

Prophets in Islam

Muslims identify the **prophets of Islam** (Arabic: *النبيوة في الإسلام*) as those humans who were assigned a special mission by God to guide humans. Muslims believe that every prophet was given a belief to worship God and their respective followers believed it as well.^[1] Each prophet, in Muslim belief, preached the same main belief, The Oneness of the Divine Creator, worshiping of that One God, avoidance of idolatry and sin, Day of Resurrection. Each came to preach Islam at different times in history and some told of the coming of the final prophet and messenger of God, who would be named "AHMAD" commonly known as Muhammad. Each prophet directed a message to a different group of people, and thus would preach Islam in accordance with the times. Although many lay Muslims and many Western scholars and writers hold the view that Islam began with Muhammad in Mecca, this contradicts the Quran, which says that Muhammad simply was the last prophet who preached the same faith that Adam preached to his children.

Islamic tradition holds that God sent messengers to every nation.^[2] Muslims believe that God finally sent Muhammad to transmit the message of the Quran, the holy book which, according to Islam, is universal in its message. The reason the Muslims believe the Quran is universal and will remain uncorrupted is because they believe that previous Islamic holy books, namely the Torah given to Moses; the Psalms given to David; and the Gospel given to Jesus, were for a particular time and community and because they believe that, even if the books were corrupted, many prophets were still to come who could tell the people of what was correct in the scripture and warn them of corruptions. Muhammad therefore, being the last prophet, was vouchsafed a book which, in Muslim belief, will remain in its true form till the Last Day.

Etymology

In both Arabic and Hebrew,^[3] the term *nabī* (plural forms: *nabiyyūn* and *anbiyāʾ*) means "prophet". Forms of this noun occur 75 times in the Quran. The term *nubuwwah* (meaning "prophethood") occurs five times in the Quran. The terms *rasūl* (plural: *rusul*) and *mursal* (plural: *mursalūn*) denote "messenger" or "apostle" and occur more than 300 times. The term for a prophetic "message", *risāla* (plural: *risālāt*) appears in the Quran in ten instances.^[4]

The Syriac form of *rasūl Allāh* (literally: "messenger of God"), *sheliheh d-allāhā*, occurs frequently in the apocryphal *Acts of St. Thomas*. The corresponding verb for *sheliheh* — *shalah*, occurs in connection with the prophets in the Hebrew Bible.^{[5][6][7][8]}

The words "prophet" (Arabic: *نبي nabī*) and "messenger" (Arabic: *رسول rasūl*,) appear several times in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The following table shows these words in different languages:^[9]

Prophet and Messenger in the Bible

Arabic	Arabic Pronunciation	English	Greek	Greek pronunciation	Strong Number	Hebrew	Hebrew pronunciation	Strong Number
نبي	Nabi	Prophet	προφήτης	prophētēs	G4396 ^[10]	נָבִי	nābîy'	H5030 ^[11]
رسول	Rasul	Messenger, Apostle	ἄγγελος, ἀπόστολος	ā'n-ge-los, ā-po'-sto-los	G32 ^[12] G652 ^[13]	מַלְאָכִי, שְׁלִיחַ	mal-āk'h', shā-lah'	H4397 ^[14] , H7971 ^[15]

In the Hebrew Bible the word "prophet" (Hebrew: *navi*) occurs more commonly, and the word "messenger" (Hebrew: *mal'akh*) refers to angels (Arabic: *ملائكة*, *Malāikah*). But the last book of the Old Testament, the Book of Malachi, speaks of a messenger that Christian commentators interpret as a reference to the future prophet John the Baptist.^[16]

In the New Testament, however, the word "messenger" becomes more frequent, sometimes in association with the concept of a prophet.^[17]

"Messenger" can refer to Jesus, to his Apostles and to John the Baptist.

