

The background is a light beige or cream color with a subtle texture. On the left side, there are several black ink splatters of varying sizes, some of which are larger and more prominent. Scattered across the entire background are numerous small, dark dots, some of which are arranged in a pattern that resembles a star or a constellation, particularly on the left side.

Islam

The Basics I

Goals

- (1) Background
- (2) Story of Abraham
- (3) Story of Muhammad
- (4) M's migration from and return to Mecca
- (5) The Koran and its 3 Powers
- (6) Beginning Concepts of Islam
- Terms: Hijrah, Gahfalah, Ka'ba

Background

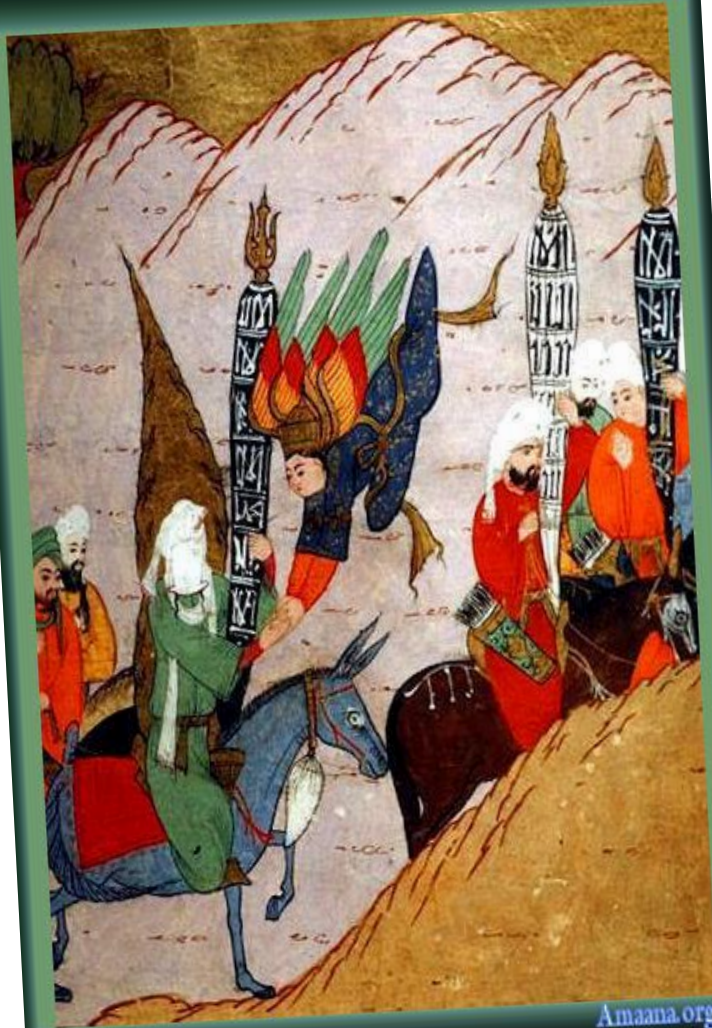
- 1.6 Billion Followers
- Founded 622 AD in Arabia
- Monotheistic: “Allah” means “The God”



Amaana.org

Background

- Prophets: Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad*
- Part of the “Abrahamic” tradition:
- Adam + Eve -> Noah
- Noah -> Shem (“Semitic”)
- Shem -> Abraham

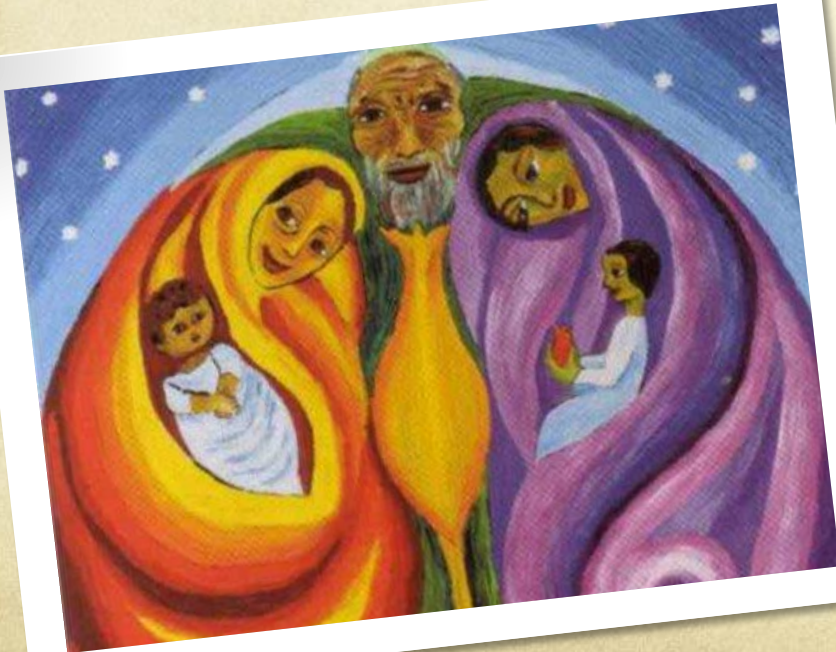


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Abraham

- Abraham's 1st wife, Sarah, bears no children.
- Abe marries a 2nd wife, Hagar, who bears Ishmael
- Sarah then bears Isaac
- Sarah demands that Hagar and Ishmael leave.





