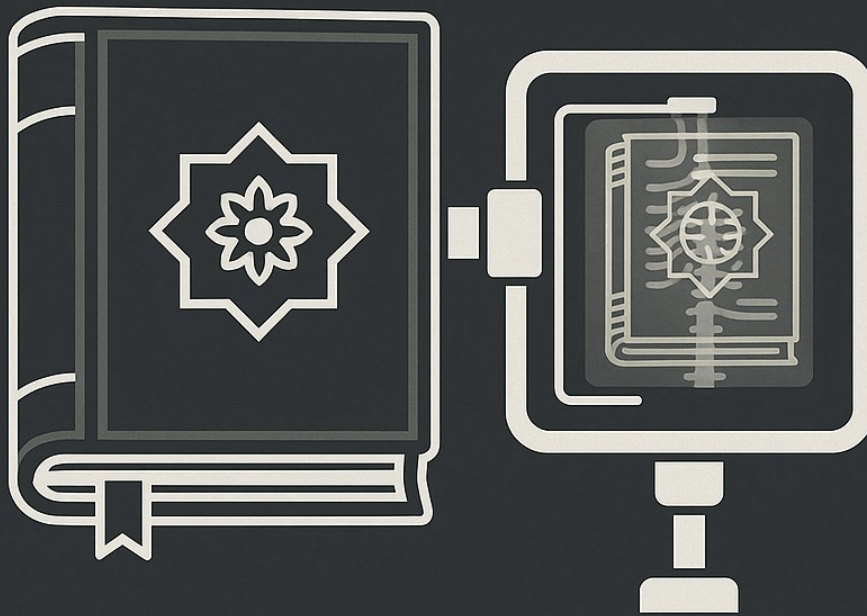


SHARIA ON TRIAL

X-RAYING THE DIVINITY
OF ISLAMIC LAW



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Can law be divine if it depends on fallible men?

For centuries, Muslims have upheld Sharia as God's eternal command. But what if the system said to reflect divine will is actually a mosaic of post quranic traditions, juristic consensus, and contradictory Hadith in *Sharia on Trial*. **Sharia** on **THAL** Dr. A.'s, Ezekiel peels back the layers—scrutinizing the foundations of Islamic law with the same mustards demand of others.

This work was inspired by a persistent crisis; Muslims citing "God's law" to reject national constitutions, disrupt civic unity and justify acts of intolerance of violence. A particularly revealing came from a course **note** at Nigeria's Open University, **promoted** **Sharia** as superior to secular law—sparking the **assumptions** the author's resolve to confront the **assumptions**.

inside, you'll find a reasoned and deeply researched exploration of key questions:

- If the Quran is complete, why rely on Hadith?
- How much of *Sharia* truly comes from divine revelation?
- What happens when human opinion is made untouchable by *Sharia* if *divine*?
- And can any legal system that violates justice, freedom, dignity truly be from God?

Unflinching, intellectually honest, and committed to peace and progress, this book calls readers to distinguish between reverence—and idolatry—and to choose

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Back Cover

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Inside, you’ll find a reasoned and deeply researched exploration of key questions:

- If the Quran is complete, why rely on Hadith?
- How much of Sharia truly comes from divine revelation?
- What happens when human opinion is made untouchable by labelling it “divine”?
- And can any legal system that violates justice, freedom, and dignity truly be from God?

Unflinching, intellectually honest, and written with a commitment to peace and progress, this book calls readers to distinguish between reverence and idolatry—and to choose truth over tradition.

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Sharia on Trial: X-Raying the Divinity of Islamic Law

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Author's Note

This book was not written out of hatred, mockery, or spite—but out of **deep concern for truth**, justice, and the future of the societies we build.

As a man of both science and conscience, I have long observed how the claim of divinity surrounding Sharia law has **stifled reform, justified cruelty, and threatened national unity**—especially in societies like mine where religious law is given priority over constitutional order. The persistent assertion that Sharia is "God's law" and thus immune to criticism has too often resulted in **bloodshed, disunity, oppression, and intellectual paralysis**.

The tipping point for me was a disturbing lecture note I encountered from the Nigerian Open University (NOUN), where Islamic Law was presented not only as superior to secular law but also as a necessary replacement for it. This kind of thinking—promoted in public academic spaces—compelled me to ask difficult questions:

Where exactly does Sharia come from? How much of it is truly divine? Can we justify labelling a man-made legal construct as God's eternal will?

This book is the product of those questions—explored with sincerity, backed by historical and textual evidence, and guided by a firm refusal to allow **political correctness** to override **honest critique**.

I am fully aware that this work will be scrutinized, resisted, or dismissed by those who conflate criticism with blasphemy. But to them, I offer this: **No belief system worth following should fear examination**. What is true will remain; what is false must be let go.

If this work offends anyone, let it not be because it lies—but because it **speaks where others have been silent, and questions where others have blindly submitted**.

May this book serve not as a final word, but as an invitation—to Muslims and non-Muslims alike—to reclaim reason, conscience, and compassion as vital tools in the pursuit of faith and justice.

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Acknowledgements

Writing this book was both an intellectual journey and a moral imperative. Though the voice in these pages is mine, many individuals and encounters have shaped the questions, convictions, and courage that gave rise to this work.

First, I acknowledge the **courageous thinkers and reformers**—both Muslim and non-Muslim—who have dared to challenge inherited assumptions about religious law. Their writings, arguments, and sacrifices opened doors of inquiry that many still fear to walk through. In particular, I am indebted to scholars like **Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, Fazlur Rahman, and Amina Wadud**, whose bold re-examinations of Islamic law helped me realize that **honesty is not hostility**.

I also express appreciation to the **authors of the very materials I critique**—especially the NOUN course note on Islamic Law. Their work, though flawed in reasoning, provided the spark that revealed the **urgency of this conversation**. Without it, this book may never have been conceived.

To my fellow Nigerians—especially those in the North—who long for peace but are trapped in the shadows of doctrinal rigidity, I hope this work serves as both a voice of conscience and a signpost toward **coexistence, progress, and national unity**.

To those who encouraged my efforts without always agreeing with my views—thank you for **trusting my intention even when you questioned my direction**.

Finally, I thank the Source of reason, conscience, and moral clarity—who, in my belief, **cannot be the author of cruelty**. May this work reflect a small portion of the courage He calls us to.

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Foreword

In a world increasingly shaped by the rule of law, the question of which laws should govern us remains one of the most contested subjects—particularly in multi-religious nations like Nigeria. Over the years, a disturbing trend has taken root: the persistent rejection of national and constitutional laws by some Muslims, who insist that only "God's law," namely Sharia, is worthy of obedience. This attitude has led not only to disunity but also to violence, bloodshed, and an ongoing erosion of the secular and democratic fabric of society.

This book was conceived in response to that troubling trend. It was during my research for an earlier work, *God is Not Cruel*, that I encountered a particularly revealing course note from the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). The material attempted to defend Islamic law by claiming that it is superior to all other legal systems, simply because it is said to be "divine." Yet the argumentation was hollow, lacking the intellectual and moral rigor required of such a serious claim.

If a law system claims divinity, then its foundations must be impeccable, its justice unquestionable, and its methods consistent with reason and compassion. Sadly, as this book will demonstrate, the divine claim of Sharia law does not hold up under scholarly scrutiny. The consequences of uncritically accepting such claims are grave—especially when laws based on dubious traditions and historically evolving interpretations are enforced as eternal and unchangeable.

In this book, I invite readers—Muslim and non-Muslim alike—to examine Sharia not through the lens of fear or blind tradition, but through reason, conscience, and justice. The aim is not to attack anyone's faith but to ask: **Can a truly divine law be this fragmented, inconsistent, and at times, unjust?**

Let this work be a voice of reason for peace, unity, and the dignity of human thought.

