

World Religions

Genesis 11

The Origins of Islam?

Wednesday, January 21st 2026

A. The Origin of their Terms- Historical & Cultural

1. Historical & Religious Terms-

a. **Islam-** Islam is a major monotheistic religion, meaning followers worship one God (Allah), centered on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. Islam literally means submission.

- **Origins-** As a religion it was founded in the 7th century in Mecca (modern-day Saudi Arabia).

- **Followers-** Are referred to as Muslims (submitter to God); 2 billion worldwide, making it the second-largest religion.

- **Fact-** The world's fastest-growing major religion, widespread in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, with Indonesia having the largest Muslim population.

b. **The Three Major Forms of Islam-** Following the death of Muhammad, a disagreement over his rightful successor led to the two main branches of Islam

- **Sunni Islam (80–90%):** Believe the leader (caliph) should be chosen by the community based on merit and adherence to the Sunnah. Main proponents- Saudi Family, Turkey (Mecca, Medina & Jerusalem main holy sites).

- **Shia Islam (10–20%):** Believe leadership should remain within the Prophet's family, specifically through his cousin and son-in-law, Ali. Main proponents- Iran, Alawites, Hezbollah, Houthis in Yemen (Karbala Iraq Main Holy site).

- Shia Twelvers sect- Twelver eschatology; The Twelfth Iman (Mahdi) is present and prepared to rule for 7 years.

- **Sufi Islam (19%)-** Sufism is a unique branch of Islam known for its mystical teachings. They follow the teachings set out by the Shi'a successor of Muhammad (Ali) but these believers also follow special training that they believe allows them to experience Allah here on earth.

- **NOTE-** There are several other sects that either branch from the three major forms of Islam or are uniquely separate (Le., Mahdavia, Ahmadiyya, Nation of Islam)

2. **Caliphate-** In simple terms, a caliphate is an Islamic state or government led by a caliph, who is considered the "successor" to the Prophet Muhammad, serving as both the supreme political and religious leader for all Muslims, aiming to govern according to Islamic law (Sharia). Historically, caliphates are simply powerful Islamic empires (Three significant Caliphates):

- **Umayyad Caliphate (661AD-750AD)-** Arab Bedouin tribes

- Headquartered in Damascus, Syria,

- Leader- Abdul al-Malik- Made Arabic the language of the Caliphate; built the Dome of the Rock Mosque on the Temple Mount; made up the legend that Abraham sacrificed Ishamel hence (dome of the rock) and Mohammed ascended to heaven from the Temple Mount

- **Abbasid Caliphate (750AD – 850AD)-** The Islamic/Arab Gold Age

- **Ottoman Caliphate/Ottoman Empire (1299AD)- 1924AD)-** The last major Caliphate

- **NOTE:** Islam still has a goal to establish a caliphate; I.e, Extremist groups like ISIS.

B. The Origin of their Texts- The Quran, Hadith, Sunna

1. **The Prophet Muhammad (570–632AD):** Born in Mecca, he received the first revelations of the Quran through the angel Gabriel in 610AD. His migration to Medina in 622AD, known as the **Hijra**, marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar and when Mohammed becomes a warlord.
2. **The Quran:** The central religious text, believed by Muslims to be the verbatim word of God revealed in Arabic to Mohammed from the angel Gabriel.
3. **Hadith and Sunnah:** The records of the Prophet Muhammad's words, actions, and approvals, which serve as a guide for interpreting the Quran and practicing the faith (I.e., Sharia)
4. **NOTE:** Islam will also reference the Jewish Torah and the New Testament Gospels

C. The Origin of their Teachings- Abraham & Ishmael-

1. **Islam's Core Beliefs (Articles of Faith)- The Six Articles of Faith:**
 - a. Belief in one God (Allah).
 - b. Belief in angels (such as Gabriel/Jibril).
 - c. Belief in holy books (including the **Quran**, Torah, and Psalms).
 - d. Belief in prophets (including Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus).
 - e. Belief in the Day of Judgment and the afterlife.
 - f. Belief in divine decree or predestination (Qadar).
2. **The Five Pillars of Islam- "Their Works":**
 - a. Shahada (Declaration of Faith): Testifying that "There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger".
 - b. Salat (Prayer): Performing ritual prayers five times daily.
 - c. Zakat (Charity): Giving a portion of wealth to the needy.
 - d. Sawm (Fasting): Fasting from dawn to sunset during the month of Ramadan.
 - e. Hajj (Pilgrimage): Making a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once if able.
 - 2026 Hajj- Sunday, May 24th – Friday, May 29th
 - The Pagan history of the Kaaba; the Black Stone
3. **The Prophetic Implications of Islam- Jihad (means struggle or fight against the enemies of Islam)**
 - a. Establish a world-wide caliphate under the leadership of the 12th Iman/Mahdi
 - b. Dealing with infidels, especially Jews & Christians- (Quran is not chronological); Suran 9 is the last chapter in the Quran chronologically
 - Suran 9 (129 verses)- The Sword Chapter; The Chapter of Disavowing