Hagar and Ishmael

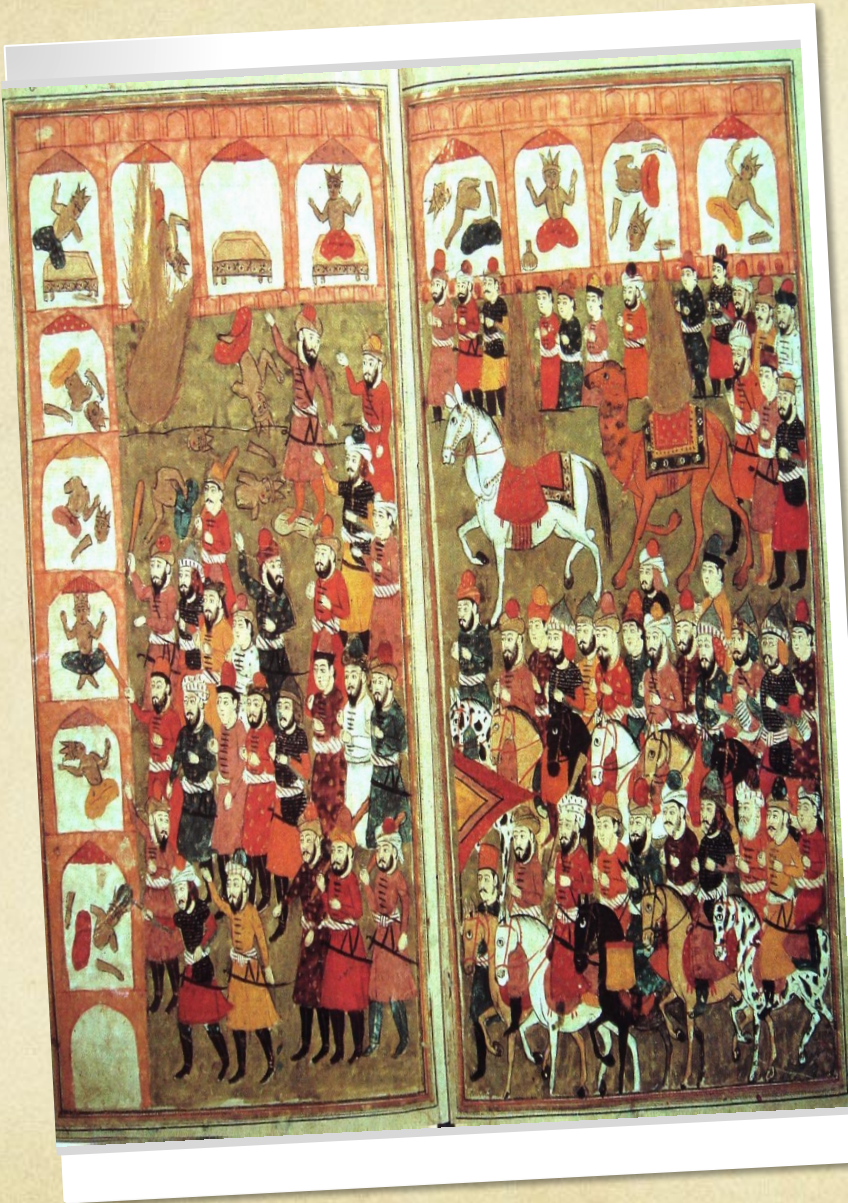
- Koran: Banished to modern-day Mecca
- Ishmael's descendants become Muslims: Muhammad*
- Descendants of Isaac become the Jews



Muhammad's Arabia

- A degenerate society suffering social and moral decline.
- Religion: Animalistic Polytheism
- No authority or moral code for people to obey.
- Warring tribes...

Q: Does this all sound familiar?





Story of M

- Founder of Islam
- Born 570 AD.
- M is not God, or “Son of God”.
- M is the “Great Prophet” of Allah.



Story of M

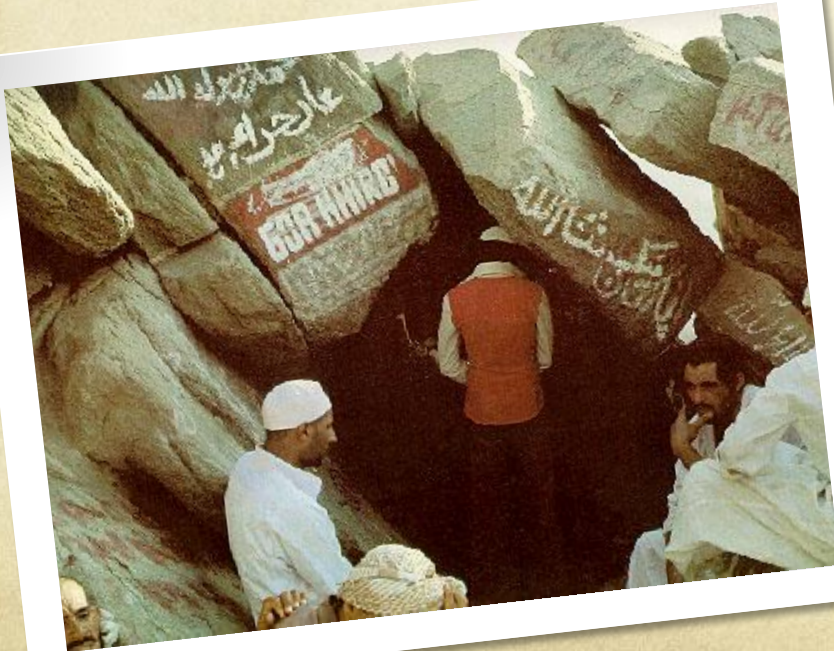
- Father dies before birth.
Mother dies at age 6.
Grandfather dies at age 8.
- Adopted by his uncle and becomes a shepherd.
- Known as a smart and caring boy.
- Isolated himself from the immorality and cynicism around him.

Q: Sound Familiar?



Story of M

- Marries Khadija, a wealthy widow.
- Isolates himself in a cave on Mount Hira.
- Joins the “hanifs,” who worship only Allah
- Allah was powerful, but still one of many gods during this time.





M's Night of Power

M's 3 chances to accept:

*Proclaim in the name of your Lord
who created!*

Created man from a clot of blood.

*Proclaim: Your Lord is the Most
Generous,*

Who teaches by the pen;

*Teaches man what he knew not
(Koran 96:1-3)*

- Khadija becomes his first follower.
- M on the path to becoming Allah's greatest prophet for 23 years.