It seems that in the New Testament a messenger can have a higher rank than prophets: Jesus Christ said about John the Baptist:

But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

—Matthew, *Gospel of Matthew*^[18]

Prophets and messengers in Islam

The table below charts the twenty-five named Quran prophets, and references key elements of their role in Islam. Muslims believe that many prophets existed, including many not mentioned in the Quran. The Quran itself refers to at least four other prophets but does not name them.^{[19][20]}

Prophets mentioned in the Quran

Name	Prophet	Messenger	Leader or Patriarch	Book	People
Adam	✓ Prophet ^[21]		✓ Leader and Patriarch	Scrolls of Adam ^[22]	Children of Adam
Idris (Enoch ^[23])	✓ Prophet ^{[24][25]}	✓ Messenger ^[26]			
Nuh	✓ Prophet ^{[27][28]}	✓ Messenger ^[29]	✓ Patriarch		People of Noah ^[30]
Hud (Eber ^[23])	✓ Prophet ^{[28][31]}	✓ Messenger ^[32]			People of 'Ād ^[33]
Saleh	✓ Prophet ^{[28][34]}	✓ Messenger ^[32]			People of Thamud ^[35]
Ibrahim	✓ Prophet ^{[36][37]}	✓ Messenger	✓ Leader ^[38]	Scrolls of Abraham ^[39]	People of Abraham ^[40]
Lut	✓ Prophet ^{[28][41]}	✓ Messenger ^[32]	✓ Patriarch		People of Sodom and Gomorrah ^[42]
Ismail	✓ Prophet ^{[43][44]}		✓ Leader and Patriarch		People of Arabia
Ishaq	✓ Prophet ^{[45][46]}		✓ Leader and Patriarch ^[47]		People of Canaan
Yaqub	✓ Prophet ^[45]		✓ Leader and Patriarch ^[47]		Fathered the Twelve Tribes of Israel
Yousuf	✓ Prophet ^{[28][48]}		✓ Leader		Copts

Ayub	✓ Prophet ^{[28][49]}		✓ Patriarch		People of Job
Shoaib (Jethro^[23])	✓ Prophet ^{[28][50]}	✓ Messenger ^[32]			Midianites ^[51]
Musa	✓ Prophet ^{[52][53]}	✓ Messenger	✓ Leader	Tawrat (Torah) ^[54]	Israelites and Copts ^[55]
Harun	✓ Prophet ^{[56][57]}		✓ Patriarch		Israelites and Copts ^[55]
Dawud	✓ Prophet ^{[28][58]}		✓ Leader (King of Israel)	Zabur (Psalms) ^[59]	Israel
Sulayman	✓ Prophet ^{[28][60]}		✓ Leader (King of Israel)		Israel
Ilyas	✓ Prophet ^{[28][61]}	✓ Messenger ^[62]			People of Elijah ^[63]
Elisha	✓ Prophet ^{[28][64]}	✓ Messenger			Israelites
Yunus	✓ Prophet ^{[21][28]}	✓ Messenger ^[65]			People of Jonah (Nineveh) ^[66]
Dhul-Kifl (Ezekiel^[23])	✓ Prophet ^{[28][67]}	✓ Messenger ^[65]			
Zechariah	✓ Prophet ^{[28][68]}				Israelites
Yahya	✓ Prophet ^{[68][69]}				Israelites
Isa	✓ Prophet ^{[70][71]}	✓ Messenger	✓ Leader	Injil (Gospel)	Israelites ^[72]
Muhammad	✓ Prophet ^{[73][74]}	✓ Messenger	✓ Leader ^[38]	Quran	The world ^[75]

[1] Qur'an 2:131–133

[2] Qur'an 10:47

[3] The Hebrew root nun-vet-alef ("navi") is based on the two-letter root nun-vet which denotes hollowness or openness; to receive transcendental wisdom, one must make oneself "open". Cf. Rashbam's comment to Genesis 20:7

[4] Uri Rubin, *Prophets and Prophethood, Encyclopaedia of the Quran*

[5] Exodus 3:13-14, 4:13

[6] Isaiah 6:8

[7] Jeremiah 1:7

[8] A.J. Wensinck, *Rasul, Encyclopaedia of Islam*

[9] *Strong's Concordance*

[10] <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=G4396&t=KJV>

[11] <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H5030&t=KJV>

[12] <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=G32&t=KJV>

[13] <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=G652&t=KJV>

[14] <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H4397&t=KJV>

[15] <http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong's=H7971&t=KJV>

[16] Albert Barnes under Malachi 2:7 and 3:1

[17] Hebrews 3:1; John 17:3; Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Ephesians 3:5, 4:11; First Epistle to the Corinthians 28:12