Dr. A. S. Ezekiel
Author of "God Is Not Cruel"

Dedication

To the restless minds

who refuse to silence their conscience in the name of tradition.

To the courageous hearts

who dare to question what others have blindly accepted.

To every victim of injustice

carried out under the banner of “divine law”—

May this book offer clarity, conviction, and the courage to believe
that **truth is not fragile**, and that **God is not the author of oppression**.

— A. S. Ezekiel

Table of Contents

Back Cover	iii
Author's Note	vi
Acknowledgements	viii
Foreword	ix
Dedication	x
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: The Quran's Claim of Completeness	3
Quranic Verses Claiming Completeness.....	3
The Problem of Supplementation.....	4
Silence of the Quran on Key Sharia Laws	4
The Doctrine of Naskh (Abrogation)	5
Selective Literalism	5
Conclusion: A Contradiction at the Core	6
Chapter 2: What Really Makes Up Sharia?	7
1. The Real Sources of Sharia Law.....	7
2. The Myth of Sharia's Continuity with Earlier Religions	8
3. The Real Origin of Sharia: A Historical Development.....	10
4. Internal Disagreements in Sharia.....	10
Conclusion: A Human System Cloaked in Divine Language.....	11
Chapter 3: The Hadith's Role in "Augmenting" the Quran	12
**1. The Key Hadith Claim: "I Was Given the Quran and Something Like It"	12
2. Reliability Problems in Hadith Literature	13
3. Hadith-Derived Laws That Conflict with the Quran	14
4. Elevating Hadith to Divine Status: The Hidden Danger	16
5. Quranic Warnings Against Extra-Scriptural Authority	16
Conclusion: A Man-Made Supplement Treated as Divine	17
References	18
Chapter 4: Is It a Case of a Previously Complete Book Now Incomplete?	19
1. The Quran's Finality and Completeness Claimed Repeatedly	19

2. Does Later Supplementation Imply the Quran Became Incomplete?	20
3. Was God Unaware of the Future?.....	21
4. The Problem of Contradiction: If It's Complete, Why Use Other Books?	21
5. Obscuring Human Error by Calling it Divine	22
Conclusion: Two Choices, Both Damaging	23
References	23
Chapter 5: The Consequences of Using a Shaky Foundation for Law	24
1. Injustice Through Contradictory and Unverifiable Sources	24
2. Legal Inflexibility and Resistance to Reform	25
3. Legal Pluralism and Division Among Muslims.....	25
4. Violation of Human Rights	26
5. Weaponization of Religion for Control and Oppression.....	26
6. Undermining the Quran's Moral Framework	27
Conclusion: When Law Becomes a Weapon, Not a Shield	27
References	28
Chapter 6: Calling the Human Divine — The Danger of Deifying Man-Made Law	29
1. Sharia Law: A Human Product Treated as Divine	29
2. When Human Error Is Immune to Correction	30
3. Deifying Scholars, Silencing the Masses	30
4. Blind Obedience Replaces Moral Responsibility	31
5. The Psychological and Social Cost	32
6. The Quran's Alternative Vision	32
Conclusion: Reverence Without Idolatry	33
References	33
Chapter 7: Final Reflections — Submitting to God, Not to Men	34
1. Submission to God Is Not Submission to Scholars	34
2. The Prophetic Model: Challenging Tradition for Justice	35
3. What Has Sharia Produced Today?.....	35
4. Reclaiming the Quran: A Return to the Essentials.....	36
5. Moving Forward: Toward a Faith That Liberates, Not Oppresses	37

Conclusion: God Is Not the Problem — We Are	37
References	38
Appendices	39
Appendix A: Quranic vs. Hadith-Based Sharia Rulings — A Comparative Table.....	39
Appendix B: Verses Often Cited to Justify Harsh Sharia — With Analysis	Error!
Bookmark not defined.	
Appendix C: Glossary of Terms	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Appendix D: Common Defences of Sharia — Rebutted.....	40
**1. “Sharia is divine because it comes from the Quran.”	40
**2. “Sharia is the same law that was given to Moses, Jesus, and Abraham.”	41
**3. “Sharia protects justice and promotes mercy.”	41
**4. “The scholars have already settled these issues — who are we to question them?”	42
**5. “Secular law is man-made and corrupt; only God’s law is pure.”	42
**6. “The problems come from misuse—not from Sharia itself.”	42
**7. “Sharia brought civilization to the Muslim world.”	43
Conclusion:	43
References:.....	44
Appendix E: A Brief Timeline of Sharia’s Historical Development.....	45
610–632 CE — The Life of Muhammad	45
632–661 CE — The Rashidun Caliphate	45
661–750 CE — The Umayyad Dynasty	45
750–900 CE — Rise of Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh).....	46
900–1200 CE — Codification and Canonization	46
1200–1800 CE — Empire, Customary Law & Qanun	46
1800–1900s — Colonialism and the Challenge of Modernity	47
20th Century — Islamic Revivalism	47
21st Century — Crisis and Reform	47
Conclusion	48
References	48

Introduction

Few legal systems are as misunderstood—and as fiercely defended—as Islamic Sharia law. In many Muslim-majority and minority societies, Sharia is not merely a religious code but a rallying cry against secularism, pluralism, and modern governance. Phrases like “It is better to obey God than man” are commonly wielded to resist state laws, justify parallel judicial systems, and even incite rebellion or violence in multi-ethnic, multi-faith nations.

But this raises a fundamental question: **Is Sharia truly the law of God—or the product of men claiming divine authority?**

The Quran declares itself to be a "complete," "fully detailed" book, sufficient as a guide for mankind. Yet Sharia law relies not only on the Quran but heavily on Hadith (reports about the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad), legal consensus (Ijma), analogical reasoning (Qiyas), and clerical fatwas. This creates an internal contradiction: If God’s final revelation is complete, why do we need secondary sources to construct its laws? And if those sources are man-made, why are their rulings treated as divine and beyond revision?

This book interrogates those questions.

We will explore how much of Sharia law actually comes from the Quran and how much is the work of human scholars interpreting—or misinterpreting—the divine message. We will examine whether Hadith, often the foundation of harsh and controversial laws, are reliable enough to legislate human life. We will ask whether the doctrine of abrogation—where earlier verses are said to be cancelled by later ones—makes sense for a supposedly eternal, divine text.

Most importantly, we will assess the real-world consequences of using a legal system built on shaky foundations. When man-made doctrines are sanctified, reform becomes taboo. When flawed interpretations are called divine, justice is sacrificed. And when societies are torn apart over which version of “God’s law” to obey, then it becomes clear: **This is not the will of a just God, but the work of fallible men.**

Let us reason together, not to destroy faith, but to separate faith from fanaticism—and to insist that whatever claims to be divine must first pass the test of truth.

Chapter 1: The Quran's Claim of Completeness

A foundational assertion in Islam is that the Quran is a complete, perfect, and fully detailed book revealed by God as a guide to all mankind. Many Muslims proudly quote verses that describe the Quran as containing everything necessary for life, morality, and law. Yet, paradoxically, Islamic jurisprudence—Sharia—depends heavily on other sources such as Hadith, Ijma (consensus), and Qiyas (analogy) to construct its legal system. This contradiction raises a vital question: If the Quran is truly complete, why does Islamic law rely so much on external, post-Quranic sources?

1.1 Quranic Verses Claiming Completeness

Several Quranic verses explicitly claim that the Quran is sufficient and all-encompassing:

Qur'an 6:114–115

“Shall I seek a judge other than Allah, while it is He who has revealed to you the Book explained in detail?”