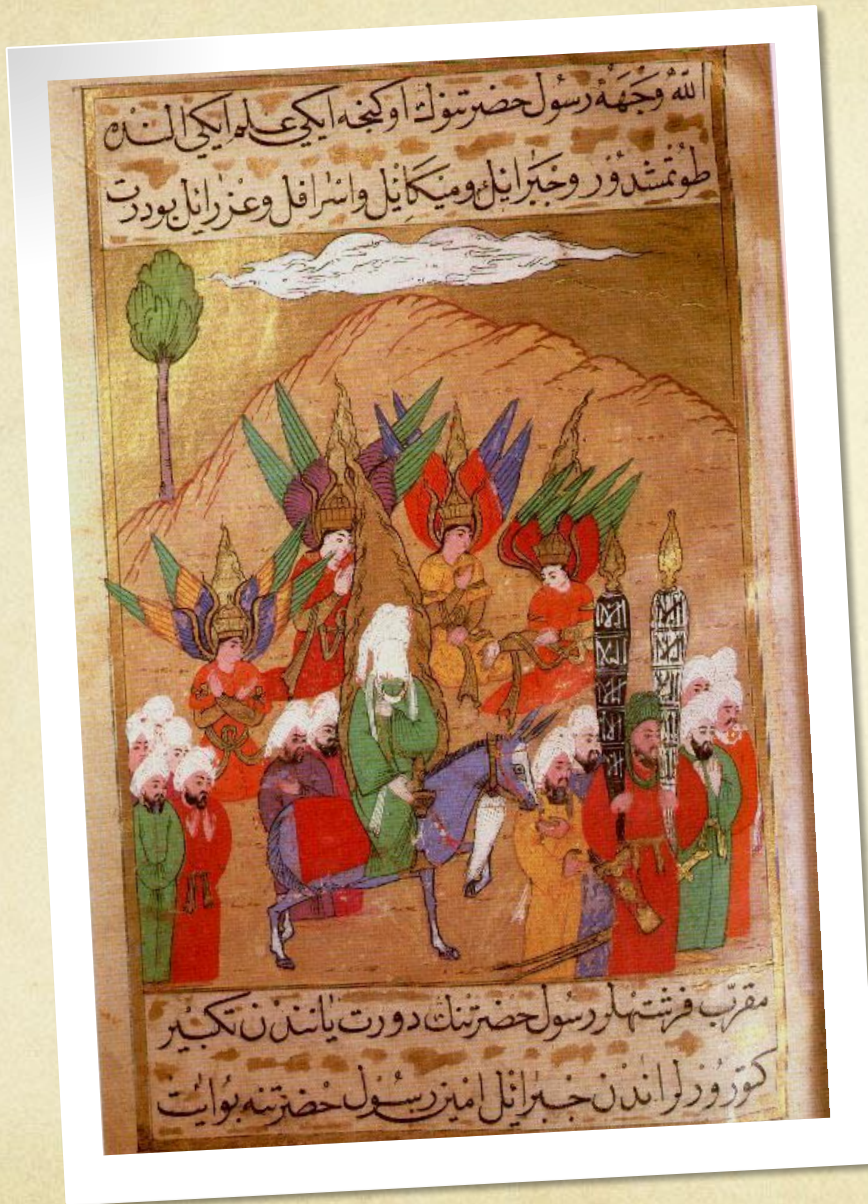


M as Prophet

- M: *"God has not sent me to work wonders; He has sent me to preach to you...I am only a preacher of God's words...(227)"*
- Like John the Baptist and Buddha: I am not a Messiah or God.
- Unlike Buddha/Confucius/Lao Tzu: Not deified after death.

Violent Reaction to M's Views

- M and his followers are persecuted: Beaten, stoned, rejected by his community.
- This did not deter M from continuing to preach.
- 1st 3 years: 40 followers
- Within a decade: Thousands



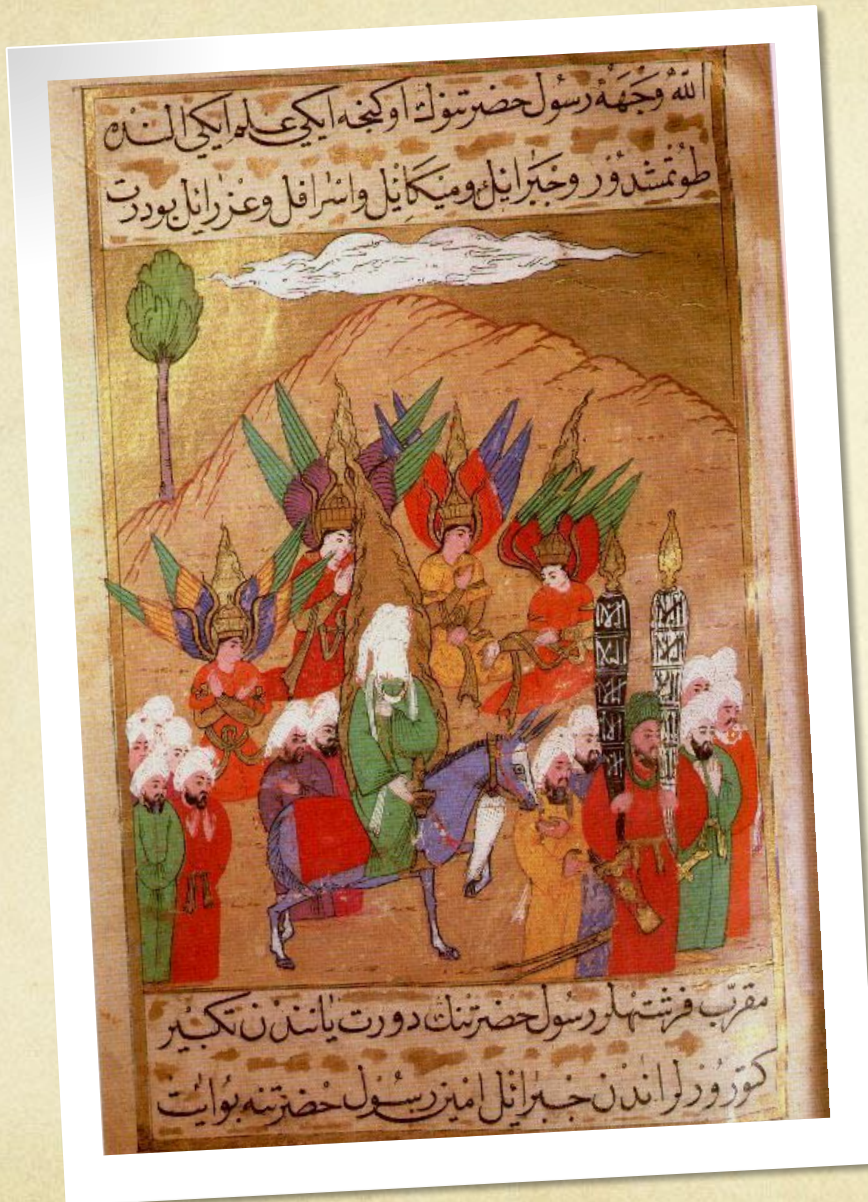
3 Reasons for Violent Response

(1) Threatened polytheism and the money flowing into Mecca from those who praised multiple gods.

