

0. MUHAMMAD AND THE MODERN WORLD - Story
Preface

1. FEAR OF ISLAM
2. MUHAMMAD'S EARLY LIFE
3. WHO WAS MUHAMMAD?
4. MUHAMMAD'S VISITATIONS
5. THE WORLD IN 610 C.E.
6. MUHAMMAD CONQUERS MECCA
7. MUSLIM CONQUESTS
8. JEWS, CHRISTIANS AND THE KORAN

9. MUHAMMAD AND THE MODERN WORLD

This image depicts the Sacred Black Stone located at the eastern corner of the Ka'bah (in Mecca). Because Muhammad touched this Stone, it is important for Muslims—who are able—to make a pilgrimage (called the Haj) to Mecca and the Ka-bah. Image online via the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada website.

Today more than 1 billion people believe that Muhammad was the last prophet sent by God. Islam, second only to Christianity in world popularity, continues to gain new converts at astonishing rates.

Following Islam's five pillars, Muslims still:

- Recite, in Arabic, the *Shahada*: "There is no god but God and Muhammad is His Prophet"
- Pray five times daily, facing Mecca
- Give to those in need (called the *Zakat*)
- Fast every year, from first light to sundown, during the month of Ramadan
- Make a pilgrimage (called the Hajj) to Mecca, if physically and financially able.

The Hajj employs some of the same rituals people followed in ancient, pre-Islamic times. Pilgrims circle the Kabah seven times, going counter-clockwise, starting at the corner where the sacred Black Stone is embedded in a silver frame. As they go, they recite prayers to Allah. Every year the Kabah is draped by a new black velvet cloth, embroidered in gold with passages from the *Koran*. Even when they are not in Mecca, Muslims pray facing the direction of the Kabah.

After encircling the Kabah, pilgrims walk seven times between the mountains of Safa and Marwa (just like Ishmael's mother Hagar did as she searched for water). Millions of pilgrims then stand together in prayer, asking for Allah's forgiveness. It is quite a spectacular sight.

For non-Muslims who have visited Islamic countries, the muezzin's call to prayer from the minaret is often the event that creates the most lasting memory. (Follow this link to hear it.) It is a much better comparison between what Islam is (as recorded in the *Koran*) and what it seems (to outsiders who observe the results of radical fundamentalism).

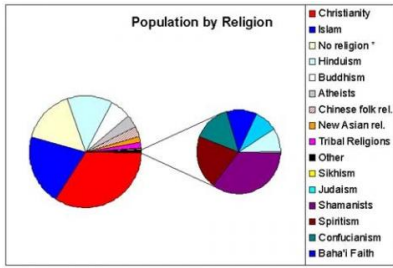
NOTE: "What is the Koran?" is an interesting discussion (with pictures) from The Atlantic on-line.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/MUHAMMAD-AND-THE-MODERN-WORLD-Muhammad-the-Prophet>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/MUHAMMAD-AND-THE-MODERN-WORLD-Muhammad-the-Prophet>



Popularity and Size of World Religions

Image online, courtesy islamicity.com website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Popularity-and-Size-of-World-Religions>



The Sacred Stone and Silver Frame

Image online, courtesy the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-Sacred-Stone-and-Silver-Frame>



The Sacred Stone and Silver Frame

Image online, courtesy the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada website.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-Sacred-Stone-and-Silver-Frame>