

# Further Reading

## A note of caution

All books and Web sites come from a certain perspective. It is important both to read critically and to look around at a range of opinions. If a book has been translated, edited, or abridged, be aware that someone else is coming between you and the original. Almost anyone can set up a Web site giving personal opinions, and some of them lack balance in the positions they offer. No one will agree with everything they read, so be critical and be aware!

## Web sites

Dr. Gary Bunt of the University of Wales, Lampeter, has produced two invaluable guides to Islamic Internet sites:

Gary Bunt. *Virtually Islamic: Computer-Mediated Communication and Cyber Islamic Environments*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000.

Gary Bunt. *Islam in the Digital Age: E-jihad, Online Fatwas, and Cyber Islamic Environments*. London: Pluto, 2003. He maintains a homepage with a regularly updated list of Web sites, called "Pathways," with short descriptions: [www.virtuallyislamic.com](http://www.virtuallyislamic.com).

Another site with well-researched Internet links is run by Prof. Alan Godlas of the University of Georgia: [www.arches.uga.edu/~godlas/](http://www.arches.uga.edu/~godlas/). This provides links for research into a variety of Islamic topics and is updated with listings of current academic research on Islam.

A *fatwa* service run by the school of Yusuf al-Qaradawi can be found at: [www.islamonline.net](http://www.islamonline.net).

A great source of information on aspects of Muslim culture and civilization can be found at: [www.muslimheritage.com](http://www.muslimheritage.com).

The homepage of the Muslim Council of Britain can be found at: [www.mcb.org.uk/direct](http://www.mcb.org.uk/direct).

## Books

### *Copies of the Qur'an*

Copies of the Qur'an in Arabic and English with footnotes are printed in Saudi Arabia for free distribution. The translation is based on that of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, but both it and the footnotes have been revised by a team of scholars approved by the publishers. It is often possible to obtain free copies by asking at mosques. Many translations are published in English, and those mentioned in this book are noted here.

Abdullah Yusuf Ali. *The Holy Qur'an*. Revised with English footnotes. Birmingham: IPCI, 1998.

Mir Ahmed Ali. *Holy Qur'an*. New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 1988.

Muhammad Asad. *The Message of the Qur'an*. Gibraltar: Dar al-Andalus, 1984.  
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 T. B. Irvine et al. *The Qur'an: Basic Teachings*. Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1979.  
 Marmaduke Pickthall. *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*. New York: Dorset, n.d.

#### *Introductions to the Qur'an*

Farid Esack. *The Qur'an: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2002.  
 Muhammad Abdel Haleem. *Understanding the Qur'an: Themes and Style*.  
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 Jacques Jomier. *The Great Themes of the Qur'an*. London: SCM Press, 1997.  
 Imam Nawawi. *Etiquette with the Qur'an*. Trans. Musa Furber. Chicago:  
 Starlatch, 2003.  
 Fazlur Rahman. *Major Themes of the Qur'an*. Minneapolis: Bibliotheca  
 Islamica, 1980.  
 Neal Robinson. *Discovering the Qur'an*. London: SCM Press, 2003.  
 Anton Wessels. *Understanding the Qur'an*. London: SCM Press, 2000.

#### *Qur'an Commentaries*

Mahmoud Ayoub. *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*. 2 vols. to date. Albany:  
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 Abdul Kalam Azad. *The Tarjuman al-Qur'an*. 3 vols. New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan,  
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 Abridged into one vol. as *The Glorious Qur'an*. Leicester: Islamic Founda-  
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 dous, 1996–.  
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 Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1988–.  
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 Foundation, 1999–.  
 Muhammad Shafi. *Ma'ariful Qur'an*. 7 vols. to date. Karachi: Maktaba-e-  
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 Al-Tabari. *The Commentary on the Qur'an*. Abridged, 1 vol. to date. Oxford:  
 Oxford University Press, 1987–.  
 Al-Tabataba'i. *Al-Mizan: An Exegesis of the Qur'an*. 7 vols. to date. Tehran:  
 World Organization for Islamic Services, 1983–.  
 Shabbir Ahmad 'Usmani. *The Noble Qur'an*. 3 vols. Karachi: Darul-Isha'at, 1999.