(2) Demanded moral cleansing of a morally corrupt society.

(3) Challenged the social order and hierarchy.

- God sees all as equal = No need for class distinctions.



M's Migration to Medina (Hijra)



- Families from Yathrib (Medina) promise to follow Allah and accept the rules of Islam.
- M migrates to Medina, establishes a theocracy.
 - Theocracy: A state where priests govern according to religious codes.
 - M is now the religious, political, judicial and military leader of Medina.





M as Leader

- Becomes known as a skillful politician and leader.
- Brings together 5 powerful tribes of Medina (3 Jewish).
- Brings peace to the city.
- M's reputation grows, followers come from all over Arabia



M as Leader

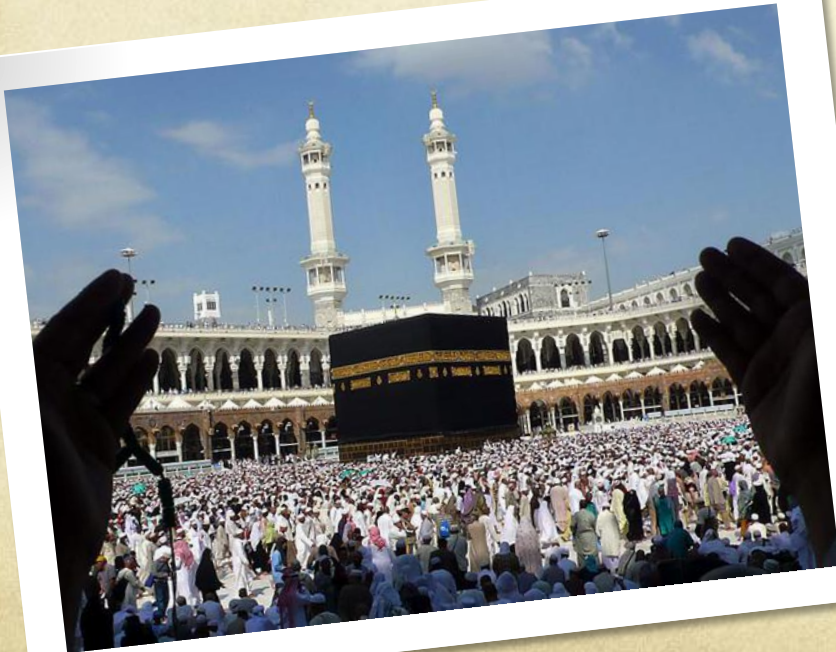
- M becomes a marked man.
- Over next years, battles between M and Mecca for control of Arabia.
- M eventually wins, Mecca converts to Islam.





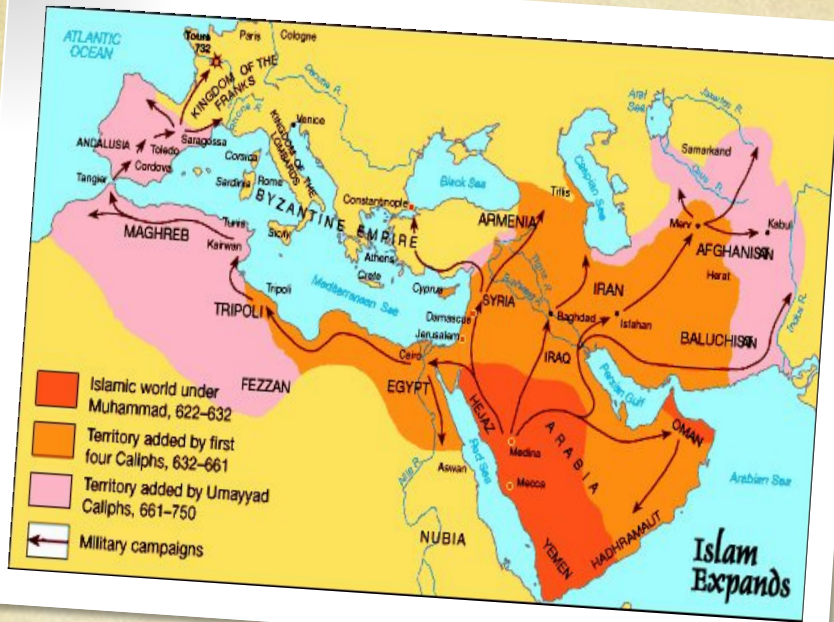
M as Victor

- M accepts conversion of Mecca to Islam.
- Dedicates Ka'ba to Allah.
- Returns to Medina as religious and political leader of Mecca.



