

# Muhammad

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Muhammad (c. 570 – 8 June 632 CE) was an Arab religious, military and political leader and the founder of Islam. According to Islam, he was a prophet who was divinely inspired to preach and confirm the monotheistic teachings of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and other prophets. He is believed by Muslims to be the Seal of the Prophets, and along with the Quran, his teachings and normative examples form the basis for Islamic religious belief.

According to writers of Al-Sʿra al-Nabawiyya Muhammad was born in Mecca to the aristocratic Banu Hashim clan of the Quraysh. He was the son of Abdullah ibn Abd al-Muttalib and Amina bint Wahb. His father, Abdullah, the son of tribal leader Abd al-Muttalib ibn Hashim, died around the time Muhammad was born. His mother Amina died when he was six, leaving Muhammad an orphan. He was raised under the care of his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, and paternal uncle, Abu Talib. In later years, he would periodically seclude himself in a mountain cave named Hira for several nights of prayer. When he was 40, in c. 610, Muhammad reported being visited by Gabriel in the cave and receiving his first revelation from God. In 613, Muhammad started preaching these revelations publicly, proclaiming that "God is One", that complete "submission" (Islām) to God (Allāh) is the right way of life (dīn), and that he was a prophet and messenger of God, similar to other prophets in Islam.

Muhammad's followers were initially few in number, and experienced persecution by Meccan polytheists for 13 years. To escape ongoing persecution, he sent some of his followers to Abyssinia in 615, before he and his followers migrated from Mecca to Medina (then known as Yathrib) later in 622. This event, the Hijrah, marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar, also known as the Hijri calendar. In Medina, Muhammad united the tribes under the Constitution of Medina. In December 629, after eight years of intermittent fighting with Meccan tribes, Muhammad gathered an army of 10,000 Muslim converts and marched on the city of Mecca. The conquest went largely uncontested, and Muhammad seized the city with minimal casualties. In 632, a few months after returning from the Farewell Pilgrimage, he fell ill and died. By the time of his death, most of the Arabian Peninsula had converted to Islam.

The revelations (waʿy) that Muhammad reported receiving until his death form the verses (ʾayah) of the Quran, upon which Islam is based, are regarded by Muslims as the verbatim word of God and his final revelation. Besides the Quran, Muhammad's teachings and practices, found in transmitted reports, known as hadith, and in his biography (sʿrah), are also upheld and used as sources of Islamic law. Apart from Islam, Muhammad has received praise in Sikhism as an inspirational figure, in the Druze faith as one of the seven main prophets, and in the Baháʼí Faith as a Manifestation of God.

## Muhammad Ali

*Muhammad Ali (/ˈmʌhˈmɑːd ˈɑːli/; born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.; January 17, 1942 – June 3, 2016) was an American professional boxer and social activist. A global*

Muhammad Ali (; born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr.; January 17, 1942 – June 3, 2016) was an American professional boxer and social activist. A global cultural icon, widely known by the nickname "the Greatest", he is often regarded as the greatest heavyweight boxer of all time. He held the Ring magazine heavyweight title from 1964 to 1970, was the undisputed champion from 1974 to 1978, and was the WBA and Ring heavyweight champion from 1978 to 1979. In 1999, he was named Sportsman of the Century by Sports

Illustrated and the Sports Personality of the Century by the BBC.

Born in Louisville, Kentucky, he began training as an amateur boxer at age 12. At 18, he won a gold medal in the light heavyweight division at the 1960 Summer Olympics and turned professional later that year. He joined the Nation of Islam in the early 1960s, but later disavowed it in the mid-1970s. He won the world heavyweight championship, defeating Sonny Liston in a major upset on February 25, 1964, at age 22. During that year, he denounced his birth name as a "slave name" and formally changed his name to Muhammad Ali. In 1967, Ali refused to be drafted into the military, owing to his religious beliefs and ethical opposition to the Vietnam War, and was found guilty of draft evasion and stripped of his boxing titles. He stayed out of prison while appealing the decision to the Supreme Court, where his conviction was overturned in 1971. He did not fight for nearly four years and lost a period of peak performance as an athlete. Ali's actions as a conscientious objector to the Vietnam War made him an icon for the larger counterculture of the 1960s generation, and he became a prominent, high-profile figure of racial pride for African Americans during the civil rights movement and throughout his career.

He fought in several highly publicized boxing matches, including fights with Liston, Joe Frazier (including the Fight of the Century, to that point the biggest boxing event and the Thrilla in Manila), and George Foreman in The Rumble in the Jungle. At a time when many boxers let their managers do the talking, Ali became renowned for his provocative and outlandish persona. He was famous for trash talking, often free-styled with rhyme schemes and spoken word poetry, and is identified as a pioneer in hip-hop. He often predicted in which round he would knock out his opponent. As a boxer, Ali was known for his unorthodox movement, footwork, head movement, and rope-a-dope technique, among others.