*General Introductions to Islam*

- Mahmoud Ayoub. *Islam: Faith and History*. Oxford: Oneworld, 2004.  
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# Glossary

**Abbasids:** The second dynasty of Sunni Islam, based in Baghdad from 750 to 1258 C.E.

**‘abd:** The Loving Servant of God.

**Abdallah:** Male name meaning Servant of God.

**adhan:** The call to prayer before each *salat*.

**Ahl al-Bayt:** The Family of the Prophet Muhammad.

**Ahl al-Kitab:** The People of the Book or Earlier Revelations, that is, Jews and Christians.

**ahwal:** In sufi traditions, a higher state of being bestowed by God.

**akhira:** The afterlife.

**alim:** A scholar of the Islamic sciences.

**al-Andalus:** The Arabic name for Islamic Spain.

**ansar:** The first group of Muslims in Madina, who welcomed the *muhajirun* in 622.

**‘aqiqa:** The ceremonies surrounding the seventh day after birth.

**asbab al-nuzul:** The occasions of revelation that record the contexts in which portions of the Qur’an were revealed.

**Ashura Day:** The tenth of Muharram, on which the martyrdom of Imam Husayn is commemorated.

**‘awra:** A woman’s attractive charms.

**aya:** Literally “a sign,” used for the verses of the Qur’an.

**Ayatollah:** Literally “Sign of God,” the highest level of religious scholars in Ithna Ashari Shi’a Islam.

**ba’ya:** The bond of allegiance made by a *murid* to a *shaykh*.

**baqa:** Sufi term for abiding in God.

**baraka:** A blessing from God. In sufi terms a spiritual power that comes from having attained a higher state of being.

**barzakh:** Life in the grave in a state of timeless awareness.

**basmala:** The Arabic expression *Bism’Allah al-Rahman al-Rahim*, In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

**batini:** Esoteric or hidden dimensions to the interpretation of the Qur’an.

**bila kayf:** “Ask not how.”

**Bohras:** A branch of the Sevener or Isma’ili Shi’a Muslims.

- al-buraq:** The mysterious mount that carried Muhammad on his miraculous night journey (*isra*) from Makka to Jerusalem.
- Caliph:** The traditional leader of Sunni Muslims.
- daff:** A simple drum.
- da'i:** Someone who makes *da'wa*, inviting others to follow the path of Islam.
- da'if:** In Hadith studies, a Hadith with a weakness in its *isnad*.
- al-Dajjal:** The Great Impostor who will lead the forces of evil in the Last Days.
- da'wa:** The invitation to others to follow the way of Islam.
- dervish:** A sufi practitioner.
- dhikr:** The remembrance of God in the heart.
- dhimmis:** Literally “the protected people,” the status given to Jews and Christians in the Islamic Empire.
- din al-fitra:** The natural God-given way of life.
- du'a:** Informal prayers of supplication.
- Eid:** Another spelling for 'Id.
- fana:** Sufi term for dying to self but being alive in God.
- faqih:** A scholar who specializes in Islamic law.
- faqir:** A sufi who embraces a life of poverty and simplicity.
- fard:** A compulsory act.
- fard 'ayn:** An act that is compulsory for all Muslims.
- fard kifaya:** A compulsory duty that can be discharged by a group of Muslims on behalf of all Muslims.
- fatwa:** A learned opinion based on personal judgment by a recognized authority in Islamic law.
- fiqh:** The science of law.
- al-Furqan:** The Criterion, name given to the Qur'an.
- Ghadir:** The oasis at which Muhammad is believed by.
- ghayba:** Occultation, the hidden existence of the Twelfth Imam.
- ghusl:** The major ablution requiring a complete bath or shower.
- hadd:** The limit, a punishment prescribed by the Qur'an.
- Hadith:** A tradition of Muhammad; something he said, taught, did, or an action he approved.
- hadith qudsi:** Sayings from God given to Muhammad that were not part of the Qur'an.
- hafiz:** Title given to a male who has memorized the whole Qur'an.
- hafizah:** Title given to a female who has memorized the whole Qur'an.

