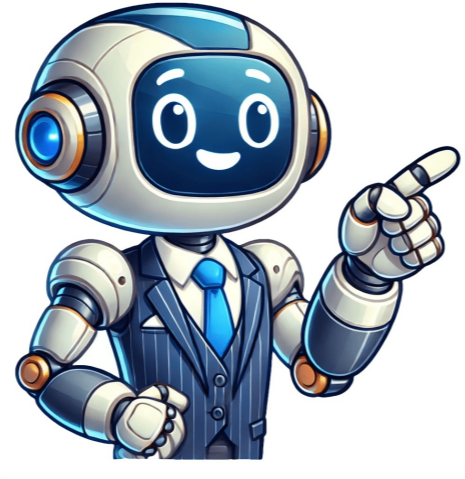


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...in five Muslims in at least 22 countries self-identifies in this way. [396] Main article: Sunnis See also: Suni-Salafi relations The Whirling Dervishes, or Mevlevi Order by the tomb of Süleyman Süleyman in Konya, Turkey Sünnîsm (Arabic: سُنيّون, *tasawwuf*), is a mystical-ascetic approach to Islam that seeks to find a direct personal experience of God. Classical Sufi practices have been criticized by some as being too focused on the repair of the self through "intentional" emotional faculty that one must use [397] [398] [399] [400] [401] [402] [403] [404] [405] [406] [407] [408] [409] [410] [411] [412] [413] [414] [415] [416] [417] [418] [419] [420] [421] [422] [423] [424] [425] [426] [427] [428] [429] [430] [431] [432] [433] [434] [435] [436] [437] [438] [439] [440] [441] [442] [443] [444] [445] [446] [447] [448] [449] [450] [451] [452] [453] [454] [455] [456] [457] [458] [459] [460] [461] [462] [463] [464] [465] [466] [467] [468] [469] [470] [471] [472] [473] [474] [475] [476] [477] [478] [479] [480] [481] [482] [483] [484] [485] [486] [487] [488] [489] [490] [491] [492] [493] [494] [495] [496] [497] [498] [499] [500] [501] [502] [503] [504] [505] [506] [507] [508] [509] [510] [511] [512] [513] [514] [515] [516] [517] [518] [519] [520] [521] [522] [523] [524] [525] [526] [527] [528] [529] [530] [531] [532] [533] [534] [535] [536] [537] [538] [539] [540] [541] [542] [543] [544] [545] [546] [547] [548] [549] [550] [551] [552] [553] [554] [555] [556] [557] [558] [559] [560] [561] [562] [563] [564] [565] [566] [567] [568] [569] [570] [571] [572] [573] [574] [575] [576] [577] [578] [579] [580] [581] [582] [583] [584] [585] [586] [587] [588] [589] [590] [591] [592] [593] [594] [595] [596] [597] [598] [599] [600] [601] [602] [603] [604] [605] [606] [607] [608] [609] [610] [611] [612] [613] [614] [615] [616] [617] [618] [619] [620] [621] [622] [623] [624] [625] [626] [627] [628] [629] [630] [631] [632] [633] [634] [635] [636] [637] [638] [639] [640] [641] [642] [643] [644] [645] [646] [647] [648] [649] [650] [651] [652] [653] [654] [655] [656] [657] [658] [659] [660] [661] [662] [663] [664] [665] [666] [667] [668] [669] [670] [671] [672] [673] [674] [675] [676] [677] [678] [679] [680] [681] [682] [683] [684] [685] [686] [687] [688] [689] [690] [691] [692] [693] [694] [695] [696] [697] [698] [699] [700] [701] [702] [703] [704] [705] [706] [707] [708] [709] [710] [711] [712] [713] [714] [715] [716] [717] [718] [719] [720] [721] [722] [723] [724] [725] [726] [727] [728] [729] [730] [731] [732] [733] [734] [735] [736] [737] [738] [739] [740] [741] [742] [743] [744] [745] [746] [747] [748] [749] [750] [751] [752] [753] [754] [755] [756] [757] [758] [759] [760] [761] [762] [763] [764] [765] [766] [767] [768] [769] [770] [771] [772] [773] [774] [775] [776] [777] [778] [779] [780] [781] [782] [783] [784] [785] [786] [787] [788] [789] [790] [791] [792] [793] [794] [795] [796] [797] [798] [799] [800] [801] [802] [803] [804] [805] [806] [807] [808] [809] [810] [811] [812] [813] [814] [815] [816] [817] [818] [819] [820] [821] [822] [823] [824] [825] [826] [827] [828] [829] [830] [831] [832] [833] [834] [835] [836] [837] [838] [839] [840] [841] [842] [843] [844] [845] [846] [847] [848] [849] [850] [851] [852] [853] [854] [855] [856] [857] [858] [859] [860] [861] [862] [863] [864] [865] [866] [867] [868] [869] [870] [871] [872] [873] [874] [875] [876] [877] [878] [879] [880] [881] [882] [883] [884] [885] [886] [887] [888] [889] [890] [891] [892] [893] [894] [895] [896] [897] [898] [899] [900] [901] [902] [903] [904] [905] [906] [907] [908] [909] [910] [911] [912] [913] [914] [915] [916] [917] [918] [919] [920] [921] [922] [923] [924] [925] [926] [927] [928] [929] [930] [931] [932] [933] [934] [935] [936] [937] [938] [939] [940] [941] [942] [943] [944] [945] [946] [947] [948] [949] [950] [951] [952] [953] [954] [955] [956] [957] [958] [959] [960] [961] [962] [963] [964] [965] [966] [967] [968] [969] [970] [971] [972] [973] [974] [975] [976] [977] [978] [979] [980] [981] [982] [983] [984] [985] [986] [987] [988] [989] [990] [991] [992] [993] [994] [995] [996] [997] [998] [999] [1000]

