Understand the instructions for the structures???

Reading assignments for coming weeks…I will provide one sura and have you choose the second randomly (casting the lot like the disciples did)

Reading Acts 1:24-26… *So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen 25 to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” 26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.*

Take your little box, choose your number, pass down to the end of the row…

7,000 books about Islam in the Library of Congress, many in Arabic…

so much info, religion is so wide-spread…can’t know everything, but we can grasp the basics…

*From Pentecost to the Present*--chapter 8, pp. 134-147, “The Rise of Islam”

Good source for the history of Islam details if you would like…

**Foundational aspects:**

1) Islam is about a very definite understanding of God. Allah is the transcendent eternal creator who is beyond comprehension…

Sura 6:102-103, ”This is God, your Lord, there is no God but Him, the Creator of all things, so worship Him; He is in charge of everything. 103No vision can take Him in, but He takes in all vision. He is the All Subtle, the All-Aware”

Perspective digest.org, One finds little in Islam on the subject of Allah’s essence and character except the sense in which the 99 names for Allah are believed to reflect the character of Allah. In all the terms and titles of Allah, one does not encounter terms of intimacy. Allah’s “beautiful names” by and large appear as either active participles or adjectives. They are not read as a proper name in Islam. Unlike how *Yahweh* in the Hebrew Scriptures is the personal name for God, *Allah* is not a proper name. In the Islamic religious formulation, God has no personal name.

Jesus telling Thomas, *“touch me and see”* (Luke 24:39)

Peter writing in 2 Peter 1:16 *“We were eyewitnesses of his majesty”*

This vision of God leads to an emphasis on predestination, total sovereignty…

God is an absolute potentate who has absolute freedom in rulings, far above human comprehension.

(Exact opposite of the entire Upper Story of the Bible…Jesus coming as God in the flesh to make God fully known! God wanting to be in direct relationship with His people!)

Lack of absolute assurance regarding salvation, Fatalism, passivity, God is arbitrary...Quran does talk about God’s mercy, but the dominant teaching is that God is omnipotent judge.

2) Islam is about Muhammad

Clarice’s note: The encyclopedia caption of the picture read as follows: Muhammad founded the Islamic religion.  According to tradition he ascended to heaven on Buraq, an animal with a mare's body and a woman's head.  In the painting above, the prophet's face is blank.  **Islamic law prohibits portraits of Muhammad.** The picture is the artist's rendition of the ascent into heaven.

Don’t believe him to be Messiah, or sinless, but tradition elevates him to nearly so…

stories/traditions about Muhammad are called *hadith* and play a central role in piety and doctrine.

Jesus is inferior to Muhammad, not hated, but inferior.

(more in next week’s lesson)

3) Islam is about the Quran.

And the companion the Hadith… Hadith (/ˈhædɪθ/[1] or /hɑːˈdiːθ/;[2] Arabic: حديث‎ ḥadīṯ, plural: أحاديث, ʼaḥādīṯ) are collections of the reports claiming to quote what the prophet Muhammad said verbatim on any matter.[3] The term comes from the Arabic meaning "report", "account" or "narrative". Hadith are second only to the Quran in developing Islamic jurisprudence,

Jewish book? Torah (Written Torah is the first 5 plus some Prophetic and others) The Talmud is the compilation of the historic rabbis "discussing" or "debating" what the Torah means. (Mishna and the Gemara make up the Talmud)

Christian book? Bible…Old and New….tons of commentaries as well, but we don’t force people to abide by commentaries…(I like Cottrell, but not infallible!)

Greater stress on the book than even we do…no human side, simply dictated verbatim to Muhammad (many believe he was illiterate, thus the whole thing is supernatural—its own biggest miracle)

Many Muslims have memorized the entire thing (size of NT)

No books placed on top, translating is frowned upon…

(again, more discussion in 2 weeks…)

My struggle is partly illustrated by the cartoon Steven shared about the public nature of Jesus work and ministry vs. the individual/private origin of Islam…article is filed in folder under “Christianity as the most falsifiable religion)

You can’t argue with the one guy and his one book! (If do, “I kill you”, as Achmed would say)

4) Islam is essentially about law

Hans Kung says same is true of Judaism, Roman Catholicism and Islam.

God is up here, He’s not coming down here…You do the best you can to reach up to His level, plead your best case…

Example: Can a Muslim woman pray with nylons on? (no) Pray in wool socks with holes? (yes, if holes are not too big)

5) Islam has a grand political and social vision

Coming together of a people—uniting warring tribes and bringing their will and ways to bear on others?

Dr. North wrote of how a smaller army of 25,000 Arabs won against 50-250,00 plodding Byzantine/Greek infantry…disaster for the Greeks.. Faster horses, more skilled warriors…

How did it spread? so many of the earlier wars did nothing to resolve ethnic tensions (See America today with blacks and whites)

Muslims took advantage and many areas saw the invading Muslims as deliverers..

