

ALLAH:

Same as Biblical God or Totally Other?

ICJS
COURSE



الله

INSTRUCTOR:

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ICJS Muslim Scholar

NOVEMBER 2, 9, & 16, 2022
IN PERSON AND ONLINE

Free—Register Today!

Course Outline

- ❑ **Class 1: Theological Foundations:
God in the Qur'an**
- ❑ **Class 2: Embodied Practice:
God in the Life of Prophet Muhammad**
- ❑ **Class 3: Qur'an and Interreligious
Engagement**

Today's Agenda

7:00-7:05 p.m.	Welcome
7:05-7:30 p.m.	Tawhid: How God Impacts Human Life
7:30-8:00 p.m.	Small-group
8:00-8:20 p.m.	Qur'an and Interreligious Engagement
8:20-8:30 p.m.	Plenary and Closing

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Tawhid -

Declare and Connect to God's Oneness

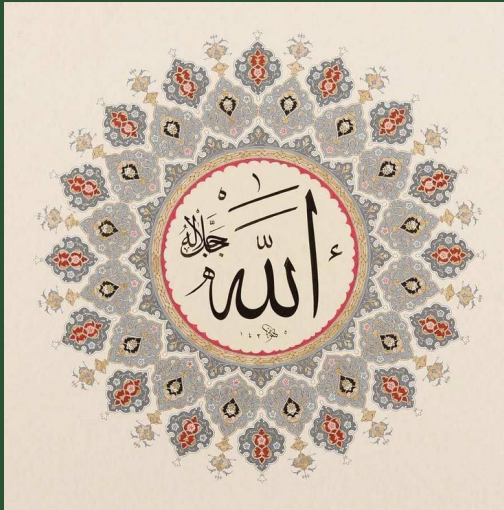


Book of the Universe is a display and exhibit of Most Beautiful Names

- The Creator, The Giver of Life
- The Compeller, The Subduer
- The Wise, The Knowing
- The Shaper, The Fashioner,
- The Provider, The Nourisher, The Sustainer
- The Most Compassionate, The Most Loving
- The Most Generous
- The Answerer of All Needs
- The All-Hearing, The All-Seeing
- The Healer
- The Protector, The Preserver
- The Pure, The Holy
- The Resurrector, The Reviver
- The Just

Tawhid -

Monotheism



- Knowledge and Awareness of God
- Love of God through Display of Divine Names
- Remembrance, Gratitude, Worship of God

The Most Beautiful Names

[Qur'an Recitation](#)

[Sura al-Hashr \(59:22-24\)](#)



The Most Beautiful Names of God



[99 Beautiful Names - Spoken Word](#)

[By Boonaa Mohammed](#)

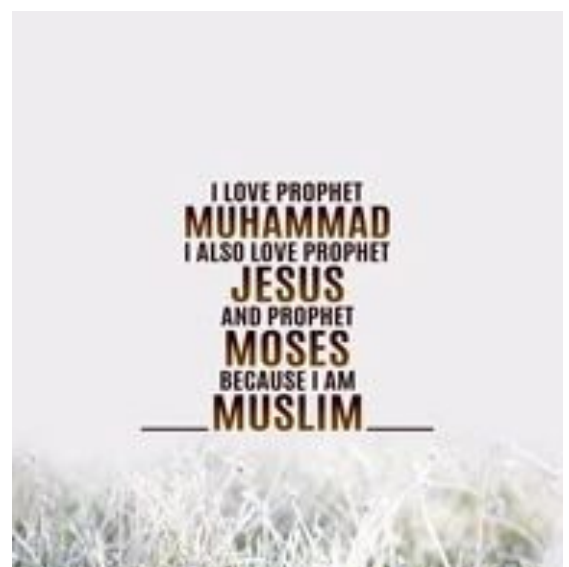
Small group

- The example of the Muslim prayer book, shows how Muslims can pray to God. What are the Most Beautiful Names of God that are invoked in this supplication? Can you give some examples?
- How is the human being described in these prayers? How would you define the relationship between God and human beings?
- Given our interreligious context, what is your preliminary conclusion after taking this class? Do Muslims worship the same Biblical God or not? If not, what are the differences in your mind? How should we engage them in our interreligious encounters?

I am a Muslim and

I ❤️ JESUS

عليه السلام
(Peace Be Upon Him)



One Human Family



Indeed, We have honored the children of Adam, carried them on land and sea, granted them good and lawful provisions, and privileged them far above many of Our creatures. (Q 17:70)

O people, we created you all from a single man and a single woman, and made you into races and tribes so that you should get to know one another. In God's eyes, the most honored of you are the ones most mindful of Him: God is All Knowing, All Aware (Q 49:13).