“...The word of your Lord has been fulfilled in truth and in justice. None can change His words.”

Qur'an 16:89

“...We have sent down to you the Book as an explanation of all things, a guidance, a mercy, and glad tidings for those who submit.”

Qur'an 5:3

“...This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion...”

Qur'an 12:111

“...It (the Quran) is not a fabricated tale, but a confirmation of what came before it, a detailed explanation of all things, and a guide and a mercy for people who believe.”

These verses do not appear to leave room for supplementation. They repeatedly emphasize that the Quran is detailed, complete, and final. If these claims are to be taken seriously, then anything that seeks to add, subtract, or reinterpret the Quran should be viewed with deep scepticism.

1.2 The Problem of Supplementation

Despite these claims, Islamic scholars and jurists agree that the Quran alone is insufficient for implementing Sharia. They argue that while the Quran provides general principles, the Hadith offers the specifics needed to establish detailed laws.

This raises several contradictions:

- **Is Allah's final message vague?** If the Quran is described as "explained in detail," why would it lack detail on key legal and moral issues?
- **Does Allah require help to finish His work?** The reliance on Hadith implies that the Prophet Muhammad had to clarify or extend the Quran, thus raising him from a messenger to a co-legislator.
- **Is Allah inconsistent?** Why declare a book "complete" and then require generations of scholars to expand and interpret it through conflicting traditions?

Note that anything can be justified, reinterpreted or forced on people. But does that make it true?

1.3 Silence of the Quran on Key Sharia Laws

Let us consider some examples of laws that are foundational to Sharia, yet not found in the Quran:

- **Stoning for adultery:** The Quran prescribes flogging (24:2), not stoning. Yet stoning is enforced based on Hadith.

- **Death for apostasy:** The Quran does not mandate death for leaving Islam; it actually permits belief and disbelief as personal choices (e.g., 18:29, 2:256). Yet Hadith mandates death.
 - **Hijab and dress codes:** The Quran's instructions on modesty are vague. Much of the enforcement comes from Hadith.
 - **Blasphemy laws:** There is no Quranic law requiring execution for blasphemy, but Hadith-based rulings have led to deadly consequences.
-

1.4 The Doctrine of Naskh (Abrogation)

Another contradiction is the doctrine of **abrogation**, where earlier verses are said to be “cancelled” by later ones (e.g., 2:106). This undermines the claim of a timeless, perfect book. If some verses can be nullified by others, it calls into question whether the Quran is truly eternal and sufficient.

1.5 Selective Literalism

Many Muslim apologists argue that the Quran is a book of principles and needs Hadith to implement those principles in practical detail. Yet, in other instances, they insist on a literal interpretation of the Quran when it serves a doctrinal or political agenda. This selective literalism reveals a deeper issue: **The Quran is treated as complete when it's convenient and incomplete when it's not.** Also note that Quran never said it is a book of principle, **instead it claims to explain ALL things IN DETAILS** and I belief words have meaning.

1.6 Conclusion: A Contradiction at the Core

The Quran's repeated claim of completeness cannot be reconciled with the reality of Sharia law as it functions today. The legal code followed by many Muslims relies heavily on external, often unreliable, sources. This not only undermines the Quran's claim of sufficiency but also raises serious theological concerns:

- Was Allah's message truly final and perfect?
- Or did man, dissatisfied with divine silence on certain matters, take it upon himself to fill in the gaps?

In either case, the divine status of Sharia law becomes questionable. If it is partly man-made, it cannot be eternal or unchangeable. And if the Quran's completeness was overstated, then the foundation of Islamic legal theory must be re-examined.

Chapter 2: What Really Makes Up Sharia?

Sharia law is often portrayed as the direct and eternal law of God, unchanged from the time of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, and finally perfected through Muhammad. According to this view, all true prophets brought essentially the same religion—*al-dīn*—and the same divine code of law. As a result, Muslims argue that Islamic Sharia is not a novel invention, but a restoration of one universal and timeless legal tradition.

But how accurate is this claim? And more importantly, what actually makes up Islamic Sharia law? To answer these questions, we must look closely at both the **composition** of Sharia and the **claims of historical continuity**.

2.1. The Real Sources of Sharia Law

Contrary to the popular idea that Sharia is solely derived from the Quran, Islamic law draws from a **complex mix of sources**, many of which are human interpretations developed after Muhammad's death:

A. The Quran (*about 10% of Sharia content*)

- The Quran contains moral and legal principles, but only about 500 of its over 6,000 verses relate to law, and most are broad.
- These include general injunctions on charity, fasting, marriage rights, and prohibitions on theft, murder, and usury.
- Rarely does the Quran provide detailed legal procedures or punishments beyond a few exceptions (e.g., theft, adultery, inheritance).

B. The Hadith (*bulk of practical Sharia law*)

- Collections of sayings, actions, and approvals of Muhammad compiled over 150-250 years after his death.
- Highly contested in authenticity, with thousands of fabricated reports.

- Source of most punitive laws (stoning, apostasy death penalty, blasphemy punishment, gender segregation, etc.).

C. Ijma (Consensus)

- Legal rulings based on scholarly agreement, often from early generations of Islamic jurists.
- Sometimes contradict Quranic principles or differ between legal schools.

D. Qiyas (Analogical Reasoning)

- Applying reasoning from known cases to new ones (e.g., banning narcotics by analogy with alcohol).
- Highly subjective, open to manipulation.

E. Fatwas and Juristic Opinions

- Thousands of legal verdicts issued by clerics over centuries.
- Often influenced by politics, culture, or local traditions.

2.2. The Myth of Sharia's Continuity with Earlier Religions

Muslims often claim that Sharia is the same law given to previous prophets, citing verses such as:

Qur'an 42:13

"He has ordained for you the same religion which He enjoined on Noah, and that which We have revealed to you, and that which We enjoined on Abraham, Moses, and Jesus..."

While this verse speaks of *religion* (Arabic: *al-dīn*) as being consistent, it is **not synonymous with legal code**. The religion referred to here means the general **message of monotheism and submission to God**, not a detailed law book.

Let us examine a few differences between Sharia and the laws of previous scriptures:

A. The Law of Moses (Torah)

- The Torah's laws are codified in detail in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.
- Many Torah laws are far more extensive than Quranic laws, including dietary laws, temple rituals, hygiene laws, and civil laws.
- Some concepts overlap with Islam (e.g., circumcision), but many laws are distinct or even opposed.
- Judaism never taught *stoning for adultery* without a rigorous court process requiring multiple eyewitnesses; Islam, through Hadith, imposes this even if only confessed.
- Jewish law also evolved and was **reinterpreted**, something Sharia resists. This shows that the Jews understood those laws to be temporary just as Jesus would later prove. Read my book "Divine Wisdom or Ritual Cruelty" for more on this topic.

B. The Teachings of Jesus (New Testament)

- Jesus explained that many Old Testament laws were not meant to be eternal (Matthew 5–7). Those were temporary concessions given to a progressive nation.
 - He promoted forgiveness over retaliation, mercy over punishment (e.g., John 8: the woman caught in adultery was not stoned).
 - Jesus opposed legalism and condemned religious leaders for burdening people with oppressive laws.
 - Salvation in Christianity is based on grace and obedience.
-

C. Abraham and Noah

- The Quran and Bible say very little about specific laws given to Abraham or Noah.
 - They are shown as figures of faith and obedience, but no coherent legal system like Sharia was associated with them.
 - There is no evidence that Abraham or Noah practiced or promoted anything like Islamic Sharia.
-

2.3. The Real Origin of Sharia: A Historical Development

Far from being eternal or universal, Sharia law **developed over centuries**, largely after the death of Muhammad:

- The first four caliphs ruled with a combination of Quranic precedent, Muhammad's actions, and their own judgment.
- Under the Abbasids (8th–13th centuries), Islamic jurisprudence was systematically codified.
- The various legal **schools of thought (Madhhabs)** emerged, often contradicting one another (e.g., Maliki vs. Hanafi on divorce and evidence).
- Much of Sharia today reflects **medieval Arabian tribal norms**, not divine law.