describing the nature of God. The role of God is to create humans as creations of God upon the earth and their relationship with God, also discussed extensively in the sacred text: “Say: He is Allah, the One” (Quran 112:1) -"Allah, the eternally Besought of all” (Quran 112:2) -"He begetteth nor nor was begotten” (Quran 112:3) -"And there is none comparable unto Him” (Quran 112:4) -"And Allah brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers knowing nothing, and gave you hearing and sight and hearts that haply ye might give thanks” (Quran 16:78) -"Vision comprehendeth (all) Him not, but He comprehendeth (all) vision. He is the Subtle, the Aware” (Quran 6:103). Muslims believe that God has no partners or associates who share in His divinity or authority and that God is transcendent, unlike His creations, and thus has no physical form. Nor is God believed to exist in (or be represented by) any material object. A number of divine attributes or “names,” which serve to describe God, are found in the Qur’an. Some commonly known attributes include the Most Merciful, the Most Forgiving, the Most High, the Unique, and the Everlasting, among others. Are humans an image of God?In Islam, human beings, like other creations, are seen as completely unlike God, though they may aspire to exhibit various attributes manifested by God, such as justice or mercy. Furthermore, even while God is believed to be beyond traditional human perception, the Qur’an states:“His is the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth and, unto Allah (all) things are brought back” (Quran 57:5) -For Muslims, God’s Oneness heightens the awareness that ultimately all life is bound by Divine Law emanating from a singular source and that life has a meaning and purpose which revolves around the consciousness of God’s presence.Moreover, belief in a singular Creator compels conscientous Muslims to view all humanity as one extended family and treat others with justice and equity. Respect for the environment and natural resources also follows from the Muslim view of God. The word Qur’an literally means “the reading” or “the recitation”, and refers to the divinely revealed scripture given to Muhammad. Since Muhammad is considered the last prophet of God, the Qur’an is believed to be the final revelation from God to humanity. The Qur’an is considered by Muslims to be the literal Speech of God given to Muhammad in the Arabic language. The chapters and verses of the Qur’an were revealed throughout Prophet Muhammad’s mission, over a span of close to twenty-three years, from 610-632 C.E. Contrary to common misconception, Muhammad is not the author of the Qur’an. Rather, he is viewed as the chosen recipient of and transmitter of the revelation and the ideal implementor of principles and commandments contained therein. The personal sayings or words of Muhammad are known as hadith, which are distinct from the divine origin of the content of the Qur’an.As verses of the Qur’an were revealed to Muhammad and subsequently repeated by him to companions and other fellow Muslims, they were written down, recited and memorized. The Prophet also typically led the formal worship five times daily, during which he recited the revealed verses according to the procedure that he established. The verses were also recited out loud by designated Muslims in the early dawn hours and prior to the worship times and other important occasions. In short, the Qur’anic verses played an immediate and practical role in the spiritual lives of Muslims from the outset. Before he passed away, the Prophet arranged the 114 chapters into the sequence we find in the Qur’an as we have it today. Scholars, both Muslim and non-Muslim, agree that the Qur’an has remained intact and unchanged to the present. The Qur’an as a scripture stands unique in this regard.Translations of the Qur’an exist in many languages throughout the world, including English, Spanish, French, German, Urdu, Chinese, Malay, Vietnamese, and others. It is important to note that while translations are useful as renderings or explanations of the Qur’an, only the original Arabic text is considered to be the Qur’an itself. The word Muslim literally means “one who willfully submits (to God).” Islam teaches that everything in Creation – microbes, plants, animals, mountains and rivers, planets, and so forth – is “muslim”, testifying to the majesty of the Creator and submitting or committing