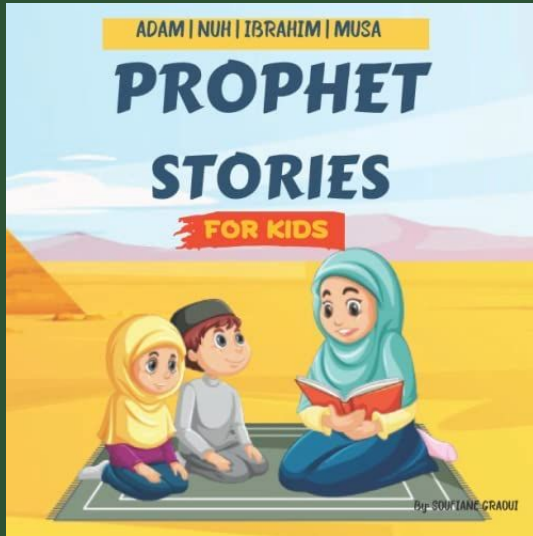
And of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Indeed in that are signs for those of knowledge. (Q 30:22)

The Dual Capacity of Humans

Indeed, We created humans in the best form. But We will reduce them to the lowest of the low. Except those who believe and do good—they will have a never-ending reward (Q 95:4-6)

O humanity! Worship your Lord, Who created you and those before you, so that you may become God-conscious. He Who has made the earth a place of settlement for you and the sky a canopy; and sends down rain from the sky, causing fruits to grow as a provision for you. So do not knowingly set up equals to God in worship. (Q 2:21-22)

Chain of Prophetic Revelation

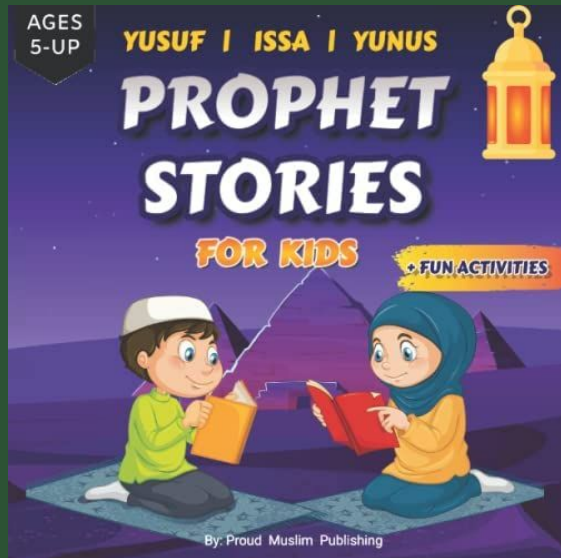


Say, 'We believe in God and in what was sent down to us and what was sent down to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and what was given to Moses, Jesus, and all the prophets by their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we devote ourselves to Him.' (Q 2:136)

Indeed, We have sent revelation to you as We sent revelation to Noah and the prophets after him. We also sent revelation to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants, 'as well as' Jesus, Job, Jonah, Aaron, and Solomon. And to David We gave the Psalms. There are messengers whose stories We have told you already and others We have not. And to Moses God spoke directly. All were messengers delivering good news and warnings so humanity should have no excuse before God after 'the coming of' the messengers. And God is Almighty, All-Wise. (Q 4:163-165)



Chain of Prophetic Revelation



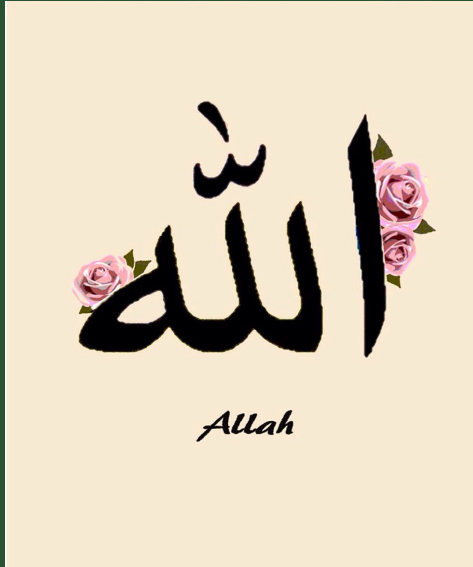
We surely sent a messenger to every community, saying, “Worship God and shun false gods.” But some of them were guided by God, while others were destined to stray. So travel throughout the land and see the fate of the deniers! (Q 16:36)

And before this Quran the Book of Moses was revealed as a guide and mercy. And this Book is a confirmation, in the Arabic tongue, to warn those who do wrong, and as good news to those who do good. (Q 46:12)