- [18] Matthew 11:9-10
- [19] Qur'an 2:247
- [20] Qur'an 36:12
- [21] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 15. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [22] Ibn Kathir, *Stories of the Prophets*, Story of Adam
- [23] Identification with Biblical prophet uncertain; for *Ahl al-Kitab* (followers of the *Holy Books*), see People of the Book.
- [24] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 45. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [25] Qur'an 19:56
- [26] Stories of the Prophets [2] Idris & Noah (pbut) [Sh. Shady Al-Suleiman] (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhNRdXrgUiY&t=9m45s>)
- [27] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 49. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [28] Qur'an 6:89
- [29] Qur'an 26:107
- [30] Qur'an 26:105
- [31] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 63. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [32] Qur'an 26:162
- [33] Qur'an 7:65
- [34] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 74. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [35] Qur'an 7:73
- [36] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 83. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [37] Qur'an 19:41
- [38] Qur'an 2:124
- [39] Qur'an 87:19
- [40] Qur'an 22:43
- [41] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 118. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [42] Qur'an 26:160
- [43] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 109. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [44] Qur'an 19:54
- [45] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 112. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [46] Qur'an 19:49
- [47] Qur'an 21:73
- [48] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 127. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [49] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 157. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [50] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 146. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [51] Qur'an 7:85

- [52] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 173. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [53] Qur'an 19:51
- [54] Qur'an 53:36
- [55] Qur'an 43:46
- [56] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 238. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [57] Qur'an 19:53
- [58] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 259. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [59] Qur'an 17:55
- [60] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 266. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [61] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 243. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [62] Qur'an 37:123
- [63] Qur'an 37:124
- [64] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 248. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [65] Qur'an 37:139
- [66] Qur'an 10:98
- [67] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 250. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [68] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 291. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [69] Qur'an 3:39
- [70] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 297. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [71] Qur'an 19:30
- [72] Qur'an 61:6
- [73] Brannon M. Wheeler (2002). *Prophets in the Quran: an introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Lo9jAavEHdIC&printsec=frontcover&dq=prophets+in+quran#v=onepage&q&f=false>). New York: Continuum. p. 321. ISBN 0-8264-4956-5. .
- [74] Qur'an 33:40
- [75] Qur'an 34:28 and Qur'an 2:185

Distinguishing between prophets and messengers

All messengers are commonly considered to be prophets. However not all prophets are considered as messengers.^[1] The Quran, like the quoted passage from the New Testament, may rank a messenger higher than a prophet. For example, whenever both titles appear together, "messenger" comes first. Crucially, a messenger delivers a *new religious law* (Sharia) revealed by God, whereas a prophet continues an old one. God sends both prophets and messengers as givers of good news and as admonishers of their people. A messenger will become the witness that God will take from that community on the Day of Judgment (see the following *sura*; Yunus;^[2] An-Nahl;^[3] Al-Mu'minoon;^[4] Ghafir;^[5] An-Nisa;^[6] Al-Qasas^[7]).

Scholars like Javed Ahmad Ghamidi and Amin Ahsan Islahi maintain that the key difference between prophets and messengers is that denial of a messenger invites punishment from God - this is termed as *sunnat Allah* (one of the ways of God in the Quran). Thus, for example, denial of Noah's invitation by his people, caused the flood to come

upon them. This is an extension of the view above that messengers become witnesses to the delivery of the Divine message to their respective nations, and their nations are judged accordingly by God.^[8]

Muslims distinguish between celestial and human messengers. In the Quranic world, God calls the angels 'messengers' but not prophets. The human messengers, however, also function as prophets — though not every prophet serves as a messenger. Angels always carry "orders" to the human prophets or messengers on what to say, what to do, and so forth. For example, Gabriel - the angel - delivered the Quran to Muhammad, the prophet and the messenger.

Prophethood in Ahmadiyya Islam

Unlike the majority of Muslims, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community does not recognize any difference between a messenger and a prophet. Ahmadiyya belief regards the terms encountered in the Quran to signify divinely appointed individuals - "warner" (*nazir*), "prophet", "messenger" - as generally synonymous. Ahmadis however categorise prophets as law-bearing ones and non-lawbearing ones. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community also recognizes Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908) as a Prophet of God, and also sees him as the Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi of the latter days and view it.^[9]