Outside boxing, Ali performed as a spoken word artist, releasing two studio albums: *I Am the Greatest!* (1963) and *The Adventures of Ali and His Gang vs. Mr. Tooth Decay* (1976). Both albums received Grammy Award nominations. He also featured as an actor and writer, releasing two autobiographies. Ali retired from boxing in 1981 and focused on religion, philanthropy, and activism. In 1984, he made public his diagnosis of Parkinson's syndrome, which some reports attributed to boxing-related injuries, though he and his specialist physicians disputed this. He remained an active public figure, but in his later years made fewer public appearances as his condition worsened, and was cared for by his family.

Elijah Muhammad

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Elijah Muhammad (born Elijah Robert Poole; October 7, 1897 – February 25, 1975) was an American religious leader, black separatist, and self-proclaimed Messenger of Allah who led the Nation of Islam (NOI) from 1933 until his death in 1975. Muhammad was also the teacher and mentor of Malcolm X, Louis Farrakhan, Muhammad Ali, and his son, Warith Deen Mohammed.

In the 1930s, Muhammad formally established the Nation of Islam, a religious movement that originated under the leadership and teachings of Wallace Fard Muhammad and that promoted black power, pride, economic empowerment, and racial separation. Muhammad taught that Master Fard Muhammad is the 'Son of Man' of the Bible, and after Fard's disappearance in 1934, Muhammad assumed control over Fard's former ministry, formally changing its name to the "Nation of Islam".

Under Muhammad's leadership, the Nation of Islam grew from a small, local black congregation into an influential nationwide movement. He was unique in his combination of black nationalism with traditional Islamic themes. Muhammad promoted black self-sufficiency and self-reliance over integration, and he encouraged African Americans to create a separate state of their own. Muhammad also rejected the civil rights movement for its emphasis on integration, instead promoting a separate black community.

Muhammad's views on race and his call for black people having an independent nation for themselves made him a controversial figure, both within and outside the Nation of Islam. He has been variously described as a black nationalist and a black supremacist. He is also known to have been a serial child rapist.

Muhammad died on February 25, 1975, after a period of declining health. He was succeeded as head of the Nation of Islam by his son, Wallace Muhammad.

## Belal Muhammad

*Belal Muhammad (born July 9, 1988) is an American professional mixed martial artist who currently competes in the Welterweight division of the Ultimate*

Belal Muhammad (born July 9, 1988) is an American professional mixed martial artist who currently competes in the Welterweight division of the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), where he is the former UFC Welterweight Champion. As of May 13, 2025, he is #1 in the UFC welterweight rankings and as of August 19, 2025, he is #13 in the UFC men's pound-for-pound rankings. A professional since 2012, he has also competed for Bellator and Titan FC.

## Murder of Kanhaiya Lal

*the circulated videos, two men—identifying themselves as Muhammad Riyaz Attari and Muhammad Ghaus—were seen holding butcher knives and claiming responsibility*

On 28 June 2022, Kanhaiya Lal Teli, an Indian tailor, was beheaded by two Muslim men in Udaipur, Rajasthan. The attackers filmed the act and circulated the video online.

The motive behind the killing was Lal's alleged sharing of a social media post in support of Bharatiya Janata Party spokesperson Nupur Sharma, whose remarks had sparked the 2022 Muhammad remarks controversy.

According to reports, the assailants entered Lal's tailor shop pretending to be customers. They then murdered him, filmed the act, and uploaded it online.

In one of the circulated videos, two men—identifying themselves as Muhammad Riyaz Attari and Muhammad Ghaus—were seen holding butcher knives and claiming responsibility for the killing.

The incident triggered widespread outrage across India. Authorities imposed a curfew in parts of Udaipur and suspended internet services to curb the spread of violence and misinformation.

## Osama bin Laden

*Muhammad bin Ladin, never officially registered the name. Osama bin Laden was born on 10 March 1957 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. His father was Muhammad bin*

Osama bin Laden (10 March 1957 – 2 May 2011) was a Saudi-born militant leader who was the founder and first general emir of al-Qaeda. Ideologically a pan-Islamist, Bin Laden participated in the Afghan mujahideen against the Soviet Union, and supported the Bosnian mujahideen during the Bosnian War. Opposed to American foreign policy in the Middle East, Bin Laden declared war on the United States in 1996 and advocated attacks targeting U.S. assets in various countries, and supervised the execution of the September 11 attacks inside the U.S. in 2001.

Born in Riyadh to the aristocratic bin Laden family, he studied at Saudi and foreign universities until 1979, when he joined the mujahideen fighting against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In 1984, he co-founded Maktab al-Khidamat, which recruited foreign mujahideen into the war. As the Soviet war in Afghanistan came to an end, Bin Laden founded al-Qaeda in 1988 to carry out worldwide jihad. In the Gulf War, Bin

Laden's offer of support to Saudi Arabia against Iraq was rejected by the Saudi royal family, which instead sought American aid.