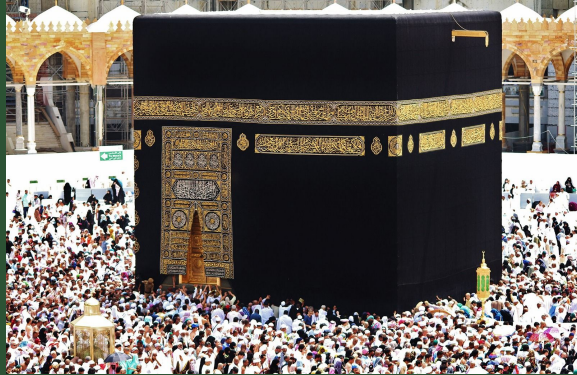
Islam -

The Primordial Message



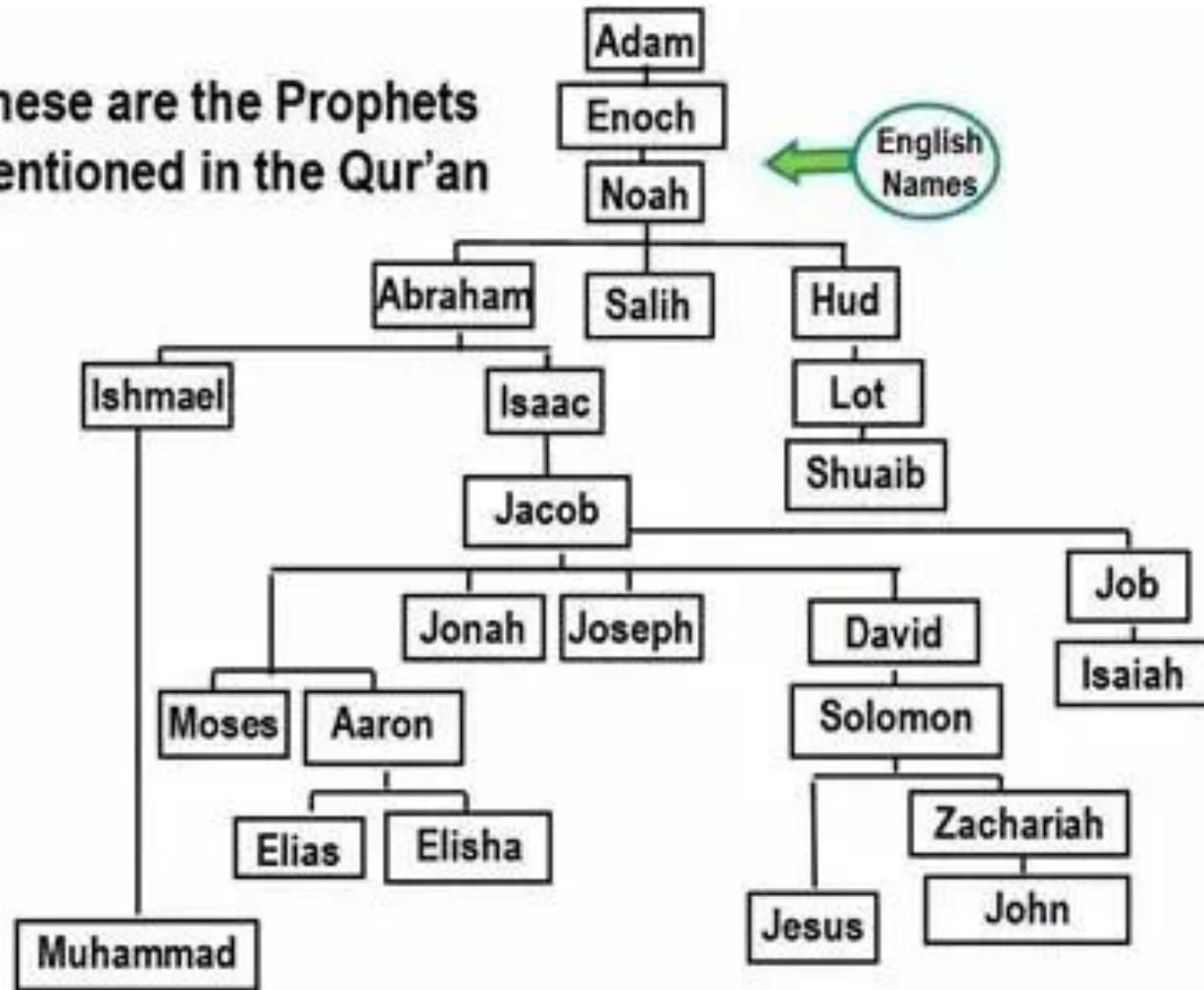
He has sent down upon you the Book with the truth, confirming what was before it, and He sent down the Torah and the Gospel aforetime, as guidance to the people, and He sent down the Criterion. As for those who disbelieve in God's signs, for them awaits a terrible chastisement; God is Almighty, Vengeful. (Qur'an 3:3-4)