General Information

Status in Islam

The Quran speaks of the prophets as being the greatest human beings of all time.^[10] A prophet, in the Muslim sense of the term, is a person whom God specially chose to teach the faith of Islam.^[10] Before man was created, God had specifically selected those men whom He would use as prophets. This does not, however, mean that every prophet began to prophesy from his birth. Some were called to prophesy late in life, in Muhammad's case at the age of 40 and in Noah's case at 480^[11] Others, such as John the Baptist, was called to prophesy while still in young age and Jesus prophesied while still in his cradle.^[12]

The Quran verse 4:69 lists various virtuous groups of human beings, among whom prophets (including messengers) occupy the highest rank. Verse 4:69 reads:^[4]

All who obey Allah and the messenger are in the company of those on whom is the Grace of Allah - of the prophets (who teach), the sincere (lovers of Truth), the witnesses (who testify), and the Righteous (who do good): Ah! what a beautiful fellowship!

—Quran, sura 4 (An-Nisa), ayah 69^[13]

Religion of preaching

In Muslim belief, every prophet preached Islam. The beliefs of charity, prayer, pilgrimage, worship of God and fasting are believed to have been taught by every prophet who has ever lived.^[10] The Quran itself calls Islam the 'religion of Abraham'^[14] and refers to Jacob and the Twelve Tribes of Israel as being Muslim.^[15] Isaac, Ishmael, Jesus, Noah, Moses and the disciples of Jesus are just some of the other figures referred to as Muslims in the Quran.^[16] The Quran says:

The same religion has He established for you as that which He enjoined on Noah - the which We have sent by inspiration to thee - and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus: Namely, that ye should remain steadfast in religion, and make no divisions therein:...

—Quran, sura 42 (Ash-Shura), ayah 13^[17]

Scriptures and other gifts

Holy books

The **Revealed Books** are the records which Muslims believe were dictated by God to various Islamic prophets throughout the history of mankind. All these books promulgated the code and laws of Islam. The belief in all the revealed books is an article of faith in Islam and Muslim's must believe in all the scriptures to be a Muslim. Muslims believe the Quran, the final holy scripture, was sent because all the previous holy books had been either corrupted or lost.^[18] Nonetheless, Islam speaks of respecting all the previous scriptures, even in their current forms.^[19] The Quran mentions some Islamic scriptures by name, which came before the Quran:

- **Tawrat (Torah):** According to the Quran, the Tawrat (Torah) was revealed to Moses,^[54] but Muslims believe that the current Pentateuch, although it retains the main message,^[20] has suffered corruption over the years. Moses and his brother Aaron used the Torah to preach the message to the Children of Israel. The Quran implies that the Torah is the longest-used scripture, with the Jewish people still using the Torah today, and that all the Hebrew prophets would warn the people of any corruptions that were in the scripture.^[21] Jesus, in Muslim belief, was the last prophet to be taught the Mosaic Law in its true form.
- **Zabur (Psalms):** The Quran mentions the Psalms as being the holy scripture revealed to David. Scholars have often understood the Psalms to have been holy songs of praise.^[22] The current Psalms are still praised by many Muslim scholars,^[23] but Muslims generally assume that some of the current Psalms were written later and are not divinely revealed.
- **Book of Enlightenment:** The Quran mentions a *Book of Enlightenment*,^[24] which has alternatively been translated as *Scripture of Enlightenment* or the *Illuminating Book*. It mentions that some prophets, in the past, came with clear signs from God as well as this particular scripture.
- **Books of Divine Wisdom:** The Quran mentions certain *Books of Divine Wisdom*,^[25] translated by some scholars as *Books of Dark Prophecies*, which are a reference to particular books vouchsafed to some prophets, wherein there was wisdom for man. Some scholars have suggested that these may be one and the same as the Psalms as their root Arabic word, *Zubur*, comes from the same source as the Arabic *Zabur* for the Psalms.
- **İnjil (Gospel):** The İnjil (Gospel) was the holy book revealed to Jesus, according to the Quran. Although many lay Muslims believe the *İnjil* refers to the entire New Testament, scholars have clearly pointed out that it refers not to the New Testament but to an original Gospel, written by God, which was given to Jesus.^[26] Therefore, according to Muslim belief, the Gospel was the message that Jesus, being divinely inspired, preached to the Children of Israel. The current canonical Gospels, in the belief of Muslim scholars, are not divinely revealed but rather are documents of the life of Jesus, as written by various contemporaries, disciples and companions. These Gospels contain portions of Jesus's teachings but don't represent the original Gospel, which was a single book written not by a human but by God.^[27]
- **Scrolls of Abraham:** The Scrolls of Abraham are believed to have been one of the earliest bodies of scripture, which were vouchsafed to Abraham,^[39] and later used by Ishmael and Isaac. Although usually referred to as 'scrolls', many translators have translated the Arabic *Suhuf* as 'Books'.^[28] The Scrolls of Abraham are now considered lost rather than corrupted, although some scholars have identified them with the Testament of Abraham, an apocalyptic piece of literature available in Arabic at the time of Muhammad.
- **Scrolls of Moses:** These scrolls, containing the revelations of Moses, which were perhaps written down later by Moses, Aaron and Joshua, are understood by Muslims to refer not to the Torah but to revelations aside from the Torah. Some scholars have stated that they could possibly refer to the Book of the Wars of the Lord,^[29] a lost text spoken of in the Hebrew Bible.^[30]

