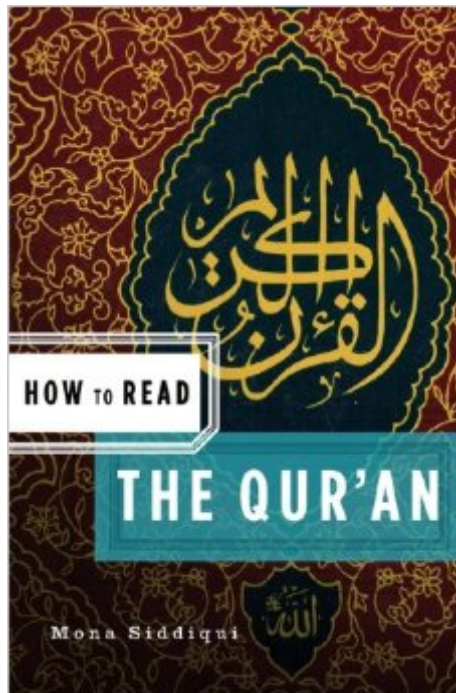


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# How To Read The Qur'an (How To Read)



## Synopsis

How to Read is a personal master class that brings you face-to-face with the work of some of the most influential and challenging texts in history. The Qur'an is the scripture of Islam, sacred to over one billion Muslims worldwide. It is regarded by Muslims as the direct word of God, timeless and unchanged. Muslims turn to the Qur'an not only for prayer and worship but also to understand the essence of their relationship with God. Mona Siddiqui considers how the Qur'an has been understood by Muslims in the intellectual traditions of Islam as well as in popular worship. She explores the big themes of prophecy, law, sin, and salvation, and what the Qur'an teaches about the particular place of Islam as God's last revelation in human history. Siddiqui's central concern is that Muslims must look to the Qur'an to breathe new life into the social and ethical relations between Muslims and non-Muslims.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Islam has become a ubiquitous presence almost everywhere in the world, but few non-Muslims possess even basic knowledge of this monumental religion. "How to Read the Qur'an" uses Islam's holiest book as a base to elucidate the faith's history, people, and beliefs. All ten chapters revolve around themes quoted in Qur'anic passages. Chapter 1, "The Book As Guidance," begins with one of the Qur'an's first and most cited suras, al-Baqarah 2:1-7, which states "This is the book. In it is guidance without doubt for those who fear God." This section then gives an overview of Islam and the social context in which its most revered book was revealed to Muhammad the Prophet between

610 - 632 CE. Muslims celebrate Ramadan in honor of this event. Tradition says that followers of Muhammad recorded these revelations on various mediums. Some twenty years after the Prophet's death the Qur'an was formed as the unchangeable Uthmanic Mushaf. In recent years modernity has challenged the ideas contained in this 7th century book. The author, a Muslim from Glasgow, bemoans reactionaries who distill the Qur'an down into singular meaning to meet these modern challenges. She believes the Qur'an should remain an open, flexible text containing multiple overlapping meanings. This subtheme, the humane openness of Islam, permeates the entire book.

I first became aware of Professor Mona Siddiqui when she spoke at a women's Islamic conference. In my opinion, she presented the most lively speech there; speaking about issues for Muslims and in Islam, and raising questions about how we should view them in the 21st century West. For her effort she was quickly rebuffed by a "shaykha" clad all in black and speaking only in Arabic. My experience with Dr. Siddiqui could just as well be my experience with her work. In *How to Read the Qur'an* she presents an intro to Islam and its holy book by addressing issues that are controversial to many Western audiences. The general overviews are there too, but it's all the interesting little stuff she inserts that I was pleasantly surprised to see in such a "beginner's guide." To draw back to the topic of the book, she inserts quotes from the Qur'an throughout, which pertain to these topics. However, while issues such as the Muhammad cartoons and hijab bans are brought up, don't expect them to be thoroughly addressed. This is not the point of the book. Also, the book is short - only 120 pages all together, it is amazing she fit them in at all. But Western audiences will find this book very approachable because she has related Islam and the Qur'an through these modern events. The book is actually part of a series "How to Read..." that has scholars write beginner's guides for books or authors in their field. For being part of a series, it definitely stands alone. I am only surprised that it is so well written. As a Muslim I am often asked what books I would recommend for non-Muslims to learn about Islam. There are not many if any books I would recommend, until now. Due to the short length, and the concise manner in which Prof.

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