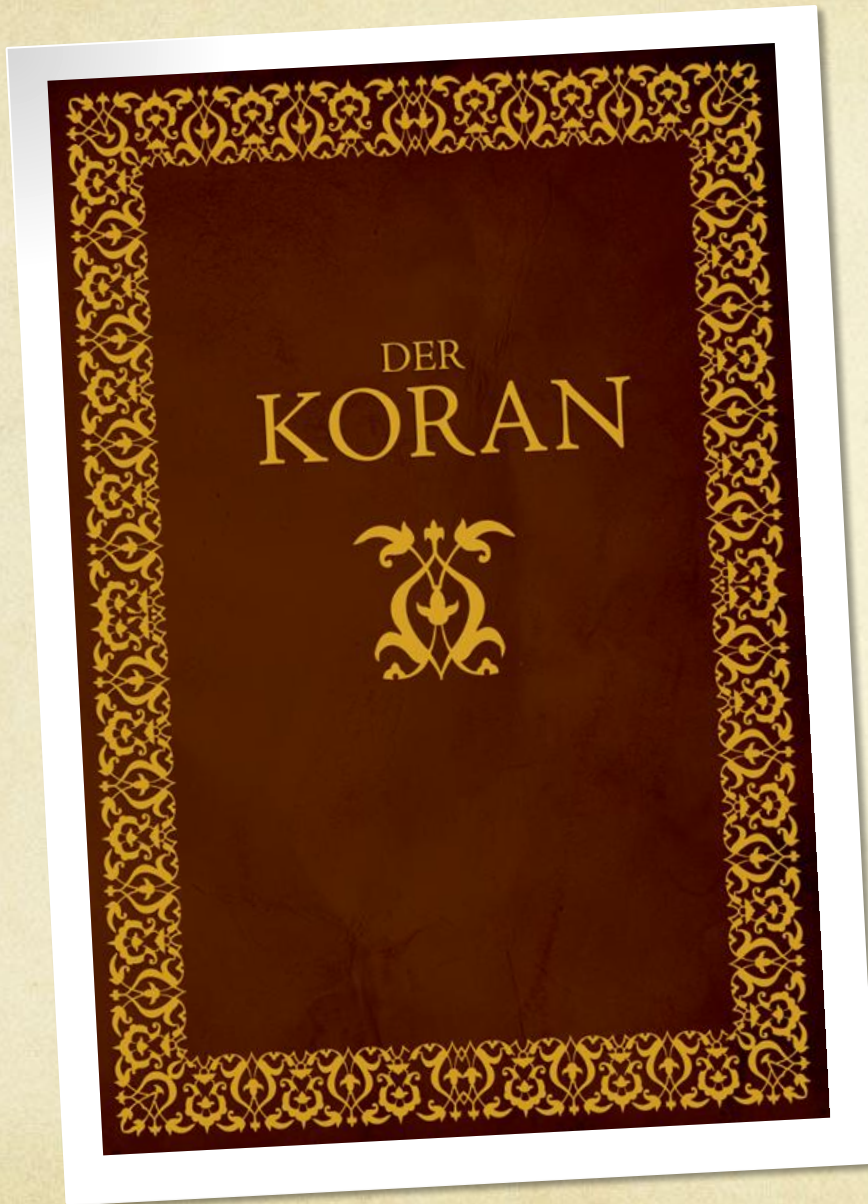
After M's Death

- M dies in 632, 10 years after the Hijra.
- Next 100 years = Islam expands in Europe through military might.
- Finally defeated in France, 732, Battle of Tours
 - Smith: If not for Charles Martel and the Battle of Tours, all of Europe might have been Muslim



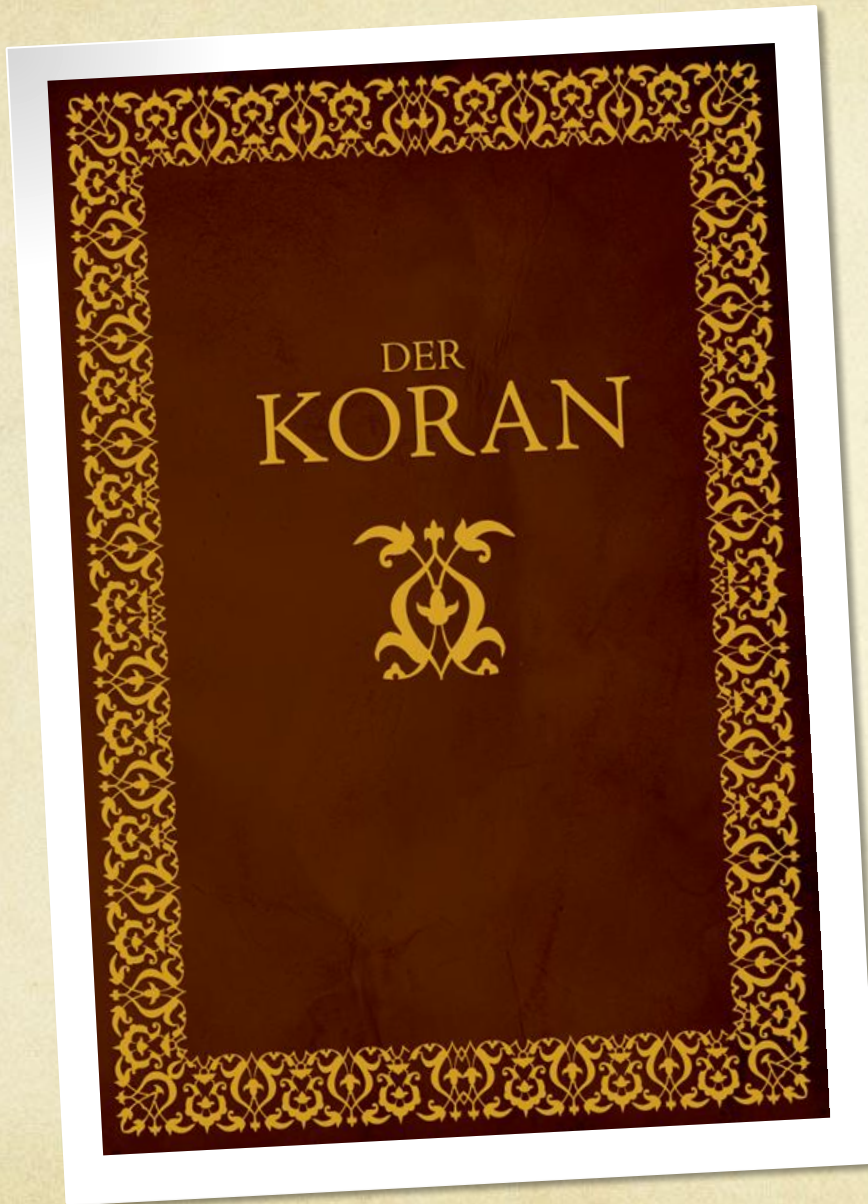
The Koran (Qur'an)

- Holy book of Islam = “Recitation”
- 6000+ verses, 114 surah's, memorized over a lifetime.
- Continuation and culmination of the New/Old Testament.
- Strength: Free from editing and “corruption” by Man.