- Hajj:** The annual pilgrimage to Makka.
- al-Hajj:** Title given to a man who has performed the *Hajj*.
- al-Hajjah:** Title given to a woman who has performed the *Hajj*.
- halal:** Something that is compulsory or fit for Muslim usage.
- hamd:** Praised.
- al-hamdu li ‘Ilah:** All praise/thanks be to God.
- hanif:** Seeker; one who worshipped one God alone but was in search of deeper knowledge.
- haqa’iq:** Spiritual truths contained in the Qur’an that are accessible only to the Prophet and Imams.
- haram:** An action or thing that is forbidden.
- hasan:** In Hadith studies, a beautiful and reliable Hadith.
- al-Hawiya:** Literally “the Abyss,” one of the names for hell.
- Hijra:** The migration of Muhammad and early Muslims from Makka to Madina in 622 C.E.
- al-Huda:** The Guidance, name given to the Qur’an.
- hulul:** Indwelling.
- ‘al-Hutama:** Literally “that which shatters,” one of the names for hell.
- ibada:** The worship of God.
- ‘ibarah:** A literary understanding of the Qur’an.
- ‘Id al-Adha:** The Festival of Sacrifice that comes at the end of the *Hajj* commemorating the sacrifice of Ibrahim and Isma’il.
- ‘Id al-Fitr:** The Festival of Fast-Breaking at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.
- ‘idda:** The waiting period after divorce during which a woman cannot remarry.
- iftar:** The light meal with which the fast is broken during Ramadan.
- ihram:** The two sheets used as clothing by men on the *Hajj*.
- ihsan:** To live in the constant watchfulness of God.
- ijma:** A consensus on a point of Shari’a.
- ijtihad:** An intellectual striving to solve a question.
- ilham:** Divine inspiration.
- ilm al-kalam:** The science of theology.
- Imam:** Among Shi’a Muslims, the infallible leader of the Muslim community in succession to Muhammad.
- imam:** The person who leads the congregation in *salat*.
- imam khatib:** A scholar who delivers the address (*khutba*) at Friday Prayers.

- iman:** Faith or belief.
- inabat:** A station on the sufi way: conversion.
- infaq:** The economic principle of the circulation of wealth.
- Injil:** The Book that was sent to the Prophet 'Isa.
- al-insan al-kamil:** The perfect human being.
- Insha'a Allah:** God willing.
- iqama:** The call that *salat* is about to begin.
- iqra:** "Recite," the command given to Muhammad by the Angel Jibril.
- isharah:** A meaning alluded to in the Qur'an that is accessible only to scholars.
- Islam:** The way of life based on the revelation of the Qur'an and teaching of Muhammad.
- islam:** The state of perfect harmony between God and all creation.
- Isma'ilis:** The Seveners among the Shi'a, who disagreed with the majority over the identity of the Seventh Imam.
- Isma'ilis (Nizari):** The group of Isma'ilis who accept the Aga Khan as the Living Imam.
- isnad:** The chain of transmitters of a Hadith.
- isra:** The miraculous night journey of Muhammad from Makka to Jerusalem.
- Ithna Ashari:** The Twelvers, the largest branch of Shi'a Muslims, who recognize Twelve Imams.
- i'tikaf:** The practice of remaining in seclusion during the last ten days of Ramadan.
- Ja'fari School:** The *madhhab* school of law, followed by Ithna Ashari Shi'a Muslims.
- Jahannam:** Literally "the Depths," one of the names for hell.
- al-Jahim:** Literally "the place for idolaters," one of the names for hell.
- ja'iz:** A neutral act that carries neither reward nor punishment.
- al-Janna:** Literally "the Garden" or Paradise.
- Jibril:** The Arabic form of the name Gabriel, the messenger angel.
- jihad:** To struggle on the path of God to establish goodness and root out evil and oppression.
- al-jihad al-akbar:** The constant struggle against the wayward self, "the greater jihad."
- al-jihad al-asghar:** The legitimate use of force in defense, "the lesser jihad."