to His divine laws. Human beings, also, are considered fundamentally “muslim” (submitters to God) in their original spiritual orientation, but being unique creations endowed with abilities of reason, judgement, and choice, they may remain on a God-conscious, righteous path towards divine reward, or may veer away as a consequence of upbringing and life-choices.More commonly, the term Muslim refers to one who believes in the Shahadah (the declaration of faith containing the basic creed of Islam) and embraces a lifestyle in accord with Islamic principles and values. Anybody may be or become a Muslim, regardless of gender, race, nationality, color, or social or economic status. A non-Muslim who decides to enter Islam does so by reciting the Shahadah, (pronounced La-Ilaaha Ila Allah, Muhammad-un Rasool Allah) witnessing that “there is no deity but Allah (God), and Muhammad is His Messenger.” Where do Muslims live?Over 1.8 billion people throughout the world are adherents of Islam. Islam is the religion of diverse peoples living in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Central, East, South and Southeast Asia, Japan, Australia, and North and South America. The global spectrum of races, ethnicities and cultures finds representation in the worldwide Muslim community.Muslims throughout the world share the same essential beliefs, values, and God-centered approach to the world. Furthermore, all Muslims look to the Qur’an and the lifestyle and traditions of Prophet Muhammad for guidance in their daily affairs. In this respect, Muslims share a common Islamic culture, focusing on shared principles and values. At the same time, the ethnic, regional or material cultures of Muslims vary tremendously across the globe. Muslims exhibit different styles of clothing, different tastes for food and drink, diverse languages, and varying traditions and customs.Muslims view the diversity found throughout the world as a natural part of God’s plan for humanity and believe it contributes to Islam’s continued vitality and universal ethos. Consequently, rather than imposing arbitrary cultural uniformity, diverse cultural practices are encouraged and supported. So long as a given cultural practice or tradition does not violate teachings of Islam it is considered legitimate and possibly even beneficial. Why Don’t Muslims Speak Out Against Terrorism? Islam teaches that Muhammad’s role as the final prophet of God was to confirm the authentic teachings of previous prophets and to rectify mistakes or innovations that followers of previous monotheistic faith traditions had introduced into the original religion of humankind. Muhammad is also viewed as the conduit for the completion of God’s guidance to humanity; the scope of his mission is seen as encompassing all people, rather than a specific region, group or community. Furthermore, his life serves as a perfect model of how to practice Islam fully.“And We have not sent thee (O Muhammad) save as a bringer of good tidings and a warner unto all mankind; but most of mankind know not” (Quran 34:28) -Essentially, Muslims view Islam not as a “new” religion, since it embodies the same message and guidance that God revealed to all His messengers, but rather a reestablishment of the “primordial” religion of humankind, centered around recognizing God’s Oneness and adhering to His commands. The view of Islam as having achieved its final form through the scripture given to Muhammad and his own teachings is an important aspect of faith. Consequently, Muhammad is considered the final messenger of God, the “Seal” of the Prophets. Any claimants to prophethood after Muhammad, who died in 632 C.E., are not accepted by Muslims. Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets; and Allah is Aware of all things” (Quran 33:40) -The early life of Muhammad including his work as a merchant, his marriage to Khadijah, his early revelations and the persecution of early Muslims by his own Quraysh tribe. Prophet Muhammad lineage all the way to Adam whyIslam, CC0. According to Allah, men and women are spiritually equal beings created from a common origin. All of the religious obligations in Islam are incumbent upon both women and men. God’s mercy and forgiveness apply equally to men and women. The following Qur’anic verse, arguably the first gender-equity statement in any major scripture, illustrates this point:“Lo! men who surrender unto Allah, and women who surrender, and men who believe and women who believe, and men who obey and women who obey, and men who speak the truth and women who speak the truth, and men who persevere (in righteousness) and women who persevere, and men who are humble and women who are humble, and men who give alms and women who give alms, and men who fast and women who fast, and men who guard their modesty and women who guard (their modesty), and men who remember Allah much and women who remember–Allah hath prepared for them forgiveness and a vast reward” (Quran 33:35) As a consequence of physiological, psychological and other distinguishing factors embodied in men and women by the Creator, the rights, responsibilities, and roles of men and women are believed to naturally differ. Muslims believe that God has assigned the responsibility of providing financially for the family to men, and the important responsibility of fostering a God-conscious and righteous family to women. Such roles do not preclude women from having careers and earning income or men from helping to raise a family. Rather, they provide a general framework for Muslim society, designed to reinforce the concept of a nuclear family unit. The guidelines for men and women’s roles are also meant to ensure dignified and proper relations between people of the opposite sex. Minimal mixing of the sexes in Muslim societies should not be construed to imply inequality or confinement. Rather, such measures are designed to protect individuals from unsolicited attention, inappropriate sexual attraction, adultery and possibly other forms of violence such as rape.Since the seventh century the Qur’an specified the natural and inherent rights of women as well as men, and enjoins people to act in line with God’s teachings of justice and equity. Islam gave gave women the right to own and inherit property, the right to obtain an education, the right to contract marriage and seek divorce, the right to retain one’s family name upon marriage, the right to vote and express opinions on societal affairs, and the right to be supported financially by male relatives (husband, father, brother, etc.) Such rights were unheard of in the seventh century, yet were implemented to varying degrees in Muslim civilization throughout the last fourteen hundred years. It is also important to recognize that only in the last two centuries have such rights been available to women in Western societies. Clearly, common stereotypes regarding women’s rights must be carefully considered, and the current practice of Muslims in various countries and regions must be examined within the context of history and within light of the sources of Islam in order to ascertain the degree to which Muslim women are able to exercise their rights today. Prevailing cultural factors must also be taken into account. Do Muslims believe in laws beside the religious law (Shariah)?The term Shari’ah means “the path” or literally “the way to a watering place.” Shari’ah is commonly used to mean divinely-revealed “Islamic Law,” which plays a central role in the lives of Muslims throughout the world. On a societal level, in some Muslim countries Shari’ah is implemented as the basis for the judicial system and for regulating the collective affairs of citizens. Other countries implement a hybrid of Shari’ah and civil law, while some others do not implement Shari’ah at all.Muslims living as minorities in countries such as the United States abide by the civil laws of the land. However, because of the importance of Shari’ah in enabling the practice of Islam as a complete way of life, Muslims may express a desire for implementation of Shari’ah for themselves. Interestingly, in England, Muslims have established a religious parliament that works with the British government to enable implementation of Muslim personal laws, which deal with matters of marriage, divorce, inheritance, and other issues. What is Islam’s view on human rights and social justice?According to Islam, human beings are the noblest creations of God, endowed with consciousness and freedom of choice. The Qur’an states that God has made humans beings His trustees or stewards on the earth. Muslims see this world as God’s field, and human beings as the caretakers. Muslims believe humanity’s ultimate task is to build a world that reflects the will of God. Thus, Islam is balanced in its concern for salvation in the Hereafter as well as peace and justice in the present world. Islam places great emphasis on social justice for all people. Muslims consider it an obligation to oppose all who exploit, oppress, discriminate, and deal unjustly with people.