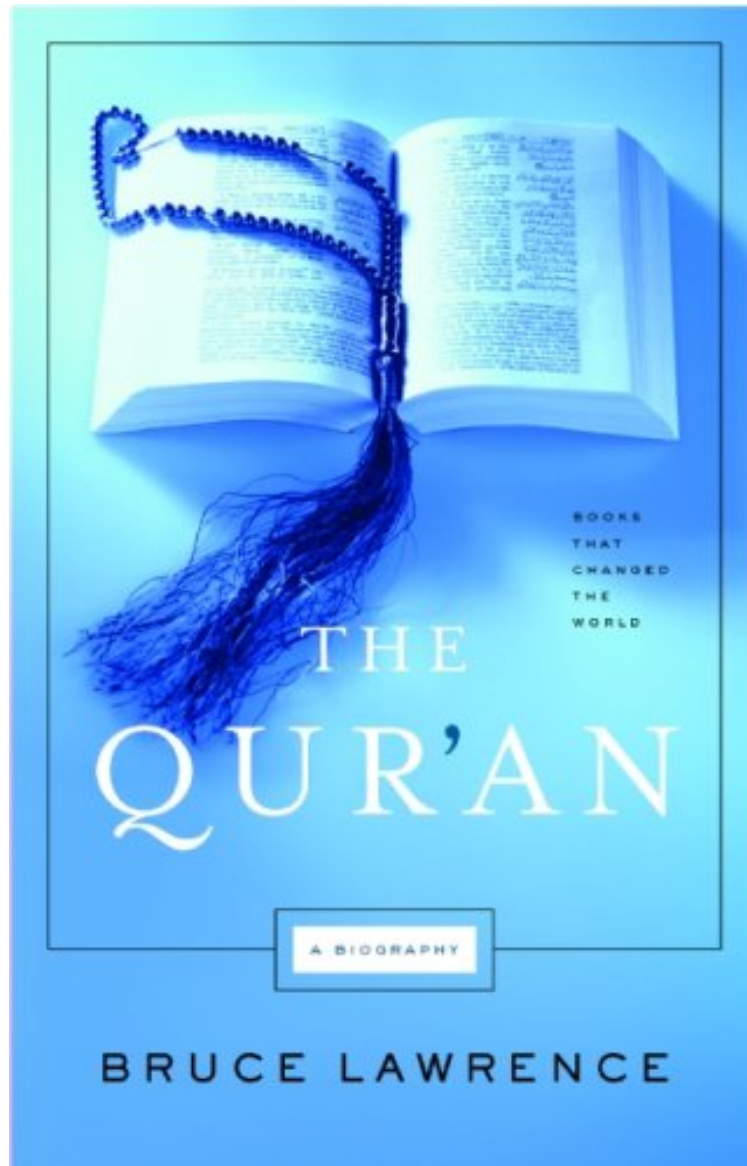


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The Qur'an: Books That changed the World

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Bruce Lawrence : The Qur'an: Books That changed the World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Qur'an: Books That changed the World:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Good, but not fantasticBy Will JeromContent Summary: In this short work Bruce Lawrence gives some important context for understanding the Qur'an, the Prophet Muhammad. He also provides some background for prominent figures in Islamic history like Aisha, Jafar as-Sadi, as well as places like the