Holy gifts

The Quran mentions various divinely-bestowed gifts given to various prophets. These may be interpreted as books or forms of celestial knowledge. Although all prophets are believed by Muslims to have been immensely gifted, special mention of 'wisdom' or 'knowledge' for a particular prophet is understood to mean that some secret knowledge was revealed to him.

- **Wisdom:** This attribute is spoken of in the Quran in numerous places. The Quran mentions that Abraham prayed for wisdom and later received it.^[31] It also mentions that Joseph^[32] and Moses^[33] both attained wisdom when they reached full age; David received wisdom with kingship, after slaying Goliath;^[34] Lut received wisdom whilst prophesying in Sodom and Gomorrah;^[35] John the Baptist received wisdom while still a mere youth,^[36] and Jesus received wisdom and was vouchsafed the Gospel.^[37]

Table of prophets/messengers in the Quran

The following table lists the prophets mentioned in the Quran. Biblical versions of names also appear where applicable:

Name (Arabic & Arabic Translit.)	Name (Biblical)	Main Article(s)	Number of times mentioned by name
آدم Ādam	Adam		25
	Adam, the first human being, ranks as the first prophet of Islam. Adam and his wife, Eve, fell from the Garden of Eden after they ate from the forbidden tree. On earth, Adam received his first revelations and lived many generations.		
إدريس Īdrīs	Enoch		2
	Idris is believed to have been an early prophet sent to mankind. The traditions that have built around Idris' figure have given him the scope of a prophet, philosopher, writer, mystic and scientist.		
نوح Nūḥ	Noah		43
	Although best known for his role in the story of the Deluge, Nuh became a primary preacher of monotheism in his day. Muslims believe his faith in God led to him being selected to build the Ark.		
هود Hūd	Eber		7
	Muslims believe that only Hud, for whom the eleventh chapter of the Quran takes its name, and a few other people survived a great storm, similar to the Deluge five generations earlier. God inflicted the storm to punish the people of 'Ād who had forgotten God.		
صالح Ṣāliḥ	Saleh		26
	According to the Quran, God ordered Saleh to leave behind his people, the tribe of Thamud, after they disbelieved and disobeyed God's order to care for a special camel and instead killed it. When Saleh and the believers fled from Thamud, God punished the people with a loud noise from the skies that killed his people instantly. Note that Saleh does not equate to the Shelah mentioned in the Hebrew Bible.		
إبراهيم Ibrāhīm	Abraham		73
	Muslims regard Ibrahim as one of the most significant prophets, because they credit him with rebuilding the Kaaba in Mecca. His family included such great figures as his sons, Ishmael and Isaac, as well as his prophetic grandson Jacob. Holy women from his household included Sarah and Hagar. Because of his significance as a patriarch, Abraham is often titled <i>Father of the Prophets</i> .		
لوط Lūṭ	Lot		27
	Muslims know Lut best for attempting to preach against homosexuality in Sodom and Gomorrah, in addition to encouraging his people to believe in the Oneness of God, although his community mocked and ignored him. Islam denies the acts which the Hebrew Bible attributes to Lot, like drinking and becoming drunk, and having intercourse with and impregnating his two daughters.		