The Koran (Qur'an)

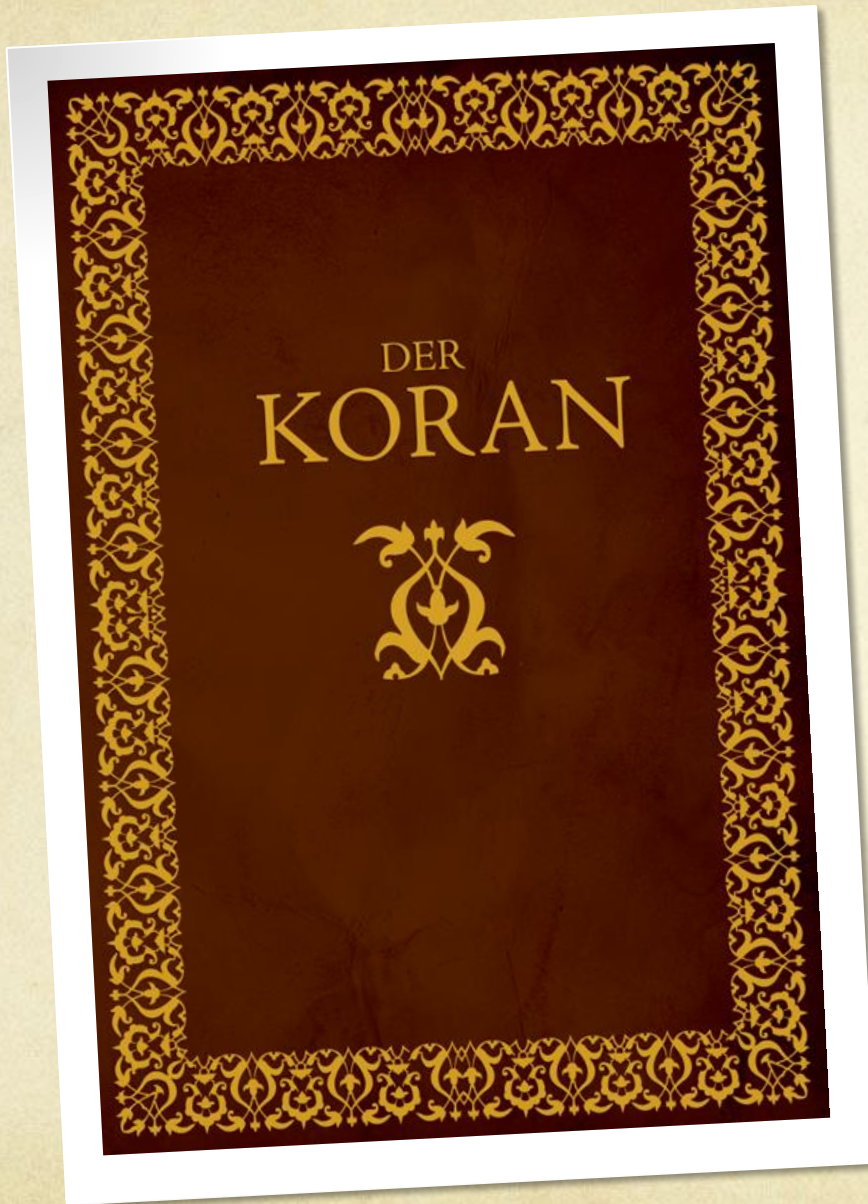
- Written version is only a facsimile of the unwritten Koran.
 - Ex. Platonic Forms
- Transmitted word of God via M:
 - Over 23 years, angel Gabriel speaks to M.
 - Followers record M's words.
 - God preserves the accuracy of the transmission.



Powers of the Koran

= 1. Language

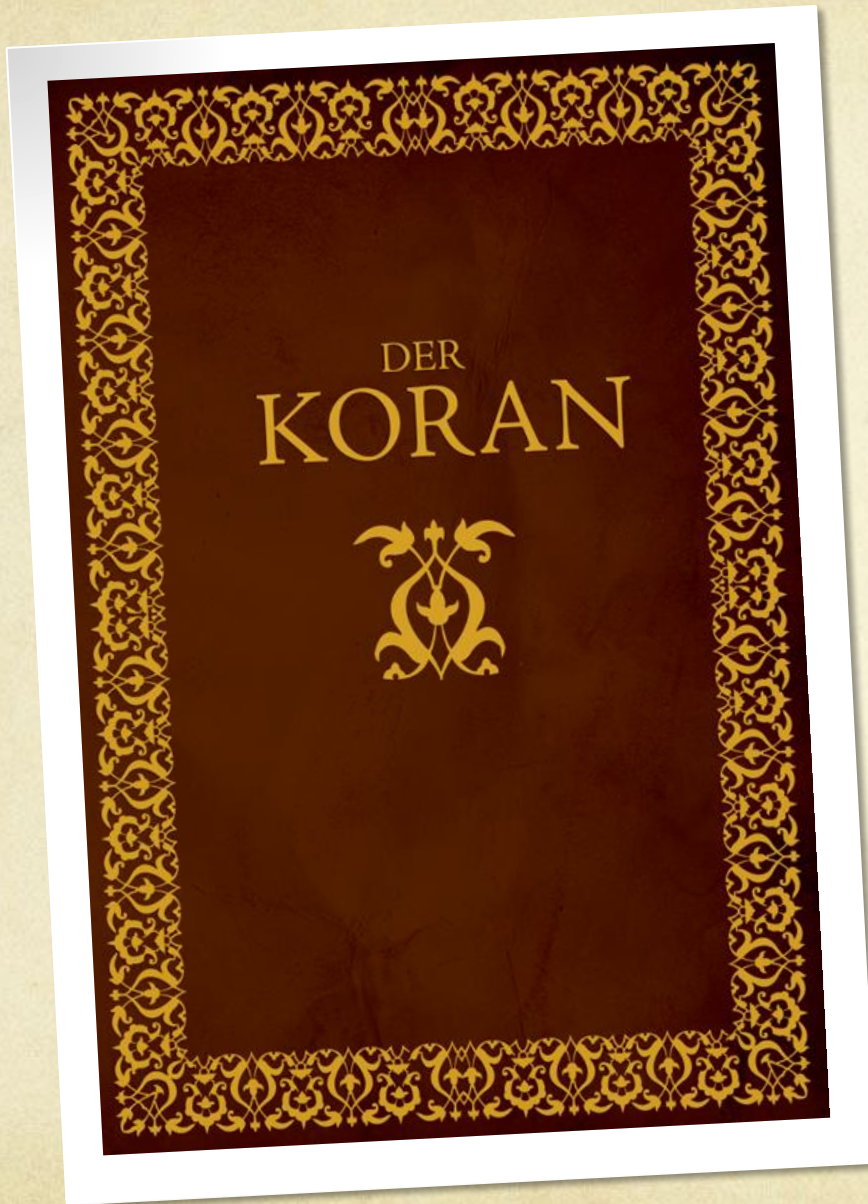
- Total truth from inside and impenetrable from outside...why?
- Koran and Arabic Language:
 - Not just about the text.
 - Arabic tradition greatly involves storytelling and creating traditions through spoken word.
 - So part of the Koran's power is power of verbal language, the mixture of words and sounds.
 - Smith: "The rhythm, melodic cadence, the rhyme produce a powerful hypnotic effect (234)"



Powers of the Koran

= 2. Doctrine

- New/Old Testaments are history above doctrine.
- Koran is doctrine above history.
- Ex. Koranic prophets not always described in chronological order.
- Instead, focus is on the lesson, not the prophet's story.



