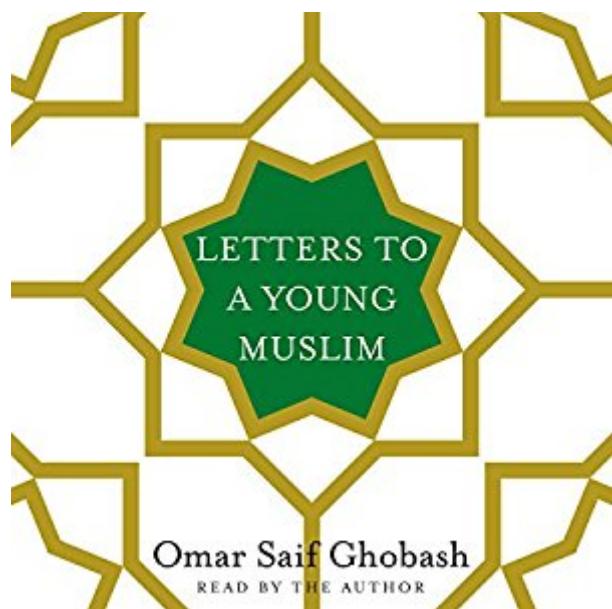


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# Letters To A Young Muslim



## **Synopsis**

From the ambassador of the UAE to Russia comes a bold and intimate exploration of what it means to be a Muslim in the 21st century. In a series of personal letters to his sons, Omar Saif Ghobash offers a short and highly listenable manifesto that tackles our current global crisis with the training of an experienced diplomat and the personal responsibility of a father. Today's young Muslims will be tomorrow's leaders, and yet too many are vulnerable to extremist propaganda that seems omnipresent in our technological age. The burning question, Ghobash argues, is how moderate Muslims can unite to find a voice that is true to Islam while actively and productively engaging in the modern world. What does it mean to be a good Muslim? What is the concept of a good life? And is it acceptable to stand up and openly condemn those who take the Islamic faith and twist it to suit their own misguided political agendas? In taking a hard look at these seemingly simple questions, Ghobash encourages his sons to face issues others insist are not relevant or not applicable or that may even be Islamophobic. These letters serve as a clear-eyed inspiration for the next generation of Muslims to understand how to be faithful to their religion and still navigate through the complexities of today's world. They also reveal an intimate glimpse into a world many are unfamiliar with and offer to provide an understanding of the everyday struggles Muslims face around the globe.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is the only book I have read about the experience of Muslims (and I've read quite a few) that gives me a real sense of hope that Islam's problems with ISIS and every other demented perversion

of the faith actually can be resolved. Coming from a man with such a distinguished public service career, this telling of his hopes for his son and other children puts Omar Said Ghobash in some kind of hero category for anyone struggling to understand and find what is truly valuable in Islam. I consider the book required reading for all who are genuinely struggling to make any sense out of the religious contentions roiling the world today. This is a positive and helpful story.

This very personal set of letters are a true gift to humanity; they unpack many myths at a time of great polarization, and encourage a fresh perspective for people of all backgrounds. It is a true privilege to benefit from this conversation between a father and a son.

I took this book with me on holiday and read it with great interest. I'm not a Muslim, so it was a wonderful way for me to learn more about Islam, one of the world's most important religions. I enjoyed the author's honest and open style as I read his intimate letters to his eldest son, which are in fact letters meant for all young men and women of faith (and even for those who may not have faith). The book was easy to read and entertaining too. I felt how deeply the author thought and reflected about the serious issues affecting Islam today. I particularly enjoyed his views about how young Muslims should adopt a more tolerant view towards other religions and non-Muslims as well. It is a very timely book given the current troubled times we live in, when we often hear of terrorism and horrendous acts of violence being committed by fanatics in the name of Islam. The book is a call to take responsibility, to find the courage to question, to challenge and ultimately to strike the right balance and decide what version of Islam makes sense to anyone who calls himself or herself a Muslim in today's world. "The more difficult and perhaps more valuable sacrifice a person can make is to face the complexity of modern life and live life to its fullest morally, spiritually, and socially. It is far more difficult to deal with the troubles thrown up by a globalised economy, the complexities of modern city life, and the utter sense of futility that all of us feel as some stage. And morally far more important. This is the true challenge of a religiously inspired life."

In a series of short letters addressed to his son, Omar Saif Ghobash touches on many of the pressing issues the world faces today in the context of a Muslim individual. He draws from his own personal experiences, as well as general Arabian history to pose difficult but important questions about what it means to grow up, to forge your own beliefs and identity in the 21st Century. I found this work to be very insightful and valuable even as a non-Muslim. It puts into perspective the

conflict between extremists and the rest of the Muslim community (a vast majority). Having been an expat teenager in Bahrain during the Arab Spring, I have witnessed the growing violence of the Shia-Sunni conflict first hand. Because I struggled to fully understand it at the time, I thoroughly enjoyed reading about the historical context of these fundamental differences in the book. Ghobash introduces the schools of thought that is rooted in the major sects of Islam in order to raise questions about how much sense it makes to dogmatically follow the teachings at face value today. Individualism is a theme in many of the letters. Ghobash conveys the importance of a sense of personal responsibility, the questioning of presented information, and an open-minded pursuit of knowledge in multiple contexts. The fact that Ghobash himself is half-Arab, half-Russian, and was educated in the West (UCL and Oxford) certainly played a role in this stance. While he does discuss several sensitive topics such as gender equality and sexuality, he presents his ideas and questions in a thought-provoking and inoffensive way. He does not try to shove any idea down your throat, but rather encourages a non-violent debate of ideas, acceptance of individual differences, and a pragmatic moral compass that is iterable as we look to coexist amongst different peoples, cultures, and beliefs. An important read that I would recommend to both my Muslim and non-Muslim friends.

Omar Saif Ghobash wrote this for his son but it is a valuable book that should be read by all. I was moved by the sensible and compelling manner in which he candidly discusses issues that impact all of us. These same types of problems are present in all cultures, it's about changing times, cultures and ideas and people trying to adapt. Some want to force their views on others. Unfortunately others see violence as the answer. I have a much better understanding of the differences between the factions of the Muslim faith and how those differences contribute to the current problems. He explained how some Muslims use methods that may have worked in other times but may not be the answer now. This book made me think about how I view the world - we have real issues that will take a sincere effort to resolve. It's not about being politically correct or being hateful towards people who do things differently. It's about seeing the people, religions, cultures as they are with their good and bad. We have to honestly acknowledge the problems to begin to solve them.

A beautiful book- The author wove his own interesting history with the history of the Middle East and the evolution of the Islamic Faith into an important and heart felt message for his son. I am Christian and really learned so much about Islam and the history of the Middle East from this book. I would highly recommend this book, I thought it was wonderfully told and the caring act of the father in writing it for his son really touched my heart.

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