- jinn:** A third order of sentient beings, created of fire, that inhabit a parallel universe to human beings.
- jizya:** A tax paid by Christians and Jews in the Islamic Empire in lieu of military service.
- Jum'a Masjid:** A principal mosque in which the main Friday congregational prayer is held.
- juz:** One-thirtieth part of the Qur'an.
- Ka'ba:** The cuboid building in the center of Makka built by Ibrahim and Isma'il, the earthly focus of prayer.
- Kalam Allah:** The eternal transcendent Speech of God.
- Karbala:** The site of Imam Husayn's martyrdom in 680.
- khafd:** The Arabic word for female circumcision.
- khalifa:** The Regent of God on earth.
- khanqah:** A sufi residential spiritual center.
- khitan:** The circumcision of boys.
- al-Khumm:** Shi'a Muslims to have nominated Ali as his successor.
- khums:** The Fifth or twenty percent payment in Shi'a Islam.
- khutba:** An address given at the Friday prayers (*Salat al-fum'a*).
- kiswa:** Embroidered black cloth that covers the Ka'ba.
- Koran:** Another spelling of Qur'an.
- kunya:** An addition to someone's name signifying that they are the father or mother of . . . (the child's name).
- laqab:** An addition to someone's name giving their place of birth, profession, or place where they have studied.
- lata'if:** A hidden meaning in a Qur'anic verse accessible only to the most pious.
- al-Lawh al-Mahfuz:** The Preserved Tablet that contains the *Kalam Allah* in the transcendent world.
- Laylat al-Mi'raj:** The Night of the Ascension of the Prophet, which commemorates Muhammad's *isra* and *mi'raj*.
- Laylat al-Qadr:** The Night of Power or Destiny, which celebrates the first revelation of the Qur'an.
- Laza:** Literally "the Great Furnace," one of the names for hell.
- madhhab:** A school of law.
- Madina:** The city in Arabia in which Muhammad established the first Muslim community and in which he is buried.
- madrasa:** An Islamic school or center of learning.

- mahabba:** A sufi higher state of being; love.
- al-Mahdi:** The Rightly Guided One who will appear in the Last Days. In Shi'a Islam, associated with the Hidden Imam.
- mahr:** The dowry given to the bride by her husband.
- mahram:** A person's close relations with whom marriage is not permitted.
- Makka:** City in Arabia, the birthplace of Muhammad, the site of the Ka'ba, and the location of the *Hajj*.
- makruh:** An action that is disapproved.
- maqamat:** A sufi term for a station on the path of spiritual growth.
- Masjid al-Nabi:** The Prophet's Mosque in Madina.
- masun:** A recommended act.
- matn:** The body of teaching contained in a Hadith.
- Mawlid al-Nabi:** The Festival of the Birthday of Muhammad.
- Mecca:** Another spelling for Makka.
- Medina:** Another spelling for Madina.
- mihrab:** A niche built into the *qibla* wall in a mosque in which the imam will stand to lead prayers.
- minaret:** A tall tower from which the *adhan* (call to prayer) is called.
- minbar:** The platform in a mosque from which the *khutba* is given.
- mi'raj:** The ascent into heaven of Muhammad when he made his night journey (*isra*) from Makka to Jerusalem.
- misbah:** The prayer beads used by Muslims.
- miswak:** A small piece of fibrous wood used for cleaning the teeth.
- Moslem:** Another spelling for Muslim.
- mu'adhdhin:** The person who calls Muslims to prayer (Arabic spelling).
- mubah:** A neutral act that carries neither reward nor punishment.
- muezzin:** The person who calls Muslims to prayer (common spelling).
- mufti:** A scholar recognized by others as being capable of giving an independent learned opinion (*fatwa*) on a legal question.
- muhajirun:** The group of early Muslims that migrated with Muhammad from Makka to Madina in 622.
- Muhammad:** Born c. 570 C.E., the last in the chain of Prophets.
- Muharram:** The month in which the martyrdom of Imam Husayn is commemorated by Shi'a Muslims with intense mourning.
- mujtahid:** A scholar qualified to perform *ijtihad*.
- murid:** A sufi "disciple" attached to a *shaykh*.