إسماعيل Ismā'il	Ishmael		12
	As a child, Ishmael - with his mother, Hagar - searched for water in the region around Mecca, leading God to reveal the Zamzam Well, which still flows as of 2012. He is also credited with the construction of the Kaaba along with Ibrahim.		
إسحاق Ishāq	Isaac		17
	According to Islamic tradition, Ishaq, the second-born son of Ibrahim, became a prophet in Canaan. He and his brother Isma'il carried on the legacy of Ibrahim as prophets of Islam.		
يعقوب Ya'qūb	Jacob		16
	The Quran portrays Jacob as "of the company of the Elect and the Good". ^[38] He continued the legacy of both his father, Isaac, and his grandfather, Abraham. Like his ancestors, he deliberately worshipped God exclusively.		
يوسف Yūsuf	Joseph		27
	Joseph, son of Jacob and great-grandson of Abraham became a prominent adviser to the pharaoh of Egypt after he interpreted the King's dream which predicted the economic future of Egypt. According to Islam, Joseph received the gift of half of the beauty granted to mankind.		
أيوب Ayyūb	Job		4
	According to Islamic tradition, Job received the reward of a Fountain of Youth, which removed all illnesses, except death, for his service to God in his hometown. It is mentioned that Job lost his wealth, family, and health for many years as test of patience carried out by God.		
شعيب Shu'aib	Jethro		11
	According to Islam, God appointed Shu'ayb, a direct descendant of Abraham, to guide the people of Midian and Aykah, who lived near Mount Sinai. When the people of the region failed to listen to his warnings, God destroyed the disbelievers' villages.		
موسى Mūsá	Moses		136
	Moses, whom the Quran refers to more than to any other prophet, had the distinction of revealing the Tawrat (Torah) to the Israelites. The Quran says Moses realized his connection with God after receiving commands from him during a stop at Mount Sinai. He later went on to free the enslaved Hebrews after the Egyptian pharaoh denied God's power. Moses subsequently led the Hebrews for forty years through the desert after they refused to obey God's command and enter the Holy Land. On another trip to Mount Sinai during this long journey, Moses received the Torah and the Ten Commandments.		
هارون Hārūn	Aaron		20
	Aaron served as an assistant to his brother Moses. In Islam, he, like Moses, received the task of saving the Israelites from the Egyptian pharaoh. He would often speak for Moses when Moses' speech-impediment prevented him from doing so himself.		
ذو الكفل Dhul-kifl	most likely Ezekiel		2
	The status of Dhul-Kifl as a prophet remains debatable within Islam, although all parties to the debate can agree in seeing him as a righteous man who strived in the way of God. Some studies identify Dhul-Kifl with Ezekiel, mentioned in the Hebrew Bible's Book of Ezekiel.		
داود Dāwud	David		16
	In Islam, God revealed the Psalms to David. Dawud also has significance as the slayer of Goliath and defeater of the Philistines. Note that Islamic tradition and the Bible differ in their accounts of the story of King David and Uriah.		
سليمان Sulaimān	Solomon		17
	Solomon learned a significant amount of knowledge from his father David before God made him a prophet. According to Islamic tradition, Sulayman received power to manipulate nature (including the jinn) and the power to communicate with and control animals. Known for his honesty and fairness, he also headed a kingdom that extended into southern Arabia.		