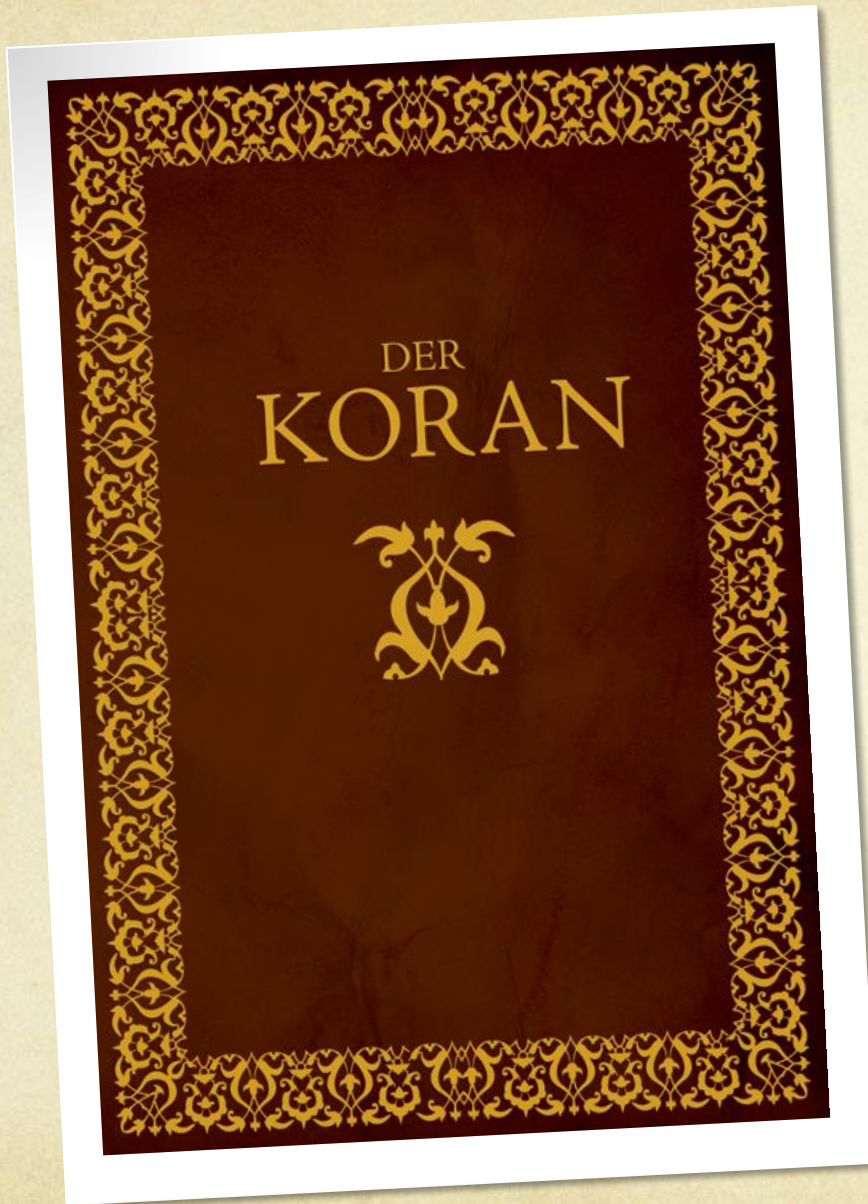
Powers of the Koran

= 3. Directness

- Smith: Koran is not about the truth: it is the truth (235)

Examples:

- Allah speaks in 1st person, describes himself and his laws.
- Rules are explicit...no question on how to proceed*





Concepts of Islam

- God
- Creation
- The Self
- The Soul and Judgment Day
- 5 Pillars of Islam





God in Islam

- God = Immaterial creator of all.
 - No need for idol worship.
- Islam = Monotheism without remixing:
 - Judaism: God of (and only of) people of Israel.
 - Christianity: God is embodied in Jesus.





God in Islam

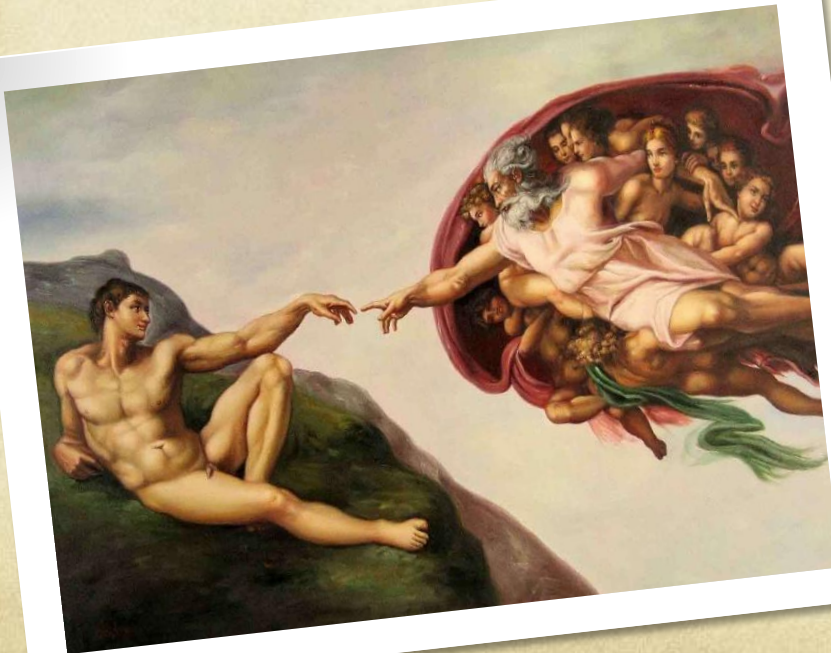
- The ultimate individual but not a father figure:
 - This makes God too human.
- God is Fear:
 - Fear b/c that's the only logical reaction to such a omniscient force.
- God is Peace:
 - Compassion and mercy cited 192 times
 - God's wrath cited 17





Creation

- God has intentionally created the world in a certain way.
 - Unlike Hinduism.
- World is material =
Motivates Arabic movement toward math and science while Europe is still in the Dark Ages.
- Since God is good, the world is good.
 - There are traces of God's goodness in the world.
 - We are to seek them out and appreciate them.