- al-Mushaf:** The Recitation, name given to the Qur'an.
- Muslim:** A *muslim* who follows the guidance of the Qur'an and the Sunna of Muhammad.
- muslim:** Something or someone who is in perfect harmony with God.
- mut'a:** Temporary marriage permitted only in Shi'a Islam.
- nabi:** A Prophet, normally one not sent with a Book but who comes to reinforce an earlier revelation.
- nafs:** The soul, spirit, inner self of a human being.
- al-Nar:** Literally "the Fire," one of the names for hell.
- nasab:** An addition to someone's name, "son or daughter of... (their father's name)".
- nasheed:** A song in praise of the Prophet Muhammad.
- nikah:** The marriage ceremony.
- nisab:** The basic allowance before *zakat* is liable.
- niyya:** The intention that precedes any action.
- nushuz:** A violation of religious duties by either partner in marriage.
- Prophet:** A human being chosen by God to receive revelation, live it out in an exemplary way, and lead others on the same path.
- qadi:** A judge.
- Qari:** A person who has mastered the technical styles for the recitation of the Qur'an in public.
- qibla:** The direction to be faced in formal prayer (*salat*), toward the Ka'ba in Makka.
- qiyas:** Analogical reasoning.
- Qur'an:** The Book that was revealed to Muhammad, 610–632 C.E.
- qurban:** The meat of the animal sacrificed at 'Id al-Adha, which is to be given to the poor.
- qurbani:** A sum of money sent to buy an animal to be sacrificed for the poor as *qurban*.
- rak'a** (pl. rak'at): The cycle of recitation, movements, and prayers that comprises one unit of *salat*.
- Ramadan:** The fasting month in the Islamic calendar.
- Rashidun:** The "Rightly Guided Caliphs" according to the Sunnis, the first four Caliphs in succession to Muhammad.
- rasul:** Messenger; a Prophet sent with a revealed Book.
- ra'y:** Personal judgment.
- riba:** Economic exploitation, giving or taking interest.
- ribat:** A sufi residential spiritual center.

- ridda:** Literally “apostasy,” but specifically referring to the rebellion of some Arab clans after the death of Muhammad.
- sabr:** The virtue of patience.
- sadaqa:** Bearing one another’s burdens, the principle of charity.
- safa:** A possible root for the word “Sufi,” connoting purification.
- sahih:** In Hadith studies, a sound Hadith without defects.
- Sa’ir:** Literally “the blazing inferno,” one of the names for hell.
- salam alaykum:** Traditional Muslim greeting: May you come ever more completely into the state of *islam*; more commonly, “Peace be with you.”
- salat:** The five-times-a-day formal prayers.
- salat al-‘asr:** The late afternoon prayer.
- salat al-fajr:** The prayer before sunrise.
- salat al-‘isha:** The night prayer.
- salat al-janaza:** The funeral prayers.
- Salat al-Jum’a:** Friday prayers, the principal congregational prayer of the week on Friday early afternoon.
- salat al-maghrib:** The prayer directly after sunset.
- salat al-zuhr:** The prayer just after the sun has passed its zenith.
- sama:** Generally, music; technically in Sufi circles: a spiritual concert.
- Saqar:** Literally “the scorching fire,” one of the names for hell.
- sawm:** Fasting during the month of Ramadan.
- sa’y:** Running between two hills in Makka, a rite during the *Hajj*.
- sayyid:** A blood descendant of Muhammad.
- Shahada:** The principal statement of faith: I bear witness that there is no god save God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God.
- Shari’a:** A pathway or complete code of life based on the Qur’an and the Sunna of Muhammad.
- sharif:** A blood descendant of Muhammad.
- shawq:** A sufi higher state of being: yearning to be constantly with God.
- shaykh:** A male sufi teacher.
- shaykhah:** A female sufi teacher.
- Shaytan:** The Satan figure of Islam, a fallen *jinn*; Iblis.
- Shi’a:** The minority group among Muslims (ten percent of the total) who hold that leaders (Imams) must come from the Ahl al-Bayt.
- shirk:** To associate partners with God.
- shukr:** Thankfulness, gratitude.
- sifat:** The attributes of God.