Bin Laden's views on pan-Islamism and anti-Americanism resulted in his expulsion from Saudi Arabia in 1991. He shifted his headquarters to Sudan until 1996, when he established a new base in Afghanistan, where he was supported by the Taliban. Bin Laden declared two fatwas in August 1996 and February 1998, declaring holy war against the U.S. After al-Qaeda's bombings of U.S. embassies in East Africa, which killed hundreds of civilians, he was indicted by a U.S. district court and listed on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorists and Most Wanted Fugitives lists. In October 1999, the United Nations designated al-Qaeda as a terrorist organization.

Bin Laden organized the September 11 attacks, which killed nearly 3,000 people, mostly civilians. This resulted in the U.S. invading Afghanistan and launching the war on terror. Bin Laden became the subject of a nearly decade-long international manhunt led by the U.S. During this period, he hid in the mountains of Afghanistan and later escaped to neighboring Pakistan. On 2 May 2011, Bin Laden was killed by U.S. special operations forces at his compound in Abbottabad. His corpse was buried in the Arabian Sea and he was succeeded by his deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri on 16 June 2011. During his lifetime, Bin Laden became a symbol of terrorism and was reviled in the United States and elsewhere as a mass murderer due to his orchestration of numerous attacks and bombings.

## Nation of Islam

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The Nation of Islam (NOI) is a religious organization founded in the United States by Wallace Fard Muhammad in 1930. A centralized and hierarchical organization, the NOI is committed to black nationalism and focuses its attention on the black African diaspora, especially on African Americans. While describing itself as Islamic and using Islamic terminology, its religious tenets differ substantially from orthodox Islamic traditions. Scholars of religion characterize it as a new religious movement.

The Nation teaches that there has been a succession of mortal gods, each a black man named Allah, of whom Fard Muhammad is the latest. It claims that the first Allah created the earliest humans, the dark-skinned Original Asiatic Race, whose members possessed inner divinity and from whom all people of color descend. It maintains that a scientist named Yakub then created the white race, a group that lacked inner divinity and who were intrinsically violent. The whites overthrew the Original Asiatic Race and achieved global dominance. Setting itself against the white-dominated society of the United States, the NOI campaigns for the creation of an independent African American nation-state and calls for African Americans to be economically self-sufficient and separatist. A millenarian tradition, it maintains that Fard Muhammad will soon return aboard a spaceship, the "Mother Plane" or "Mother Ship", to wipe out the white-dominated order and establish a utopia. Members worship in buildings, varyingly called temples or mosques. Practitioners are expected to live disciplined lives, adhering to strict dress codes, specific dietary requirements, and patriarchal gender roles.

Wallace Fard Muhammad established the Nation of Islam in Detroit. He drew on various sources, especially Noble Drew Ali's Moorish Science Temple of America and black nationalist trends like Garveyism. After Fard Muhammad disappeared in 1934, the leadership of the NOI was assumed by Elijah Muhammad, who expanded the NOI's teachings, declared Fard Muhammad to be the latest Allah, and built the group's business empire. Attracting growing attention in the late 1950s and 1960s, the NOI's influence expanded through high-profile members such as the black nationalist activist Malcolm X and the boxer Muhammad Ali. Deeming it a threat to domestic security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation worked to undermine the group. Following Elijah Muhammad's death in 1975, his son Wallace D. Muhammad took over the organization, moving it towards Sunni Islam and renaming it the World Community of Islam in the West. Members seeking to retain

Elijah Muhammad's teachings re-established the Nation of Islam under Louis Farrakhan's leadership in 1977. Farrakhan has continued to develop the NOI's beliefs, for instance by drawing connections with Dianetics, and expanding its economic and agricultural operations.

Based in the United States, the Nation of Islam has also established a presence abroad, with membership open only to people of color. In 2007 it was estimated to have 50,000 members. The Nation has proven to be particularly successful at converting prisoners. The Southern Poverty Law Center and the Anti-Defamation League have characterized it as a black supremacist hate group that promotes racism towards white people, antisemitism, and anti-LGBT rhetoric. Muslim critics accuse it of promoting teachings that are not authentically Islamic.

## Wives of Muhammad

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Muhammad is said to have had thirteen wives in total (although two have ambiguous accounts, Rayhana bint Zayd and Maria al-Qibtiyya, as wife or concubine). As a sign of respect, Muslims refer to each of these wives with the title "Umm al-Mu'minin" (Arabic: ?? ??????????????, lit. 'Mother of the Believers'), which is derived from 33:6 of the Quran.