“O ye who believe! Be ye staunch in justice, witnesses for Allah, even though it be against yourselves or (your) parents or (your) kindred, whether (the case be of) a rich man or a poor man, for Allah is nearer unto both (than ye are). So follow not passion lest ye lapse (from truth) and if ye lapse or fall away, then lo! Allah is ever Informed of what ye do” (Quran 4:135) -Muslims understand the goal of Islam to be the spiritual upliftment of the individual and productive development of society. The ultimate consequence of rejecting God, His guidance and teachings is an unjust society. Conversely, the natural consequence of obedience to God’s laws and living according to His guidance is a society of peace, equality, freedom from want, dignity for all, and justice. What is Jihad?The Arabic word jihad means “struggle” or “exertion” and refers to any spiritual, moral or physical struggle. In the personal sphere, efforts such as obtaining an education, trying to quit smoking, or controlling one’s temper are forms of jihad.Jihad as a military action is justified in two cases: struggle to defend oneself, or others, from aggression and struggle for freedom of religion and justice. The Qur’an says: “They question thee (O Muhammad) with regard to warfare in the sacred month. Say: Warfare therein is a great (transgression), but to turn (men) from the way of Allah, and to disbelieve in Him and in the Inviolable Place of Worship, and to expel his people thence, is a greater (transgression). And they will not cease from fighting against you till they have made you renegades from your religion, if they can. And whoso becometh a renegade and dieth in his dishelof: such are they whose works have fallen both in the world and the Hereafter. Such are rightful owners of the Fire: they will abide therein” (Quran 2:217) - and therefore must be thwarted. Systematic, forced conversion to Islam is a historical myth. Muslims defeated hostile forces and gained control of new lands where Islamic rule was established, yet non-Muslim inhabitants were not forced to become Muslims. Islam clearly condemns such actions: “There is no compulsion in religion.” (Qur’an, 2:256). In the course of time, many non-Muslims did find the message of Islam appealing and converted to Islam, resulting ultimately in the transformation of society at all levels.Because jihad is a highly nuanced concept, the term “holy war” is an inappropriate rendering or definition. In fact, for Muslims, war can never be holy, and the equivalent Arabic term for holy war “harb muqaddasa” never occurs in the Qur’an. Instead, war can be just or unjust, but never holy. What about all the terrorists?Contrary to popular misconception, Islam does not condone terrorism. Prophet Muhammad and his companions prohibited the killing of civilians and non-combatants in the course of warfare. The Qur’an says: “Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but begin not hostilities. Lo! Allah loveth not, aggressors” (Quran 2:190) -Moreover, the Qur’an and the Prophet prohibited the torturing of prisoners and the senseless destruction of crops, animals and property.Struggle against injustice is a key, distinctive concept in Islam. Through the ages, the concept of righteous struggle has inspired Muslim peoples and movements to stand up against oppression and tyranny, as in the case of the wars of independence against colonialism.While some Muslim extremists may perpetrate acts of terrorism, this does not diminish the legitimacy of righteous struggle against oppression and injustice experienced by Muslims in many parts of the world. Indeed, such terrorists violate the teachings of Islam.“O ye who believe! Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity, and let not hatred of any people seduce you that ye deal not justly. Deal justly, that is nearer to your duty. Observe your duty to Allah. Lo! Allah is Informed of what ye do” (Quran 5:8) -in any case, there can be no such thing as “Islamic terrorism”, despite the fact that such terms have become a popular oxymoron. The adjective “Islamic” cannot be applied to what some misguided Muslims do. The Dark Ages where humans thoughts were oppressed, humans prosecuted and Europe was plagued by famine, wars and poverty. But what about the Muslim world? How did they create the first university? Who was Abbas ibn Firnas? And how did Al Khwarizmi lay down the foundation to computers (Hint: algorithm)? An estimated five to seven million Muslims live in North America, and of these, over two and a half million are Americans who have embraced Islam. The United States Department of Defense reports that there are currently more than 9,000 Muslims on active duty in the U.S. armed services. A number of leading American scientists, physicians, sports figures, and scholars are Muslim. Clearly, Muslims are part of the diverse fabric of the United States, and playing a productive role in our society as neighbors, co-workers, colleagues, schoolmates, and friends. The diversity of Muslims in the United States is a hallmark of the community –virtually every race, ethnicity and culture is represented among American Muslims, making for a unique experience not found anywhere else in the world.Currently, there are more than 2150 masjids (mosques) throughout the United States, as well as over 400 Islamic schools (126 full-time), three colleges, 400 associations, an estimated 200,000 businesses, and over 200 publications, journals, and weekly newspapers. The history of Islam in the U.S.The history of Islam in the New World in some sense precedes that of the United States itself. Some researchers claim that certain artifacts, found in the Mississippi delta and other locales, antedating the European “voyages of discovery,” lend credence to the possibility of Arab or African expeditions. European sailing vessels, including those under Christopher Columbus’ command, often enlisted Muslim crew members, due to their expertise in maritime navigation.Later on, in American history, as many as 20% of the slaves brought to the United States from Africa were Muslims (before being forcibly converted to Christianity). Another group of Muslims, Spaniards known as Mudejars, established roots in the New World after the conquest of Granada in 1492 and the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain resulting from the Inquisition. The influence of these highly-skilled Hispano-Arab Muslim craftsmen and artists has had far-reaching effects in American architecture and design, which are still in evidence today, especially in the American Southwest.In the modern era, since the late 1900s, Muslims from all over the world, along with people of other faiths, have immigrated to the U.S. to make a better life for themselves and to contribute their unique talents and sensibilities to the ever-evolving American social matrix. In the last fifty years, a dramatic increase in native-born American Muslims and converts to Islam has taken place as well, providing new generations of Muslims prepared to interact fruitfully with fellow Americans and raise the contributions of the community to higher levels. Is Islam one of the most recent religions to come to the US? Or its roots are deeper in the fabric of this nation? And who are the current Muslims in America? This video is a view of Islam and Muslims in the US. We believe in and strive for the nobility of consciousness, truthfulness of expression and goodness of action. We believe that peace blossoms through love and justice and in times where “me” becomes “we” and “mine” transforms to “ours”.We believe that true faith inspires a deep reverence for life, love for the living, care for the environment, and an unwavering commitment to social justice. We believe that all creation is part of God’s (Allah’s) family while the best of people are those best to God’s (Allah’s) universal family.We are on a mission to empower, nurture, protect, and promote values that affirm human dignity, human rights and the integrity of creation while making the world healthier, peaceful, and more beautiful. We at IslamiCity invite you to please join us.Please DONATE generously to help sustain this public outreach initiative! Knowledgebase

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