

Name: _____
Date: _____

Shariah

In many western governments, particularly the United States, there is a separation between religion and government. Many Muslims believe in Shariah, a term that means “path” in Arabic. Shariah law tells many devout Muslims what to eat, how to pray, and how to behave in public. Muslims believe the Shariah are commandments from God (Arabic *Allah*).

Under Shariah law, people may not consume alcohol, borrow money at interest, or allow women in their family to go out in public without a veil. Shariah law allows a man to take as many as four wives, provided his first wife agrees and he is able to support all of his wives and children. This provision of the Shariah is not often employed in even the most traditional Muslim societies.

Saudi Arabia is the only nation that closely adheres to Shariah law. Criminals who are convicted of murder, rape, or other violent crimes

in Saudi Arabia can face public amputation of arms or legs, or beheadings. Westerners often argue that Saudi justice is cruel, but most observers agree that violent crime is less common in Saudi Arabia than in America.

Devout Muslims defend Shariah because their values have served them well for over one thousand years. Saudi professor Dr. Hend Khuthaila said, “The West may be more advanced in some areas like science, but I have never believed for a minute that your culture is better than ours...We go to the United States and see playgrounds, so we build swings for five thousand dollars and our children don’t use them. Swings are not part of our culture. We would rather spend time with our families than be on a playground with strangers.”

Fill in the Blanks

Sharia l_____ governs many aspects of *Is_____ life. While w_____ laws were written by people, M_____ believe S_____ is the p_____ revealed to *M_____ by *A_____. The S_____ dictates that M_____ may not consume a_____, borrow m_____ at i_____, or allow w_____ to go out in p_____ without a v_____.

Violent c_____ is almost nonexistent in S_____ Arabia because under S_____ law, criminals often face a_____ or d_____. Devout M_____ defend their v_____ because they have served them well for over one-t_____ years. While many people in the W_____ Hemisphere find the S_____ justice system to be c_____, most Saudis do not have to be concerned with *c_____.

Answer in complete sentences

*1. What is the dictionary definition of polygamy?

*2. Do you agree or disagree with Dr. Khuthaila’s opinion of American cultural superiority. Defend your answer.