إلياس Ilyās	Elijah		2
	Ilyaseen or Ilyas took over control of the Kingdom of Samaria after the kingdom of Solomon collapsed. Islamic tradition says he attempted to convince the people of Israel of the existence of only one God, but the people remained persistent in their disbelief.		
اليسع Alyasa‘	Elisha		2
	Elisha took over the task of leading the Israelites after the death of Elijah. He attempted to show the king and queen of Israel the power of God, but they dismissed him as a magician.		
يونس Yūnus	Jonah		4
	Islamic tradition states that God commanded Jonah to help the people of Nineveh towards righteousness. However, Nineveh's people refused to listen to his message, so Jonah decided to abandon trying to help them and left. After being swallowed by a whale, Jonah repented in the stomach of the whale until it spewed the prophet out on dry land.		
زكريا Zakariyyā	Zechariah		7
	Zachariah became the guardian of Mary the mother of Jesus. According to the Quran, he prayed to God asking for a son, since his sterile wife Elizabeth could not provide one. God granted his wishes, lifting his wife's sterility and allowing her to give birth to John the Baptist ^[39]		
يحيى Yahyá	John the Baptist		5
	Of John, Islam states that, throughout his lifetime, he captivated audiences with his powerful sermons which preached Abrahamic monotheism.		
عيسى ‘Īsá	Jesus		25
	God sent one of the highest-ranked prophets in Islam, Jesus, to the Children of Israel. The Quran makes it clear that Jesus was not divine nor did he have a share in God's divinity and rather spoke only of the worship of God. Jesus is called the <i>Masih</i> in Muslim belief. In Christianity, they believe that Jesus was crucified. Islam confirms that the Children of Israel wanted to kill Jesus by crucifying him on a cross, but God did not let this happen. Muslims believe that God raised Jesus to heaven (as in flying higher and higher, elevating) and saved Jesus from the Children of Israel, and then they crucified a man that was made to appear as Jesus. This is considered by Muslims as a miracle. Jesus will return to Earth near al-Qiyamah (Resurrection Day, Day of Judgement) to restore peace and rid the world of its evil, according to the sayings of Muhammad. The Quran also refers to this in Sura Maryam, when Jesus spoke out of his cradle "...peace be upon me the day I was born, the day I'll die, and the day I'll be raised back to life (again)!"		
محمد Muḥammad	Parakletos or Paraclete (Maulana Rumi mentions in his Masnavi, Book I, that the Bible contained the name <i>Ahmad</i> (which is the Arabic equivalent of 'Parakletos' or 'Paraclete'))		4
	Muhammad is important for sealing prophecy in Muslim belief and reinforcing the same faith that started with Adam. Muslims don't view Muhammad as the beginner of a new religion, but the Quran states that Muhammad simply preached the same religion as Adem (Adam), Ibrahim (Abraham), Nuh (Noah), Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus) and all the other prophets, and continued the holy religion. Sunni Muslims follow Muhammad by following his sayings, what he had told them what to do and not to do. and doing all the things that he did. Shia Muslims follow Muhammad sayings too, but are also focused on his cousin and son-in-law, Ali. Shia's believe that Ali is the successor of Muhammad and that Ali is the first of The Twelve Imams. Shia's also believe that Muhammad al-Mahdi is the last Imam and is currently alive and is hiding in the Major Occultation, and that Mahdi will return near al-Qiyamah along with Jesus to rid the world of its evil.		

Other prophets

The Quran mentions only 25 prophets by name but also tells that God sent many other prophets and messengers, to all the different nations that have existed on Earth. Many verses in the Quran discuss this:

- "We did aforetime send messengers before thee: of them there are some whose story We have related to thee, and some whose story We have not related to thee. ..." ^[40]
- "For We assuredly sent amongst every People a messenger, ..." ^[41]

Other prophets in the Quran

- Samuel: The Hebrew prophet is referenced as "a prophet" in the Quran, ^[19] in the context of the anointing of King Saul. Although his name is not given, he is mentioned by name in other Islamic literature. ^[42]
- Luqman: The Quran mentions the sage Luqman in the chapter named after him, but does not clearly identify him as a prophet. The most widespread Islamic belief ^[43] views Luqman as a saint, but not as a prophet. The Arabic term wali (Arabic ولي, plural Awliyā' أولياء) is commonly translated into English as "Saint". However, the wali should not be confused with the Christian tradition of sainthood. A key difference is that the wali continues what a prophet taught without any change. However, other Muslims regard Luqman as a prophet as well. ^[44]
- Khidr: The Quran also mentions the mysterious Khidr, identified at times with Melchizedek, who is the figure that Moses accompanies on one journey. Although most Muslims regard him as an enigmatic saint, some see him as a prophet as well. ^[45]
- Dhul-Qarnayn: Dhul-Qarnayn, often identified with Alexander the Great or Cyrus the Great, is a revered ruler in Islam. His narrative, which parallels that of Alexander in the Alexander romance, does not explicitly denote him as a prophet but some Muslims believe he was a prophet as well. ^[45]
- Three prophets of the town: These three unnamed prophets, who were sent to the same town, are referenced in chapter 36 of the Quran. ^[46]

Prophets in Islamic literature

Numerous other prophets have been mentioned by scholars in the *Hadith*, exegesis, commentary as well as in the famous collections of *Qisas Al-Anbiya* (*Stories of the Prophets*). These prophets include:

- Daniel ^[47]
- Uzair ^[48]
- Isaiah ^[49]
- Jeremiah ^[50]
- Zechariah, son of Berekiah ^[51]
- Seth ^[52]
- Shem ^[53]
- Abel ^[51]
- Zechariah ben Jehoiada

Mary, mother of Jesus

A few scholars (such as Ibn Hazm)^[54] see Maryam (Mary) as a *nabi* and a prophetess, since God sent her a message via an angel. The Quran, however, does not explicitly identify her as a prophet. Islamic belief regards her as the holiest of women, but not generally as a prophet.