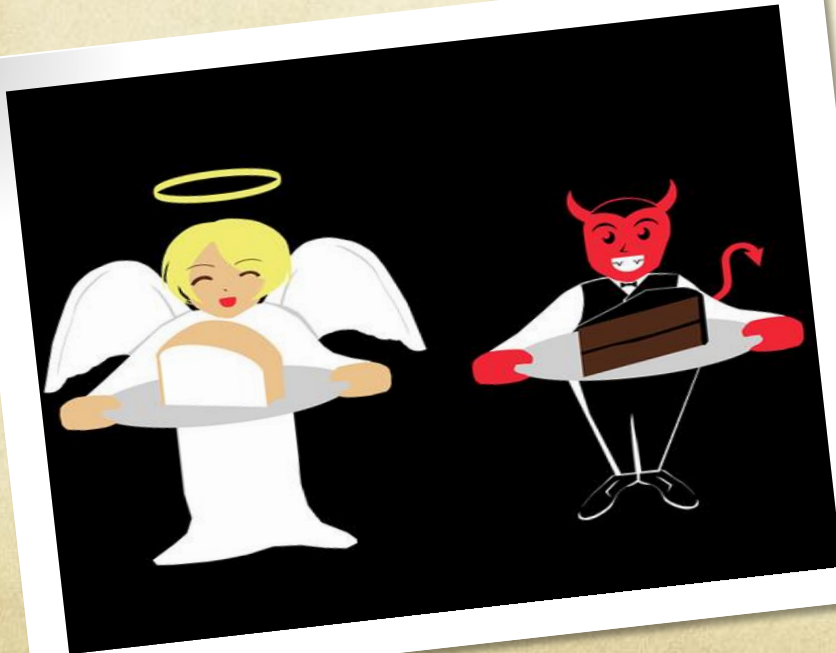




The Self:

Human Nature

- Human Nature is not stained by “original sin”.
- People are naturally good and deserve respect.
- Those who lose the way fall into “gahflah” = forgetfulness.
- We should always remember our creator and our connection to God.



The Self: 2

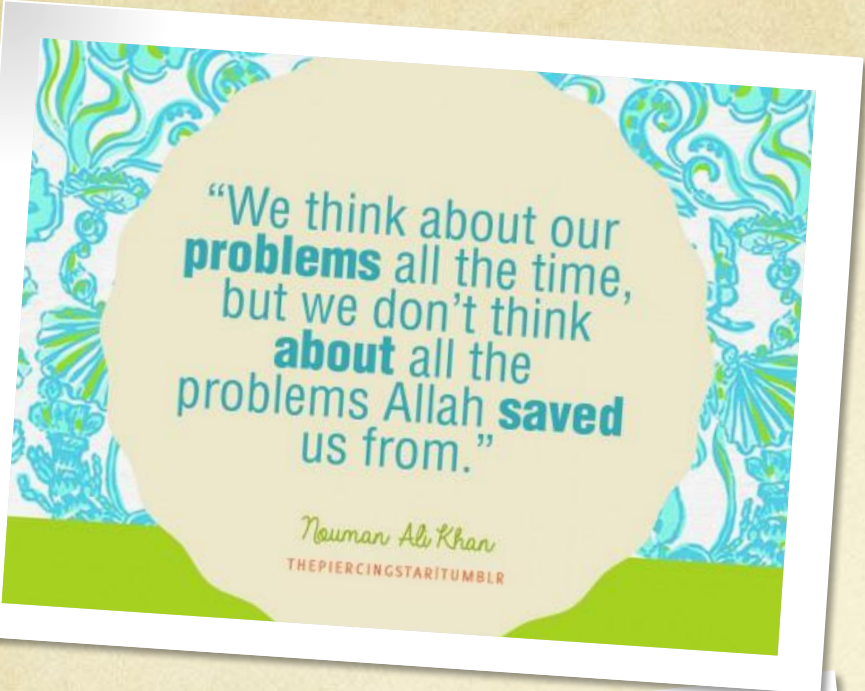
Obligations

(1) Gratitude:

- Practice gratitude through self-respect and respect for others.

(2) Surrender

- To a Cause*
- Love/Friendship
- Surrender to God is to surrender to other forms of slavery (240)
- Ex. Abraham's son.



"We think about our **problems** all the time, but we don't think **about** all the problems Allah **saved** us from."

Neuman Ali Khan
THEPIERCINGSTARITUMBLR



O Allah, if I hurt others, give me the strength to apologize. If people hurt me, give me the strength to forgive.

Ameen Ya ALLAH

The Self: Individuality?

- We are individuals = Free will.
- Our experiences and successes are unique.
- We get credit for choosing the right path.
- “...All life is individual there is no such thing as universal life. God Himself is an individual. He is the most unique individual (240)”



LIFE BRINGS LESSONS INTO OUR LIFE THAT
COME WITH FREE WILL. WE CAN CHOOSE TO BE
THE VICTOR OR THE VICTIM.





The Soul?

- Each soul is unique...not “Atman is Brahman”
- Nothing the soul does is forgotten.
- This is because we cannot escape an omniscient God.



Judgment Day

- Judgment day is the product of our free choices and connection with God.
- God as judge
 - God determines our fate
- Soul as judge
 - Removed from our material self, we can objectively judge whether we've met our ideals.





Recap

- Background
- Abraham
- Story of Muhammad
- M's migration from and return to Mecca



Recap

- The Koran
- 3 Powers of the Koran
 - Language
 - Doctrine
 - Directness
- Concepts of Islam
 - God
 - Creation
 - Self
 - Souls & Judgment Day



End of Islam I