In effect, **Sharia is not one law, but many interpretations**—a blend of early traditions, evolving juristic thought, political expediency, and clerical control.

2.4. Internal Disagreements in Sharia

If Sharia were divine, it should be consistent and unified. Instead:

- Sunni and Shia law differ greatly.

- Schools like Hanafi and Hanbali issue conflicting rulings.
- Fatwas contradict each other across regions.
- Some laws (e.g., punishment for theft) are harshly applied in one country and abolished in another.

This shows that Sharia is not fixed, but **manipulated** based on human context.

Conclusion: A Human System Cloaked in Divine Language

Despite claims of divine continuity, Sharia law is **neither eternal nor universal**. It is not the law of Moses. It contradicts the spirit of Jesus. It cannot be traced to Abraham or Noah. What it truly represents is **a post-Quranic Islamic legal tradition** built upon fallible human efforts to define and control society.

The assertion that Sharia is “God’s law” while it contains:

- Hadith-based rulings of questionable authenticity,
- Cultural influences from medieval Arabia,
- And a complete absence of consensus among scholars

...is not only misleading but dangerous. When such a system is declared divine and thus beyond reform, it **locks entire societies into outdated structures** that often conflict with modern values of justice, human rights, and equality.

In the next chapter, we will critically examine the Hadith literature, especially those that claim Muhammad was given authority to add to the Quran. Are these reports trustworthy enough to legislate over the Quran’s declared completeness?

Chapter 3: The Hadith’s Role in “Augmenting” the Quran

One of the most significant contradictions in the Islamic legal tradition is the claim that the Quran is both complete and in need of supplementation through the Hadith. Muslim scholars argue that while the Quran is the word of God, it is not detailed enough for legal implementation, and thus the Hadith—records of the Prophet Muhammad’s sayings and actions—must fill in the gaps. This creates a theological tension: **If the Quran is divinely complete and fully detailed (Qur’an 6:114–115; 16:89), how can it require human elaboration through Hadith?**

This chapter explores the **role Hadith plays in expanding the scope of Islamic law**, investigates the **reliability of Hadith**, and asks whether attributing legal authority to Hadith contradicts the Quran’s declared sufficiency.

3.1. The Key Hadith Claim: “I Was Given the Quran and Something Like It”

One of the most often quoted traditions by proponents of Hadith-based law is the following:

“I have been given the Qur’an and something like it along with it.”
(*Sunan Abu Dawud* 4604) [1].

This Hadith is cited to justify placing Hadith on equal footing with the Quran in terms of legal authority. The implication is that Muhammad received a second, oral form of revelation—what scholars term *wahy ghayr matluw* (unrecited revelation)—besides the Quran.

But this claim leads to serious doctrinal challenges:

- **Where does the Quran support this idea?** Nowhere does it state that Muhammad was given a second, equal source of law.

How can something unrecorded and unauthenticated be equal to a text declared “guarded” by God (Qur’an 15:9)?

Why were these secondary revelations not preserved with the same rigor as the Quran, if they were also divine?

This Hadith, like many others, contradicts the Quran’s own emphasis on clarity, preservation, and completeness.

3.2. Reliability Problems in Hadith Literature

Hadith were **not written down during Muhammad’s lifetime**. In fact, early caliphs like Abu Bakr and Umar discouraged their documentation for fear they might overshadow the Quran [2]. The Hadith collections we have today—Sahih Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, Abu Dawud, etc.—were compiled **between 150 and 250 years after Muhammad’s death**.

Key problems with Hadith reliability include:

Fabrication: Many Hadith were invented for political gain, sectarian bias, or theological debate. Imam Bukhari reportedly sifted through over 600,000 Hadith and accepted only around 7,000 [3].

- **Contradictions:** Different Hadith often contradict each other—even within the same collection. For example, some Hadith report that Muhammad forbade writing down anything but the Quran, while others endorse writing Hadith.
- **Weak chains of narration (Isnad):** Many reports rest on chains of unknown, unreliable, or biased transmitters.
- **Forgery and bias:** Companions and later scholars were not infallible. For instance, political factions supporting the Umayyads or Abbasids introduced Hadith to justify their power.

A typical example is the hadith of Mu'adh ibn Jabal that is purported to support use of hadiths, Ijma and Qiyas to supplement Quran in Islamic law. Muslims forwards this hadith knowing fully well that the hadith is weak and has unverifiable chain of narration and is absent in early sahih hadith collections. This shows how selective Muslims are in accepting facts. When a hadith supports their intend, it is acceptable even if it fails the laid down rules for accepting hadiths or the rule that established Islam itself. Here is an excerpt from my rebuttal to NOUN lecture note that stimulated the writing of this book:

“The Hadith of Mu'adh ibn Jabal

In this hadith, Mu'adh tells the Prophet that he will judge:

- First by the **Qur'an**
- Then by the **Sunnah**
- Then by **exerting his own opinion (ijtihad)**
Muhammad allegedly replies:

“Praise be to Allah who has guided the messenger of the Messenger of Allah to what pleases Him.”

Scholarly Critique of the Hadith

- The hadith is not found in **Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī** or **Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim**.
- Hadith scholars including **Ibn Hazm**, **Al-Albani**, and **Shawkani** classified it as **weak due to unreliable chains of narration**.
- Juynboll argues the hadith emerged **long after Muhammad's death**, likely to justify evolving legal methods.

“This hadith is not authentic and cannot be used as the basis for legal decision-making.” — Ibn Hazm.

Despite these issues, **most of Islamic jurisprudence—especially harsh punishments and social restrictions—is based on Hadith, not the Quran.**

3.3. Hadith-Derived Laws That Conflict with the Quran

Let us consider some core Sharia laws that stem not from the Quran but from Hadith, often contradicting Quranic principles:

A. Stoning for Adultery

Quranic Punishment: 100 lashes for both parties (Qur'an 24:2).

- **Hadith Punishment:** Stoning to death for married individuals (Sahih Bukhari 6812) [4].

B. Apostasy Punishment

Quranic Principle: “*There is no compulsion in religion*” (Qur'an 2:256); belief is a personal matter (Qur'an 18:29).

- **Hadith Punishment:** “*Whoever changes his religion, kill him*” (Sahih Bukhari 3017) [5].

C. Adult Breastfeeding

- Hadith narrates that Muhammad told a woman to breastfeed an adult man to make him *mahram* (non-marriageable) to her (Sahih Muslim 1453) [6].
- The Quran never allows such a practice and sets clear weaning age (Qur'an 2:233). Though Aisha said the verse was in the Qur'an before a goat ate it.

D. Child Marriage

- Aisha reported marrying Muhammad at age 6 and consummation at age 9 (Sahih Bukhari 5133) [7].
- Quran encourages puberty as a marker for marriageability (Qur'an 4:6), not childhood.

E. Daily Prayers

- Hadith gave five daily prayers after intense negotiation between Muhammad, Moses and Allah (Sahih Bukhari Book 59, Hadith 685) [8].
- While Quran gave three (Quran 20:130, 11:114)

These are **not minor differences**; they demonstrate how Hadith has shaped a legal tradition that **often overrides or distorts the Quran's ethical message**. Despite the fundamental teachings of Islam that Qur'an is superior to Hadiths hence when in conflict with the latter, the former should be supreme. Yet even one of the five pillars of Islam, daily prayers, is caught in contradiction.