Prophet Abraham



Our Lord! Make us both fully submit to You (muslimayni) and from our descendants a nation that will submit to you (muslimatan). Show us our rituals, and turn to us in grace. You are truly the Acceptor of Repentance, Most Merciful. (Q 2:128)

These are the Prophets mentioned in the Qur'an



Qur'anic Criticism

Scriptural error (tahrif):

Have you any hope that they will be true to you when a party of them used to listen to the word of God, then used to change it (yuharrifu), after they had understood it, knowingly? (Qur'an 2: 75)

Theological error:

They have taken their rabbis and monks as well as the Messiah, son of Mary, as lords besides God, even though they were commanded to worship none but One God. There is no god worthy of worship except Him. Glorified is He above what they associate with Him! (Q 9:31)

They say, "The Most Compassionate has offspring." You have certainly made an outrageous claim by which the heavens are about to burst, the earth to split apart, and the mountains to crumble to pieces in protest of attributing children to the Most Compassionate. It does not befit the majesty of the Most Compassionate to have children. (Q 19: 88-92)



Qur'anic Criticism

O People of the Book! Do not go to extremes regarding your faith; say nothing about God except the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was no more than a messenger of God and the fulfilment of His Word through Mary and a spirit created by a command from Him. So believe in God and His messengers and do not say, "Trinity." Stop!—for your own good. God is only One God. Glory be to Him! He is far above having a son! To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth. And God is sufficient as a Trustee of Affairs. (Q 4:171)

Those who say, "God is the Messiah, son of Mary," have certainly fallen into disbelief. The Messiah himself said, "O Children of Israel! Worship God—my Lord and your Lord." Whoever associates others with God in worship will surely be forbidden Paradise by God. Their home will be the Fire. And the wrongdoers will have no helpers. (Q 5:72)



Qur'anic Criticism

And remember when Jesus, son of Mary, said, "O children of Israel! I am truly God's messenger to you, confirming the Torah which came before me, and giving good news of a messenger after me whose name will be Aḥmad (The Praised One)." Yet when the Prophet came to them with clear proofs, they said, "This is pure magic". (Q 61:6)

Ritual error:

All food was permitted to the Children of Israel, except for what Israel forbade itself before the Torah was sent down. Say: 'Bring the Torah and read it, if you are truthful.' Whoever forges lies against God after that, those—they are the evildoers." (Q 3:93-94)

As for monasticism, they made it up—We never ordained it for them—only seeking to please God, yet they did not even observe it strictly. So We rewarded those of them who were faithful. But most of them are rebellious. (Q 57:27)

Qur'an and Religious Diversity

We have assigned a law and a path to each of you. If God had so willed, He would have made you one community, but He wanted to test you through that which He has given you, so race to do good: you will all return to God and He will make clear to you the matters you differed about (Q 5:48)

We have chosen some of those messengers above others. God spoke directly to some, and raised some high in rank. To Jesus, son of Mary, We gave clear proofs and supported him with the holy spirit. If God had willed, succeeding generations would not have fought among themselves after receiving the clear proofs. But they differed—some believed while others disbelieved. Yet if God had willed, they would not have fought one another. But God does what He wills

(Q 2:253)



Qur'an on Interreligious Engagement

Do not argue with the People of the Book unless gracefully, except with those of them who act wrongfully. And say, "We believe in what has been revealed to us and what was revealed to you. Our God and your God is One. And to Him we submit." (Q 29:46)

Invite to the Way of your Lord with wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is guided. (Q 16:125)

Let there be no compulsion in religion, for the truth stands out clearly from falsehood. So whoever renounces false gods and believes in God has certainly grasped the firmest, unfailing hand-hold. And God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.(Q 2:256).



An Interreligious Encounter

[Muslim Refugees in Christian Abyssinia](#)



Further Resources:

Excellent introduction to Islam:

- Salih Sayilgan, [*Exploring Islam: Theology and Spiritual Practice in America*](#)

Qur'an translations:

- [*The Qur'an*](#), trans. By M.A.S Abdel Haleem
- [*The Study Qur'an: A New Translation and Commentary*](#), by Syed Hossein Nasr et al.

Comparative work:

- [*The Bible and the Qur'an: Biblical Figures in the Islamic Tradition*](#), by Younus Mirza and John Kaltner

Podcast by Zeyneb Sayilgan, [*On Being Muslim*](#)