Muhammad's first marriage was to Khadija bint Khuwaylid in 595, when he was 25 and she was either 28 or 41. She was his only wife until her death in 619 (the Year of Sorrow) ended their 24-year-long marriage. After Khadija, Muhammad went on to marry ten women: Sawdah bint Zam'ah in 619; Aisha bint Abi Bakr in 620; Hafsa bint Umar, Zaynab bint Khuzayma, and Hind bint Abi Umayya in 625; Zaynab bint Jahsh in 627; Juwayriya bint al-Harith and Ramla bint Abi Sufyan ibn Harb in 628; and Safiyya bint Huyayy and Maymunah bint al-Harith in 629. Additionally, the statuses of Rayhana bint Zayd and Maria al-Qibtiyya are disputed, as there has been disagreement among Muslim scholars on whether they were concubines or wives. With the exception of Aisha, all of these women were previously widowed or divorced. The common view is that Muhammad had seven biological children (three sons and four daughters) and all but one of them were produced with Khadija between 598 and 611 or 615. Maria bore Muhammad a son in 630 (his seventh child), but none of his sons survived to adulthood.

Traditionally, two epochs delineate Muhammad's life and career: pre-Hijrah Mecca between 570 and 622; and post-Hijrah Medina between 622 and his death in 632. "Hijrah" refers to Muhammad's migration, alongside the early Muslims, from Mecca to Medina due to the Meccans' persecution of the early Muslims. All but two of his marriages were contracted after this migration.

## Shia Islam

*Shia Islam is the second-largest branch of Islam. It holds that Muhammad designated Ali ibn Abi Talib (r. 656–661) as both his political successor (caliph)*

Shia Islam is the second-largest branch of Islam. It holds that Muhammad designated Ali ibn Abi Talib (r. 656–661) as both his political successor (caliph) and as the spiritual leader of the Muslim community (imam). However, his right is understood to have been usurped by a number of Muhammad's companions at the meeting of Saqifa, during which they appointed Abu Bakr (r. 632–634) as caliph instead. As such, Sunni Muslims believe Abu Bakr, Umar (r. 634–644), Uthman (r. 644–656) and Ali to be 'rightly-guided caliphs', whereas Shia Muslims regard only Ali as the legitimate successor.

Shia Muslims believe that the imamate continued through Ali's sons, Hasan and Husayn, after which various Shia branches developed and recognized different imams. They revere the ahl al-bayt, the family of Muhammad, maintaining that they possess divine knowledge. Shia holy sites include the shrine of Ali in Najaf, the shrine of Husayn in Karbala, and other mausoleums of the ahl al-bayt. Later events, such as

Husayn's martyrdom in the Battle of Karbala (680 CE), further influenced the development of Shia Islam, contributing to the formation of a distinct religious sect with its own rituals and shared collective memory.

Shia Islam is followed by 10–13% of all Muslims with a population of an estimated 150–200 million followers worldwide. The three main Shia branches are Twelverism, Isma'ilism, and Zaydism. Shia Muslims form a majority of the population in three countries across the Muslim world: Iran, Iraq, and Azerbaijan. Significant Shia communities are also found in Bahrain, Lebanon, Kuwait, Turkey, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan and the Indian subcontinent. Iran stands as the world's only country where Shia Islam forms the foundation of both its laws and governance system.

## Sunni Islam

*Islam and the largest religious denomination in the world. It holds that Muhammad did not appoint any successor and that his closest companion Abu Bakr (r*

Sunni Islam is the largest branch of Islam and the largest religious denomination in the world. It holds that Muhammad did not appoint any successor and that his closest companion Abu Bakr (r. 632–634) rightfully succeeded him as the caliph of the Muslim community, being appointed at the meeting of Saqifa. This contrasts with the Shia view, which holds that Muhammad appointed Ali ibn Abi Talib (r. 656–661) as his successor. Nevertheless, Sunnis revere Ali, along with Abu Bakr, Umar (r. 634–644) and Uthman (r. 644–656) as 'rightly-guided caliphs'.

The term Sunni means those who observe the sunna, the practices of Muhammad. The Quran, together with hadith (especially the Six Books) and ijma (scholarly consensus), form the basis of all traditional jurisprudence within Sunni Islam. Sharia legal rulings are derived from these basic sources, in conjunction with consideration of public welfare and juristic discretion, using the principles of jurisprudence developed by the four legal schools: Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki and Shafi'i.

In matters of creed, the Sunni tradition upholds the six pillars of iman (faith) and comprises the Ash'ari and Maturidi schools of kalam (theology) as well as the textualist Athari school. Sunnis regard the first four caliphs Abu Bakr (r. 632–634), Umar (r. 634–644), Uthman (r. 644–656) and Ali (r. 656–661) as rashidun (rightly-guided) and revere the sahaba, tabi'in, and tabi al-tabi'in as the salaf (predecessors).

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