While there is much made of ISIS today, often Islam did not advance at the point of the sword, Christians were allowed to stay Christians, Jews to stay Jews…but second-class citizens, (higher taxes, excluded from some jobs, blamed if things went wrong)…SO most people see more convenient and socially profitable to convert… (Same thing happened with Christianity when it was in vogue 300 years earlier)

Virtually no separation of Mosque and State in Islam.

in Muslim majority countries, the political and social agenda is set by Islamic law…

Major political decisions are heavily influenced by Muslim teachers. (Arab politicians who ignore the views of the Muslim holy men can pay for it with their lives—Anwar Sadat in Egypt)

**The Five Pillars of Islam**

Keying on the idea of pillars hold things up…Solomon pushed over the pillars…

1) The *Shahadah* One sentence equivalent of John 3:16, “There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His messenger”

Found in 3:18… “God bears witness that there is no god but Him, as do the angels and those who have knowledge. He upholds justice. There is no god but Him, the Almighty, the All Wise.”

THEN…all sorts of online debate about whether or not you are allowed to or should *add* the part about Muhammad…!

Say with sincerity and you are a Muslim!

(Means there is only one God—Muslims deny the trinity)

Muhammad not only messenger, but last and greatest…

2) *Salat* (prayers)

Pray towards Mecca 5 times a day.

Muslim converts.com:

There are five obligatory prayers which are performed at five different times of the day.

1 FAJR PRAYER (The Morning Prayer)

It starts at dawn and ends at sunrise. Thus it can be prayed between these points. But it is best to pray at the beginning of its time (i.e. just after start of dawn)

2 DHUHR PRAYER (The Early Afternoon Prayer )

It starts when the sun begins to decline from its zenith and ends when the size of an object's shadow is equal to the objects size.

3 ASR PRAYER (The Late Prayer )

It starts when an object's shadow is equal to the objects size and ends when just before sunset.

It is better to pray Asr before the sky becomes yellow (even though it is allowed to pray at such a time) because the Prophet ( peace be upon him) disliked Muslims praying at such as time and. He remarked that the the Munafiq (Hypocrite ) offers his pray at this time.

4 MAGHRIB PRAYER (The Sunset Prayer ) .

Its time begins just after sunset and ends when twilight has just disappeared

5 ISHA PRAYER (The Night Prayer )

It starts when twilight has disappeared and ends before midnight

HOW TO PRAY

Stage1

Learning to pray when your language is not Arabic can seem to be a very difficult task. However it is not as difficult as it may appear to you. A certain amount of text is memorized and the same text can be recited in all the 5 daily prayers. (Carly—More like a script)

Attend prayer service every Friday. (wash properly before communal worship)

If you don’t know Arabic, learn it enough to recite prayers.

3) *Zakat* (alms giving) Be generous!

mandated to give 2.5% of earnings to others.

See my screenshot of zaket.com calculator…

Muhammad was very generous. Quran stresses charity.

4) *Sawm* (fasting)

during daylight hours during Ramadan (9th month of Muslim calendar) Are allowed to eat and drink between sunset and sunrise

Special month, Muhammad received first revelations from Allah, sexual abstention rules, rules for what to do if you miss a day…

 If a person cannot observe the fast due to some reasons, it is obligatory upon him to feed 60 indigent persons in the morning and evening, if possible, on the same day.

 While feeding the poor it has to be seen that they are grownup and one should be moderate, the food should neither be very cheap nor expensive.

 Expiation will not be valid if one and the same needy person is fed in the morning and evening.

5) *Hajj* (pilgrimage)

To Mecca at least once in your life if you can afford it. (only Muslims allowed in the city)

7 days, rituals (dress, prayer, ablution, animal sacrifices)

Mecca as Muhammad’s birthplace, city he returned to in triumph after exile in Medina.

Muslims also believe that Abraham built an alter here to offer Ishmael (but God provided a ram)

Muslimvoices.org: Ishmael is highly regarded in Islam for his goodness and wisdom. After wandering in the desert with his mother – Hagar’s search for water is reenacted during the Hajj each year – they settled in Mecca. There it is believed Ishmael built the Ka’aba with Abraham.

DO!! (this and this and this and this…very exacting!)

**Muslims and Christian doctrines**

Long list of what Muslims do and don’t agree with on p. 26 (copy and place in folders?)

**Jihad: Sixth pillar of Islam**

One of the most loaded words in Muslim vocabulary.

8 then-contemporary examples on. p. 27

Some Muslims want to dismiss any hint that such acts are relevant to or indicative of orthodox Islam…Critics of Islam love to dwell on such examples as proof that Islam is a religion of the sword… (we need balanced assessments!)

“It would be unfair to dismiss all Muslims as blood-thirsty warriors in a global Islamic jihad.”

Akin to saying all Christians favor killing because some radicals in the IRA claim to be followers of Jesus.

