

Indiana Univ. Scholar Explains How Awesome Sharia Law Is

My knowledge of Sharia Law is modest. So when I came across an article on The Conversation—[“What Sharia law means: Five questions answered”](#)—written by Indiana University professor [Asma Afsaruddin](#), I decided to learn a little more about it.

I’m glad I did this, because apparently a lot of my assumptions on Sharia Law were just plain wrong. Afsaruddin opens her article by explaining the fundamental objectives of Sharia Law:

“Sharia provides guidance on how to live an ethical life. It lays down guidelines on how to pray and how to treat one’s family members, neighbors and those who are in need. It requires Muslims to be just and fair in their dealings with everyone, to refrain from lying and gossip, etc., and always to promote what is good and prevent what is wrong.”

Sharia Law is actually quite progressive, in some respects. Afsaruddin explains that its laws protect “life, intellect, family, property and [the honor of human beings](#).” Its protection of civil liberties is akin to “a premodern Islamic Bill of Rights.”

Like other religions, Sharia Law does frown on adultery, as many know. Those found guilty are supposed to be lashed (according to the Quran) or stoned to death (based on hadith). However:

“...there is a high bar of evidence that must be met before this punishment can be meted out: Four witnesses must observe the actual act of penetration. Even in this age of voyeurism, it would be next to impossible to meet this criterion.”

And then there is the burning question: Is Sharia anti-women?

“Most definitely not. The Quran recognizes the absolute equality of men and women as human beings and proclaims that they are each other’s partners in promoting the common good.