3.4. Elevating Hadith to Divine Status: The Hidden Danger

Once Hadith are accepted as *equal to* or even *above* the Quran in shaping law, several dangerous theological implications arise:

Fallible human words become binding divine commands.

Any future reform becomes impossible, as altering Hadith-based laws is treated as blasphemy.

- **Contradictions in Hadith weaken the perception of divine justice**, leading to confusion, sectarianism, and injustice in implementation.

Furthermore, using fallible texts as the foundation of law has real-world consequences: blasphemy accusations, death sentences for apostates, and oppressive gender laws that are out of sync with universal human rights as well as backwardness due to rigid incompetent human idea.

3.5. Quranic Warnings Against Extra-Scriptural Authority

The Quran itself **warns against attributing religious authority to things not revealed by God**:

Qur'an 6:112–113

"...So that the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter may incline to it, and be pleased with it, and that they may commit what they are committing."

Qur'an 7:3

"Follow what has been revealed to you from your Lord, and do not follow other allies besides Him..."

Qur'an 45:6

"These are the verses of God We recite to you in truth. Then in which statement after God and His verses will they believe?"

The Quran even criticizes the Jews and Christians for taking their rabbis and priests as lords by obeying their invented laws (Qur'an 9:31). **Ironically, this is exactly what Muslim scholars have done through Hadith.**

Conclusion: A Man-Made Supplement Treated as Divine

Despite the Quran's assertion of self-sufficiency, much of Islamic law comes from Hadith—texts that are post-Quranic, riddled with inconsistencies, and shaped by human politics. Accepting Hadith as legally binding undermines the Quran's divine finality and reintroduces the very man-made traditions Islam claimed to purify.

The next chapter will ask a sobering question: **If the Quran once claimed to be complete, does relying on external sources now mean that the present Quran is no longer complete—or that Allah was mistaken?**

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Chapter 4: Is It a Case of a Previously Complete Book Now Incomplete?

Islamic theology holds that the Quran is the final, complete, and perfect revelation from God—a book that requires no addition, deletion, or correction. Yet, as we have seen, the vast majority of Islamic law is drawn not from the Quran, but from external, post-Quranic sources. This creates a theological conundrum: **If the Quran was once complete, why does Islamic law now require supplementary texts and traditions to function?**

This chapter explores three critical questions:

1. Was the Quran ever truly complete?
2. If so, does present-day reliance on extra-Quranic sources mean it is now incomplete?
3. Does this imply a deficiency in God's foresight or a flaw in the claim of divine perfection?

4.1. The Quran's Finality and Completeness Claimed Repeatedly

The Quran does not describe itself as partial, evolving, or dependent on future human input. Rather, it presents itself as a finished and eternal message.

Qur'an 6:115

"The word of your Lord has been completed in truth and justice. None can change His words..."

Qur'an 5:3

"This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as your religion."

Qur'an 16:89

"... We have sent down to you the Book as an explanation of all things, and a guidance, mercy, and glad tidings..."

If these statements are to be taken seriously, they imply finality. **Any law, command, or principle not found in the Quran should be, at best, non-essential—and at worst, a challenge to God's completeness.**

4.2. Does Later Supplementation Imply the Quran Became Incomplete?

The argument from Islamic jurists is that Hadith and other legal tools do not contradict the Quran but “clarify” it. But this is problematic for several reasons:

A. Clarification vs. Expansion

Many Hadith and juristic rulings **do not clarify the Quran—they introduce entirely new rulings.** For example:

- **Death for apostasy** is not found in the Quran but introduced by Hadith (Sahih Bukhari 3017) [1].
- **Stoning for adultery** is not Quranic—it replaces the Quran's stated punishment of lashes (Qur'an 24:2 vs. Bukhari 6812) [2].
- **Breastfeeding adult men**, a rule reportedly issued by Muhammad, is nowhere in the Quran (Sahih Muslim 1453) [3].

These are not clarifications but **supplementary laws**, often contradicting the tone or teachings of the Quran. But still remember that Qur'an did not even allow room for clarification as it claimed to be perfect in details and explanation. Are they doubting Allah's clarity?

B. Reliance on Fallible Humans

If the Quran was complete, **why should its proper execution depend on the memory, judgment, and honesty of fallible men**—transmitters of Hadith, jurists,

or later caliphs? How can a perfect message be left vulnerable to manipulation, forgery, and conflicting reports? Are humans better in language and jurisprudence than Allah that Allah needs their clarification?

4.3. Was God Unaware of the Future?

Muslim apologists often defend extra-Quranic sources by saying they were necessary for evolving circumstances. But this raises a deeper theological issue:

Did God not foresee the challenges of future societies

Is Qur'an not for all time again?

Was the Quran only sufficient for the 7th century?

If God knew human beings would need further guidance, why did He declare the Quran complete?

Such questions suggest one of two conclusions:

1. **God misrepresented the Quran's sufficiency** (which is theologically unacceptable in Islam), or
2. **Human scholars misrepresented the need for additional sources**, claiming divine authority for man-made laws.

Both conclusions weaken the divine claim of Islamic law.

4.4. The Problem of Contradiction: If It's Complete, Why Use Other Books?

Let us apply the Quran's standard to itself. The Quran explicitly condemns adding other books to God's revelation:

Qur'an 45:6

"These are the verses of God. We recite them to you in truth. In what statement after God and His verses will they believe?"

Qur'an 6:114

"Shall I seek other than God as a judge while it is He who has sent down to you the Book explained in detail?"

If the Quran itself rejects other "statements" as valid sources of religious law, why do Muslim scholars justify Hadith and legal consensus (Ijma) as necessary for implementing divine will?

The answer lies not in theology, but **in the political and historical evolution of Islam**. As Islamic societies grew and governance became more complex, rulers and scholars needed more legal tools. Instead of admitting these were human developments, they clothed them in divine language—thereby declaring Sharia infallible and unchangeable.

4.5. Obscuring Human Error by Calling it Divine

Declaring the Quran complete and then relying on Hadith, Qiyas, and Fatwas is **like selling an unfinished house as move-in ready**—only to bring carpenters every week for new additions. Worse still, if the later additions cause structural problems (injustice, gender oppression, legal contradictions), critics are told the original house is beyond criticism.

This theological stubbornness has led to:

- **Unjust rulings** that cannot be corrected because they are claimed to be "divine."
- **Suppression of dissent**, since questioning Hadith-based laws is equated with questioning God.
- **Stagnation in legal reform**, especially in Muslim-majority countries.

Conclusion: Two Choices, Both Damaging

The Islamic tradition must choose between two flawed options:

Accept that the Quran was once complete, but now requires supplementation—thus undermining God’s foresight and Quranic sufficiency.

Accept that the Quran was never complete on its own—thus acknowledging that the current Sharia law is partly man-made and fallible.

Either way, the core claim—that Sharia is eternal, divine, and flawless—is shaken.

The next chapter will examine the consequences of using such a **fragile foundation** as the basis for judging people, enforcing punishments, and running societies.

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Chapter 5: The Consequences of Using a Shaky Foundation for Law

Law is the backbone of every society. It shapes how justice is dispensed, how rights are protected, and how human dignity is upheld. In a system where the foundation of law is unstable, society suffers from injustice, inequality, and abuse of power. Islamic Sharia law, often presented as divinely revealed and flawless, is in fact **built upon a fragile and deeply inconsistent foundation**. It relies heavily on the Hadith—texts of dubious authenticity—and the interpretations of fallible men centuries after the Prophet Muhammad.