- silsila:** A sufi spiritual lineage linking a *shaykh* back to Muhammad.
- sipara:** One-thirtieth part of the Qur'an.
- sira:** The biography of Muhammad.
- subha:** The prayer beads used by Muslims.
- Subhan Allah:** "All glory be to God."
- suf:** Literally "wool," most likely the root of the word "sufi."
- Sufism:** The mystical dimension of Islam.
- Suhuf:** The Book sent to the Prophet Ibrahim.
- Sunna:** The way of life of Muhammad.
- sunna:** A recommended act.
- Sunni:** The largest grouping among Muslims, approximately ninety percent of the total.
- sura:** A chapter in the Qur'an.
- tafsir:** Commentary written on the Qur'an.
- tafsir bi al-ra'y:** A commentary based on rational judgment.
- tafsir ma'thur:** A commentary based on the Hadith of Muhammad.
- talaaq:** The process of divorce by simple repudiation by the husband.
- al-Tanzil:** That which was sent down, name given to the Qur'an.
- tanzil:** Literally "the sending down," used to describe the revelation of a Book.
- taqlid:** Faithful following of an earlier legal ruling.
- taqwa:** God-consciousness.
- tarawih:** The prayers each night during Ramadan in which Sunni Muslims recite daily one-thirtieth part of the Qur'an.
- tariqa:** A sufi order.
- tarwiz:** A portion of the Qur'an written on parchment contained in a leather pouch and worn by a Muslim.
- tasawwuf:** The mystical dimension of Islam.
- tasbih:** The prayer beads used by Muslims.
- Taurat:** The Book sent to the Prophet Musa.
- tawaf:** Walking around the Ka'ba seven times as part of the rites of the *Hajj*.
- tawakkul:** A station on the sufi way: trust in God.
- tawba:** Repentance.
- tawbat:** A station on the sufi way: repentance.
- tawhid:** The absolute oneness of God.
- tawil:** The "allegorical" interpretation of the Qur'an.
- tekke:** A sufi residential spiritual center.

- ulama:** The body of scholars (pl. of *alim*).
- Umayyads:** The first dynasty of Sunni Islam, based in Damascus from 661 to 750 C.E.
- umma:** The united worldwide community of Muslims.
- ummi:** “Unlettered” or “without book learning,” the state of Muhammad before the Qur’an was revealed to him.
- umra:** The minor pilgrimage to Makka.
- usul al-fiqh:** Principles of jurisprudence.
- wahy:** The technical term used for revelation.
- wajib:** A compulsory act.
- wali:** Literally “a Friend of God,” someone of outstanding piety.
- waqf:** A charitable trust.
- wudu:** The ritual ablution that must be made before formal prayer or handling the Qur’an.
- Zabur:** The Book that was sent to the Prophet Daud.
- zahiri:** The literalist school of Qur’anic commentary.
- zakat:** Purification of wealth by passing on two and a half percent of surplus wealth each year to those in need.
- zakat al-fitr:** A payment to those in need before the celebration of ‘Id al-Fitr; the cost of one meal per person in the household.
- Zamzam:** The spring in Makka that was miraculously provided by God for Isma’il and Hagar.
- zawiya:** A sufi residential spiritual center.
- Zaydis:** The Fivers among the Shi’a, who recognized a different Fifth Imam to the majority.
- zuhd:** A station on the sufi way: renunciation.

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