

Acton University 2019

Outline of "Islam 101" lecture by Mustafa Akyol

What are the basic teachings of Islam? How do they compare to those of Judaism and Christianity? Who was the historical Muhammad? How one should make sense of controversial concepts such as sharia, jihad or caliphate? This lecture will present answers to such questions, while also offering an analysis of the doctrinal problems in the contemporary Muslim world.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1) Arabia before Islam: Desert, idolatry, and tribalism
- 2) Muhammad: From merchant to messenger of God.
- 3) A Judaism-like theology, a Christianity-like universalism.
- 4) The Qur'an's basic themes: God, creation, prophesy, afterlife.
- 5) Controversial concepts: Jihad, the Sharia and the Caliphate
- 6) Basics division in Islam: Sunnis, Shiites, and others.
- 7) Trends in Islam today

SUGGESTED READING

- Mustafa Akyol, *Islam without Extremes: A Muslim Case for Liberty*, WW Norton, 2011
(Available at the Acton University Book Store)

- Jack Miles, *God in the Qur'an*, Random House, 2018

- Fred M. Donner, *Muhammad and the Believers: At the Origins of Islam*, Harvard University Press, 2010

- Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History*, Modern Library, 2002

You can read articles by Mustafa Akyol on these topics in his [New York Times page](#), and follow him on Twitter at [@akyolinEnglish](#).