This chapter examines the real-world consequences of using such a precarious legal framework to judge, punish, and govern people—especially in societies where questioning religious authority is forbidden.

5.1. Injustice Through Contradictory and Unverifiable Sources

Because much of Sharia is derived from **Hadith literature with contested authenticity**, it has produced laws that contradict both Quranic values and one another.

A. Examples of Contradictory Laws

Adultery Punishment: Quran prescribes 100 lashes (Qur'an 24:2), but Hadith commands stoning (Bukhari 6812) [1].

- **Apostasy:** Quran allows freedom of belief (Qur'an 2:256; 18:29), but Hadith mandates execution (Bukhari 3017) [2].
- **Inheritance Laws:** Even slight errors in interpretation lead to legal imbalance, such as undervaluing women's shares in modern contexts.

- **Women's Testimony:** Based on Hadith, two women equal one man (Bukhari 2658) [3], despite the Quran using this standard only in a specific context (Qur'an 2:282), not as a universal rule.

Such contradictions lead to **selective enforcement**, legal abuse, and confusion in Islamic courts.

5.2. Legal Inflexibility and Resistance to Reform

Once laws are labelled “divine,” they become **untouchable**, even when they lead to suffering or are no longer socially relevant.

- **Child marriage** continues in many countries due to Hadith about Aisha's young age at marriage (Bukhari 5133) [4].
- **Gender inequality** persists because of Hadith and juristic consensus, despite modern recognition of women's equal rights.
- **Brutal punishments** like amputation and flogging are retained in countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran, claiming divine legitimacy.

In contrast, secular legal systems can revise unjust laws. Sharia's **self-immunization against critique** ensures the **perpetuation of outdated and harmful practices**.

5.3. Legal Pluralism and Division Among Muslims

Because Sharia is not a unified code but a collection of interpretations, **different sects, schools, and regions enforce different versions of “divine law.”**

- Sunni and Shia law differ on issues like inheritance, prayer, and divorce.
- The four Sunni madhhab (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, Hanbali) have conflicting rulings.

- Fatwas issued by clerics vary widely, even within the same country.

This leads to **fragmented legal systems**, confusion among believers, and exploitation by those in power who pick the version of Sharia that suits their agenda.

5.4. Violation of Human Rights

The implementation of Sharia in its classical form leads to clear **violations of international human rights standards**.

- **Freedom of religion and belief** is denied through apostasy laws [5].
- **Freedom of expression** is crushed through blasphemy laws—often weaponized to settle personal disputes.
- **Equal protection under the law** is undermined by gender-based discrimination and unequal penalties.
- **Torture and cruel punishments** such as flogging, stoning, or amputation are still carried out in the name of divine justice.

These actions contradict both **universal ethical norms** and **Islam’s claim to be a religion of mercy** (Qur’an 21:107).

5.5. Weaponization of Religion for Control and Oppression

Once a law is deemed “divine,” it becomes a **powerful political tool**. Throughout history, religious authorities and political rulers have used Sharia not for justice but for control:

- **Silencing dissent:** Those who challenge a law are accused of opposing God.
- **Targeting minorities:** Non-Muslims are treated unequally under traditional Sharia (e.g., Jizya tax, reduced rights).

- **Enforcing obedience:** Citizens are taught that to disobey unjust laws is to rebel against God.

This fusion of **religion and state power** has led to authoritarianism, violence, and ideological extremism in many parts of the Muslim world.

5.6. Undermining the Quran's Moral Framework

Many Sharia rulings undermine the very values the Quran promotes—justice, mercy, and personal responsibility.

- The **Quran calls for proportional punishment** and forgiveness (Qur'an 5:45; 42:40), but Sharia often demands maximum cruelty.
- The **Quran supports reason and consultation** (Qur'an 42:38), yet Sharia leaves no room for re-evaluation or public input.
- The **Quran respects privacy** (Qur'an 24:27–28), yet Sharia includes invasive laws governing private behaviour.

Using a system that **misrepresents the moral tone of the Quran** while claiming divine origin leads to moral dissonance and disillusionment—especially among younger generations.

Conclusion: When Law Becomes a Weapon, Not a Shield

The consequences of using a man-made yet supposedly divine legal system are far-reaching and devastating. From the stoning of women to the execution of dissidents, from the silencing of reformers to the spread of religious violence, the damage caused by an uncritical adoption of Sharia law is undeniable.

A just society requires laws built on:

- Transparency
- Reason
- Human dignity
- Flexibility to correct error

Sharia, as currently understood and applied, fails these tests because **its foundation is unstable—rooted in contested traditions, political interests, and rigid dogma**. When that shaky structure is presented as divine, it becomes a **blunt instrument of oppression rather than a tool for justice**.

In the next chapter, we will explore the **danger of declaring man-made laws as divine**, and what happens when religious pride blocks reform—even when the laws clearly harm the people they claim to serve.

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Chapter 6: Calling the Human Divine — The Danger of Deifying Man-Made Law

Throughout human history, the most dangerous mistakes have come not merely from ignorance, but from **elevating human error to divine authority**. In the context of Islamic law, this mistake takes a profound and troubling form: **declaring man-made interpretations and cultural practices to be the eternal will of God**. This chapter explores the consequences—both theological and social—of confusing divine law with human construction.

6.1. Sharia Law: A Human Product Treated as Divine

As shown in earlier chapters, the Quran forms only a small portion of Sharia. The bulk of Islamic law stems from **Hadith**, **juristic consensus (Ijma)**, and **analogy (Qiyas)**—all of which are the products of fallible human reasoning. Yet these sources are routinely treated as if they were God's final word.

This elevation leads to a grave theological error: **it equates scholarly opinion and historical interpretation with divine revelation**.

Qur'an 6:112–113

“... We have made for every prophet an enemy—devils among mankind and jinn—who inspire each other with seductive speech... that the hearts of those who do not believe in the Hereafter may incline to it... so leave them and what they invent.”

Allah himself warns against following invented doctrines. Yet in Islamic tradition, thousands of legal opinions from medieval scholars are now **beyond question**, defended as sacred, and **resistant to revision even when they contradict both reason and justice**.

6.2. When Human Error Is Immune to Correction

Once a man-made ruling is labelled "divine," it becomes **irreversible—even if it is unjust or outdated**.

Examples:

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): Practiced in some Muslim communities and justified using weak Hadith. Medical and human rights bodies universally condemn it, yet it persists due to “religious” legitimacy [1].

- **Child Marriage:** Justified by Hadith about Aisha’s age (Bukhari 5133) [2], even though it conflicts with the Quranic spirit of maturity and consent (Qur’an 4:6).
- **Death for Apostasy or Blasphemy:** Not supported by the Quran, but enforced via Hadith (Bukhari 3017) [3]. Reformers who challenge it risk death.

Such rulings **would be dismissed in any rational legal system**, but when declared divine, they become **immovable—even in the face of widespread suffering**.

6.3. Deifying Scholars, Silencing the Masses

Islamic history reveres scholars like Abu Hanifa, Malik, Shafi’i, and Ahmad ibn Hanbal. While they contributed intellectually to the early Islamic world, their views are now **enshrined as semi-divine**, and their rulings are treated as infallible.

Qur’an 9:31

“They have taken their rabbis and monks as lords besides Allah...”

Muslim commentators use this verse to criticize Jews and Christians for following religious leaders over God. Yet Muslims themselves **have made the same**

mistake—giving their own scholars the **final say on religious law**, even when their interpretations conflict with Quranic principles.