Dome of the Rock and the Taj Mahal. It is a short, readable book, well suited for introductory students to Islam. Analytical Review: I thought this book was good, but not fantastic. The background information was interesting, but much of it I already knew before. What disappointed most is the very uncritical, almost dogmatic orientation of the book in parts. Instead of questioning, it gave very pat, religious-friendly answers, where a more critical perspective could have shed more insight. Again - that is probably well suited to the introductory student more than the expert. 21 of 22 people found the following review helpful. A good introduction. By Sahra Badou This is a very simple attempt to explain the Qur'an. I personally don't think it should have been called a biography, for it isn't. However, the book is very well written and easy to read, and will introduce the reader, whether Muslim or not, to how Muslims have used and interpreted the Qur'an throughout the centuries. The first chapters are on Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his followers, his wars, and on one of his youngest wives, A'isha. These chapters will introduce the reader to how and why the Qur'an descended to the people of the world. The rest of the chapters are about how Muslims have used and interpreted the Qur'an. I did enjoy the chapter on the use of the Qur'an for healing. According to the author, Muslims have used the Qur'an to heal themselves from diseases such as cancer and AIDS. Qur'anic verses have also been used to adorn murals such as in the Mosque of the Dome and the Taj Mahal, and the author does a great job explaining their history. The author points out that not all Islamic scholars or Imams interpreted the Qur'an in the same way. This caused branches in Islam, among which are the Sunnis, Shiites, Sufis, Wahabis, Dancing Dervishes, and Nation of Islam, to name just a few. The author goes through some of these branches of Islam and he does a great job explaining their origins. I did also enjoy the chapter on jihad, a subject captivating the minds of everyone after 9/11. Some Muslim scholars view Jihad as a means of fighting your enemies (e.g. Osama Bin Laden), while other scholars view Jihad as a spiritual struggle within oneself. The author talks about prominent Muslim figures from the United States, India, and Pakistan, and about their differing views on how one should approach the Qur'an. Those chapters were fascinating. Overall, this is an excellent book for both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Interesting. By ARFedewa I knew very little about Islam before taking a class in college. This book helped shed some light on a controversial (within the USA) religion.

Meditative and unique, a lovely read for any spiritual person, Muslim or not. Publisher's Weekly Few books in history have been as poorly understood as the Quran. Sent down in a series of revelations to the Prophet Muhammad, the Quran is the unmediated word of Allah, a ritual, political, and legal authority, an ethical and spiritual guide, and a literary masterpiece. In this book, one of the launch titles in Atlantic Monthly Press Books That Changed the World series, the distinguished historian of religion Bruce Lawrence shows precisely how the Quran is Islam. He describes the origins of the faith and assesses its tremendous influence on today's societies and politics. Above all, Lawrence emphasizes that the Quran is a sacred book of signs that has no single message. It is a book that demands interpretation and one that can be properly understood only through its history. Bruce Lawrence's work is a beautifully written and, in these increasingly troubled times, invaluable introduction to and exploration of the core sacred text of Islam.

From Publishers Weekly As part of this press's series on Books That Changed the World, Lawrence, a professor of Islamic Studies at Duke University, offers an unusual "biography" of the Qur'an, the Islamic holy book. He describes in each chapter how the Qur'an has been experienced throughout its 1,400-year history, as it has fascinated, intrigued and guided millions of Muslims and non-Muslims. Lawrence gracefully describes the Qur'an's interpretation and use by individuals, leaders, poets and even on building walls. Throughout, Lawrence emphasizes the wide diversity of Qur'anic interpretations around the world and through the ages. The same verses that appear on the walls of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, for example, are written inside drinking glasses in Indonesia, sipped by women seeking the healing powers of the Qur'an. Some Sufis have even claimed that the Qur'an can heal AIDS when people chant its verses. In his boldest analysis, Lawrence examines Osama bin Laden's manipulative citation of the Qur'an. In contrast, Lawrence profiles W.D. Mohammed, the spiritual leader of approximately two million African-American Muslims, who sees the Qur'an as unifying peoples beyond race and culture. This book, like the book it studies, is meditative and unique, a lovely read for any spiritual person, Muslim or not. (Feb.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "An important work for those seeking to understand--and defend--Islam." "This book, like the book it studies, is meditative and unique, a lovely read for any spiritual person, Muslim or not." "Timely and provocative . . . Lawrence's history of the Qur'an [is] highly instructive. . . . The history of the book is a map of the world we live in today." "Standout . . . [Lawrence] presents in the most readable manner what for some will be a new topic. For Muslims who seek to deepen their faith and for non-Muslims who seek to understand that faith, The Qur'an is a valuable resource." About the Author Bruce Lawrence is the Nancy and Jeffrey Marcus Humanities Professor of Religion at Duke University and the author or editor of numerous books, including *Shattering the Myth: Islam Beyond Violence*.