Notes

- [1] Malcomn Clark (2003). *Islam for Dummies* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=zPXu561ZpvgC&pg=PT100&dq=all+messengers+are+prophets#v=onepage&q=all+messengers+are+prophets&f=false>). Wiley Publishing Inc. ISBN 978-0-7645-5503-9. .
- [2] Qur'an 10:48
- [3] Qur'an 16:38
- [4] Qur'an 23:46
- [5] Qur'an 40:5
- [6] Qur'an 4:45
- [7] Qur'an 28:75
- [8] Ghamidi, Javed Ahmad (2009) (in Urdu). *Mizan* (2nd ed.). Lahore.
- [9] Claim to Mahdi and Messiah (<http://www.reviewofreligions.org/1599/my%20claim-to-promised-messiahship/>)
- [10] Wheeler, *Historical Dictionary of Prophets in Islam and Judaism, Prophets*
- [11] Wheeler, *Historical Dictionary of Prophets in Islam and Judaism, Noah*
- [12] Qur'an 19:30–33
- [13] Qur'an 4:69
- [14] Qur'an 3:67
- [15] Qur'an 2:123–133
- [16] Wheeler, *Historical Dictionary of Prophets in Islam and Judaism*
- [17] Qur'an 42:13
- [18] *Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, Cyril Glasse, *Holy Books*
- [19] *Concise Encyclopedia of Islam*, Cyril Glasse
- [20] Qur'an 87:18–19
- [21] Qur'an 5:44
- [22] Encyclopedia of Islam, *Psalms*
- [23] Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary*; Martin Lings, *Mecca*; Abdul Malik, *In Thy Seed*
- [24] Qur'an 3:184 and 35:25
- [25] Qur'an 3:184
- [26] Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Appendix: *On the Injil*
- [27] Encyclopedia of Islam, *Injil*
- [28] Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Quran*; Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary*
- [29] Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary*
- [30] Numbers 21:14
- [31] Qur'an 26:83
- [32] Qur'an 12:22
- [33] Qur'an 28:14
- [34] Qur'an 2:251
- [35] Qur'an 21:74
- [36] Qur'an 19:14
- [37] Qur'an 3:48
- [38] Qur'an 38:47 (Translated by Yusuf Ali)
- [39] "Prophet Zakariyah" (<http://www.islam101.com/history/people/prophets/zakariya.htm>). *The Prophets*. Islam101.com. . Retrieved 2006-05-06.
- [40] Qur'an 40:78
- [41] Qur'an 16:36
- [42] *A-Z of Prophets in Islam*, B M. Wheeler, *Samuel*
- [43] *A-Z of Prophets in Islam*, B M. Wheeler, *Luqman*
- [44] *Concise Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Cyril Glasse, *Prophets in Islam*
- [45] *A-Z of Prophets in Islam*, B M. Wheeler, *Khidr*
- [46] Qur'an 36:13–21
- [47] *Stories of the Prophets*, Ibn Kathir, *Daniel*
- [48] *Stories of the Prophets*, Ibn Kathir, *Ezra*
- [49] *Stories of the Prophets*, Ibn Kathir, *Isaiah*

[50] *Stories of the Prophets*, Ibn Kathir, *Jeremiah*

[51] *The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Note 364: "Examples of the Prophets slain were: "the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar" (Matt. 23:35)

[52] *Stories of the Prophets*, Ibn Kathir, *Adam*

[53] *A-Z of Prophets in Islam and Judaism*, Appendix: *List of Prophets in Islam*

[54] Ibn Hazm on women's prophethood (http://www.globalwebpost.com/farooqm/study_res/islam/gender/women_prophethood.html)

External links

- Prophets in Islam (<http://lasjan.page.tl/Prophets.htm>)
- Legacy of Prophets (<http://true-muslim.com/1449/legacy-of-the-prophets/>) in Islam

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