By deifying scholars:

- Reformers are silenced.
 - Questioning outdated laws becomes heresy.
 - Religion becomes chained to the past, **immune to growth**.
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6.4. Blind Obedience Replaces Moral Responsibility

The elevation of human rulings to divine status leads believers to accept unjust practices without question. Instead of appealing to conscience, reason, or justice, they are told:

- *“This is God's law.”*
- *“Who are you to question the scholars?”*
- *“Islam is perfect—if you don't like it, leave.”*

This discourages critical thinking and fosters **moral passivity**. At worst, it leads to:

- **Vigilante justice** in blasphemy cases.
- **Suppression of dissent** in political discourse.
- **Acceptance of cruelty** in the name of religion.

God endowed humans with reason, empathy, and a conscience—not to **blindly follow ancient opinions**, but to **discern truth from error**.

6.5. The Psychological and Social Cost

Declaring flawed human rulings to be divine does not just damage theology—it has **deep human consequences**:

- **Women** remain second-class citizens in many Muslim societies due to laws that claim divine legitimacy for their marginalization.
- **Youth** leave Islam not because they hate God, but because they **cannot reconcile injustice with divinity**.
- **Communities** divide over interpretations of Hadith, sectarian rulings, and *madhhab* loyalties.

The result is a **religion fractured by internal contradictions, frozen in medieval thought, and disconnected from the moral sensibilities of modern humanity**.

6.6. The Quran's Alternative Vision

Contrary to the rigidity of traditional Sharia, the Quran offers a dynamic, principle-based moral vision:

- **Justice** (Qur'an 4:135): "*Stand firm for justice, even against yourselves...*". But hadith and Islamic jurists said it is okay to lie if beneficial.
- **Mercy** (Qur'an 21:107): "*We have not sent you except as a mercy to the worlds.*"
- **Reason** (Qur'an 17:36): "*Do not follow what you have no knowledge of...*"
- **Flexibility** (Qur'an 2:286): "*God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.*"

These principles suggest a **living, moral faith**—not a fossilized legal system. Yet, in the name of Sharia, the **Quran's ethical voice has been silenced by juristic rigidity**.

Conclusion: Reverence Without Idolatry

It is one thing to respect the contributions of scholars. It is another to **treat their writings as scripture**. When Muslims elevate Hadith and legal rulings to divine status, they commit the same error the Quran warns against: **turning human speech into God's word**.

Such deification:

- Blocks reform,
- Sanctions injustice,
- And ultimately, **corrupts the divine message it seeks to protect**.

In the next chapter, we will turn to final reflections: what does it truly mean to submit to God—and how can Muslims reclaim their faith from the grip of man-made law?

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Chapter 7: Final Reflections — Submitting to God, Not to Men

The essence of Islam lies in the word “*Islam*” itself: **submission to God**. But what does it truly mean to submit to God? Does it mean following whatever a religious scholar says? Accepting medieval rulings even when they conflict with conscience and justice? Or does it mean seeking God’s will with sincerity, using the very faculties of reason, compassion, and morality that He gave us?

This final chapter reflects on the **distinction between divine submission and blind obedience to human systems**, and calls for a return to a faith anchored in reason, justice, and the **Quran’s core values**—not the rigidity of man-made legal codes. Not the deeply flawed reasoning I saw in the lecture note meant for Islamic university students of Sharia law.

7.1. Submission to God Is Not Submission to Scholars

For too long, submission to God has been **confused with submission to religious authorities**. Many Muslims today believe:

- To question Hadith is to question God.
- To reject a harsh Sharia ruling is to reject Islam.
- To call for reform is to invite apostasy.

But the Quran never instructs believers to follow human beings uncritically.

Qur’an 17:36

“Do not follow what you have no knowledge of. Indeed, the hearing, the sight, and the heart—about all those [one] will be questioned.”

True submission to God requires **independent thought, moral clarity, and conscious faith**—not mechanical obedience.

7.2. The Prophetic Model: Challenging Tradition for Justice

Ironically, Muhammad himself was a reformer who **challenged tribal customs and religious elites** of his time. He:

- Confronted unjust laws and practices.
- Promoted social equity and compassion.
- Endured mockery and persecution for standing against the religious status quo.

At least that is what Muslims want us to believe. If Muslims are truly followers of the Prophet, then they must inherit not only his teachings, but **his courage to reform, to think, and to challenge oppression**—even when that oppression is cloaked in religious language. Qur'an told us how Abraham challenged idol worship but today it is same Muslims that fight for their Allah and kill apostates for leaving.

7.3. What Has Sharia Produced Today?

A sincere evaluation of Sharia's outcomes must ask: **Has it made Muslim societies more just, more peaceful, or more united?**

In reality, it has:

- **Divided the Muslim world** into legal sects and warring interpretations.
- **Oppressed women, minorities, reformers, and dissenters** in the name of divine law.

- **Alienated younger generations**, who find a disconnect between their innate sense of right and wrong and the laws enforced in God's name.
- **Fostered extremism**, where radicals use ancient rulings to justify modern terrorism.

No divine law should ever produce such fruit.

Qur'an 5:32

"...Whoever kills a soul... it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one—it is as if he had saved mankind entirely."

Yet today, people are stoned, lashed, mutilated, or murdered in the name of Sharia. How can a law that contradicts such a profound Quranic verse still be called divine?

7.4. Reclaiming the Quran: A Return to the Essentials

To truly submit to God, Muslims must **return to the Quran with open eyes and a humble heart**. Not as a book interpreted through 10th-century jurisprudence, but as **a living, ethical, and rational guide** for human life.

Key Quranic themes include:

- **Justice** (Qur'an 4:135): Even if it is against yourself.
- **Mercy** (Qur'an 6:54): God prescribes mercy for Himself.
- **Freedom of belief** (Qur'an 2:256): No compulsion in religion.
- **Equality of souls** (Qur'an 49:13): All people are one family before God.
- **Use of intellect** (Qur'an 39:9): Are those who know equal to those who do not?

These themes stand in contrast to many of the rulings found in traditional Sharia. They call believers not to fear reform, but to embrace **moral and intellectual integrity** in their walk with God.

7.5. Moving Forward: Toward a Faith That Liberates, Not Oppresses

If Muslims are to find peace, unity, and progress, they must be willing to:

- **Distinguish between the divine and the human**—between God’s eternal message and fallible interpretations.
- **Acknowledge historical errors** without losing faith in God.
- **Liberate themselves from intellectual stagnation**, reclaiming their right to think, question, and improve.

Qur’an 13:11

“...Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.”

The future of Islam depends not on how strictly old rulings are enforced, but **on whether believers are brave enough to reform what was never divine to begin with.**

Conclusion: God Is Not the Problem — We Are

The tragedy of Sharia is not that it exists, but that it was **falsely declared divine**, and used to chain hearts instead of liberating them.

- God is not cruel.
- Islam was not meant to silence the voice of reason or morality.

The problem lies in **elevating flawed human constructions to divine status**, and punishing those who dare to call for truth, justice, and reform.