If all Muslims were radical militants, the amount of terrorism in the world would be staggering! (1.6 billion terrorists? Vs 2 billion Christians)

Muslims have and do declare Jihad against one another—Iran and Iraq.

Millions of deaths, Muslim on Muslim…

Many Muslims use the term in a far broader term than just military. It refers to the battle against self in one’s own soul…

(We promote the same—See Paul’s words about discipline in 1 Corinthians 9:27, *No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.*

AND YET we have every right to be concerned about the actual scope of the military aspect…

* + There is a darker side to Islamic Jihad…
  + Does not do to say, “well, most of them are nice!”

Most American gun owners are nice, still some evil people!

* + We can’t be ignorant about the extremism that is at the heart of some forms of Islam…

See the slide from religion of peace.com

*2:191-192 "And kill them wherever you find them, and turn them out from where they have turned you out. And Al-Fitnah* [disbelief or unrest] *is worse than killing... but if they desist, then lo! Allah is forgiving and merciful. And fight them until there is no more Fitnah* [disbelief and worshipping of others along with Allah] *and worship is for Allah alone. But if they cease, let there be no transgression except against Az-Zalimun(the polytheists, and wrong-doers, etc.)"*

The verse prior to this (190) refers to *"fighting for the cause of Allah those who fight you"* leading some to believe that the entire passage refers to a defensive war in which Muslims are defending their homes and families. The [historical context](http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/pages/muhammad/persecution-medina.apsx) of this passage is **not** defensive warfare, however, since Muhammad and his Muslims had just relocated to Medina and were *not* under attack by their Meccan adversaries. In fact, the verses urge *offensive* warfare, in that Muslims are to drive Meccans out of their own city (which they [later did](http://www.thereligionofpeace.com/pages/muhammad/mecca-more-tolerant.aspx)). Verse 190 thus means to fight those who offer resistance to Allah's rule (ie. Muslim conquest).

2:216, "**Fighting is prescribed for you**, and ye dislike it. But it is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you, and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth, and ye know not."

(This is the answer to Carly’s first question, it’s what the text says)

4:95, “Those believers who stay at home, apart from those with an incapacity, are not equal to those who commit themselves and their possessions to striving in God’s way. God has raised such people to a rank above those who stay at home— although He has promised all believers a good reward, those who strive are favored with a tremendous reward above those who stay at home—“

Not bad people, but is bad ideology!

We have to be ready to oppose those who warp these verses!

Sad truth that most cruelty is done under the guise of goodness..

Jewish leaders who thought that killing Jesus, followers was will of God?

Those who send in suicide bombers think it is the will of God and those kids think they will go to heaven…

Are there verses in the Bible about killing and warfare? (Yes)

Are they in the New Testament? (command disciples to “kill them where you find them?”)

God had a specific time/place/role/land for the Jews and they fought for that and that alone (and they still do!)

Our NT does not tell us to go, therefore and kill! WE might shake the dust, but we don’t kill!

Jesus didn’t kill! (turn the other cheek!)

They tried to KILL Jesus… They tried to kill Paul

James mentions *you kill and covet* in 4:2, but not in the context of supposed to do, wrong behavior!

Revelation has the souls who were killed wanting and waiting for vengeance!

We are called to live in peace as individuals and governments are called to promote and provide that peace…

Romans 13:3-4, *For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. 4 For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.*

Want more discussion on the topic?

Judith Miller has covered for New York Times since 1977, book, *God has 99 names* “She allows her readers to understand what makes militant Islam attractive to its followers without, in the least, offering any sort of blessing or excuse for its presence.” p. 30

Gather the facts and interpret them for ourselves!

Dr. North: “Arabia had been all but ignored by the classical civilizations of the ancient world. The Bedouin nomads were poor, undisciplined, jealous and strife-ridden. Islam was able to weld them into a force and unite hem in religion. Raised in privation, these hardy warriors fought zealously, beleiving that death in battle gave them instant admission to Paradise and its sensual alllures...

Doesn’t that make their lifestyle a win-win for the warriors?

Appreciate your efforts with the structures…in the end, I suspect they may all well stand. They are fairly decent and stable…Possible all of you kept them intact.

Did it make you nervous or mindful at all throughout the evening?

The pillars of Islam do that, constant reminder, “Am I good enough? Doing enough?”

Yes, NT has texts about doing good works, but a true udnerstanding of grace is much more relaxed day by day…doing because want to, not because we need to.

in the end, you have sincerely obeyed the rules, unfortunately, you are all sincerely wrong…see the fine print at the bottom of the first slide…

**My Notes**

**Foundational Aspects:**

**1)**

**2)**

**3)**

**4)**

**5)**

**The Five Pillars of Islam**

**1) *The Shahadah***

**2) *Salat***

**3) *Zakat***

**4) *Sawm***

**5) *Hajj***