May this book serve as a **voice of conscience**, calling believers back—not away from God—but **back to the essence of religion**: a sincere, thoughtful, and ethical submission to a just and merciful God.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Quranic vs. Hadith-Based Sharia Rulings — A Comparative Table

Issue	Quranic Guidance	Hadith/Sharia Ruling	Comment
Theft	Cut off the thief’s hand (Q 5:38)	Same, but detailed procedures from Hadith and fiqh	Quran vague; implementation shaped mostly by Hadith
Adultery	100 lashes for both (Q 24:2)	Stoning to death (Hadith: Bukhari 6812, Muslim 1691)	Stoning not in Quran; based on Hadith and juristic consensus
Apostasy	No penalty in Quran (Q 2:256, Q 10:99)	Death penalty (Bukhari 3017)	Contradiction between Quranic tolerance and Hadith punishment
Women's testimony	2 women = 1 man in finance (Q 2:282)	Generalized to all legal matters via Hadith	Often misapplied beyond financial context
Child marriage	No direct Quranic approval; mentions maturity (Q 4:6)	Justified using Aisha’s age in Hadith (Bukhari 5133)	Major ethical concern
Inheritance	Outlined in Quran (Q 4:11–12)	Modified through juristic reasoning	Disputes over fairness and adaptability
Blasphemy	No worldly punishment in Quran	Death/lashing found in Hadith and some classical rulings	Quran leaves it to God (Q 6:68, Q 33:57–58)
Alcohol	Prohibited gradually (Q 2:219, 5:90)	40–80 lashes (Hadith: Muslim 1706)	Punishment not mentioned in Quran

Issue	Quranic Guidance	Hadith/Sharia Ruling	Comment
Hijab/veil	Modesty enjoined (Q 24:31, Q 33:59)	Enforced specific dress codes via Hadith and legal opinions	Cultural variations often misrepresented as divine law

Appendix B: Common Defences of Sharia — Rebutted

Many defenders of Sharia argue from a place of conviction, but their most popular arguments often collapse under scrutiny. This appendix offers **reasoned, evidence-based rebuttals** to these common claims.

1. “Sharia is divine because it comes from the Quran.”

Rebuttal:
Sharia draws heavily from **Hadith, consensus (ijma), and analogical reasoning (qiyas)**—all of which are human constructs. The Quran itself provides **limited legal content** (around 500 verses, many vague or contextual), while **thousands of rulings** originate from post-Quranic sources [1].

2. “Sharia is the same law that was given to Moses, Jesus, and Abraham.”

Rebuttal:

This claim has no historical or textual basis. Mosaic Law and Christian teachings differ significantly from Sharia:

- The Torah emphasized civil and ritual law but was specific to Israelite society.
- Jesus rejected legalism and focused on inner righteousness (Matthew 5–7).
- No historical record shows Abraham with a codified law.

The Quran’s claim (Q 42:13) that all prophets had the same Sharia ignores **evidence of theological and legal diversity** among these figures [2].

3. “Sharia protects justice and promotes mercy.”

Rebuttal:

Many Sharia rulings **violate modern human rights** and Quranic principles of mercy:

- Stoning for adultery contradicts Quranic 100 lashes (Q 24:2).
- Death for apostasy contradicts Quranic freedom of belief (Q 2:256).
- Gender inequality in testimony, inheritance, and leadership lacks Quranic consistency and is fuelled by Hadith.

While some aspects may aim at justice, others cause cruelty, especially in modern contexts.

4. “The scholars have already settled these issues — who are we to question them?”

Rebuttal:

This is an **appeal to authority**, not to truth. Scholars were human, lived in specific cultures, and disagreed often. Even among the four Sunni schools, there is no consensus on several rulings (e.g., apostasy punishment, prayer practices, divorce mechanisms). Blind deference to scholars **elevates fallible men to divine status**—the very error the Quran criticizes (Q 9:31).

5. “Secular law is man-made and corrupt; only God’s law is pure.”

Rebuttal:

Ironically, most of Sharia is also man-made: drawn from narrations with **questionable authenticity**, debated interpretations, and **classical juristic opinions shaped by culture and politics**.

Furthermore:

- Secular laws can be **revised** when unjust.
- Sharia is treated as unchangeable—even when harmful.

The divinity claim is a shield that resists reform, **not a proof of moral superiority**.

6. “The problems come from misuse—not from Sharia itself.”

Rebuttal:

While abuse exists, **many of the core rulings themselves are problematic**:

- Child marriage is not a misuse—it is defended based on Hadith (Bukhari 5133).
- Amputation for theft and stoning for adultery are not distortions—they're literal interpretations.
- Discrimination against women and minorities is embedded in classical fiqh.

Labelling all criticism as “misuse” is **a way of avoiding uncomfortable but necessary moral inquiry.**

7. “Sharia brought civilization to the Muslim world.”

Rebuttal:

Islamic civilization did flourish in arts, science, and architecture—but that was **often in spite of Sharia, not because of it.** Many Muslim empires had to **reinterpret, suspend, or supplement Sharia** with local and administrative law to govern effectively.

Progressive reforms (e.g., banning slavery, codifying civil rights, improving women's status) came through **modern ijihad and secular legislation**, not classical Sharia [3].

Conclusion:

Respect for people of faith should not prevent **honest analysis of what is claimed to be divine.** The truth is not threatened by scrutiny—only falsehood is.

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Appendix C: A Brief Timeline of Sharia's Historical Development

With References

610–632 CE — The Life of Muhammad

- The Quran was revealed over 23 years during Muhammad's prophetic mission.
 - Legal rulings were minimal and situation-specific.
 - No codified legal system was developed during his life; instead, he judged by divine inspiration and evolving context [1].
-

632–661 CE — The Rashidun Caliphate

- The first four caliphs faced new issues that required reasoning beyond the Quran.
 - Umar ibn al-Khattab suspended the Quranic punishment for theft due to famine—an early act of legal pragmatism [2].
-

661–750 CE — The Umayyad Dynasty

- Expansion required pragmatic rulings not explicitly found in revelation.
 - Governors relied on **ra’y** (personal opinion), tribal customs, and experience—laying the groundwork for Islamic jurisprudence [3].
-

750–900 CE — Rise of Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh)

- The Abbasid era saw scholarly growth in legal theory.
 - Al-Shafi’i systematized legal sources and introduced **usul al-fiqh**, emphasizing Hadith over **ra’y** [4].
 - Major schools of Sunni jurisprudence emerged, each with its distinct methodology.
-

900–1200 CE — Codification and Canonization

- Legal schools (madhhabs) solidified.
 - Claims emerged that the “gates of ijtihad” had closed, reducing innovation [5].
 - Sharia began transitioning from flexible interpretation to rigid tradition.
-

1200–1800 CE — Empire, Customary Law & Qanun

- Ottoman sultans integrated **qanun** (sultanic decrees) with Sharia to ensure governability [6].
- Sharia’s role shrank to **family and personal law**, while states exercised broader civil and criminal authority using secular ordinances.

1800–1900s — Colonialism and the Challenge of Modernity

- European colonial systems displaced Sharia in civil and criminal law.
- Reformers like **Muhammad Abduh** and **Sir Syed Ahmad Khan** pushed for reinterpretation and rationalism in Islamic thought [7].
- Traditionalists resisted reforms, fearing Westernization.

20th Century — Islamic Revivalism

- Movements like **Jamaat-e-Islami** and the **Muslim Brotherhood** reasserted Sharia as divine and non-negotiable.
- Iran's 1979 revolution institutionalized Sharia-based governance [8].
- Nigeria's northern states (early 2000s) reintroduced Sharia criminal codes—resulting in public flogging, amputations, and death sentences [9].

21st Century — Crisis and Reform

- Modern scholars argue for historical contextualization and ethical re-evaluation of Sharia (e.g., An-Na'im, Abu Zayd, Wadud).
 - There is a growing divide between:
 - **Literalists**, who want to enforce classical rulings.
 - **Reformists**, who stress Quranic ethics and human rights compatibility [10].
-

Conclusion

Sharia was not handed down fully formed, but evolved through **debate, politics, and scholarship**. Treating it as a static, divine legal code ignores its **human history**, its **regional variations**, and the **internal contradictions** that developed over time.

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