

# 3

## Islam: beliefs and teachings

### 3.1 The Oneness of God and the supremacy of God's will

#### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Islam is a **monotheistic** religion. This means that Muslims believe there is only one God (**Allah**).
- The belief in one, indivisible God is known as **Tawhid**.
- Muslims believe in the **supremacy** of God's will: the idea that God's will is above all things. This means that things only happen if God wants them to.

#### The Oneness of God

Tawhid is a fundamental belief in Islam. Surah 112 from the **Qur'an** (the main holy book in Islam) helps to explain this belief:

Verse in Surah 112	Meaning
'He is God the One'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is only one God</li> <li>• God is a unified, undivided being; God cannot be divided into different persons</li> </ul>
'God the eternal'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God has always existed</li> </ul>
'He begot no one nor was He begotten'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God was not born or came into being out of something else</li> <li>• God does not have any children</li> </ul>
'No one is comparable to Him'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God is unique</li> <li>• No other person or thing has God's qualities and attributes</li> <li>• No one can accurately picture or describe God because there is nothing to compare him to</li> </ul>



The word 'Allah' in Arabic

Belief in Tawhid means that Muslims should:

- worship only one God
- never make anything in their lives more important than God, as God has no equal
- not use images or pictures of God, as it is impossible to portray God accurately.

#### The supremacy of God's will

- Muslims believe **God's will is supreme** (most powerful). This means God can make anything happen that he wants to happen (see page 50).
- It also means that **nothing happens unless God allows it to happen**.
- This helps to give Muslims confidence when something goes wrong, because they know it is part of God's plan for them.
- Muslims try to live according to God's will in their everyday lives, accepting that God knows best.

#### TIP

Remember that Christianity and Islam are both monotheistic religions. This means they both believe in only one God. The difference is that Christians believe God is also three Persons.

#### APPLY



- A** Give two beliefs about God found in Surah 112 and explain what each teaches Muslims about God.
- B** 'Tawhid is the most important belief in Islam because it influences everything that Muslims do.'  
**Evaluate this statement.**

#### TIP

To 'evaluate' this statement, explain the extent to which you think it is true or not and why. Consider how a belief in Tawhid affects the way a Muslim lives their life.

## 3.2 Key beliefs of Sunni Islam and Shi'a Islam

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Muhammad** was the last and most important of the prophets in Islam. After Muhammad died, there were disagreements about who should succeed him as the leader of Islam. The religion split into two branches: **Sunni** and **Shi'a**.
- The central beliefs of Sunni Muslims are given in the **six articles of faith**, while the central beliefs of Shi'a Muslims are shown in the **five roots of 'Usul ad-Din**.

### Sunni and Shi'a Islam

Sunni Islam	Shi'a Islam
The Sunni leader (called the Caliph) should be elected	The Shi'a leader (called the Imam) should be a descendant of Muhammad and chosen by God
Only the Qur'an and the <b>Sunnah</b> (Muhammad's teachings and actions) have the authority to provide religious guidance	The Qur'an, Sunnah <i>and</i> the Shi'a leader have the authority to provide religious guidance
Abu Bakr, Muhammad's advisor, was the rightful leader after Muhammad died	Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, was the rightful leader after Muhammad died
The six articles of faith give the main beliefs for Sunni Muslims	The five roots of 'Usul ad-Din give the main beliefs for Shi'a Muslims
There are many shared beliefs in Sunni and Shi'a Islam. For example, both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• believe in the same God</li> <li>• follow the teachings in the Sunnah</li> <li>• follow the teachings in the Qur'an</li> <li>• acknowledge the importance of the prophets.</li> </ul>	

### TIP

You will learn about further differences between Sunni and Shi'a Islam as you continue to read this chapter and Chapter 4.

### The six articles of faith in Sunni Islam

- 1 **Tawhid** – belief that there is only one God.
- 2 **Angels** – belief in angels, who passed on God's message to the prophets.
- 3 **The holy books** – respect for the holy books and particularly the Qur'an, which is the highest authority in Islam.
- 4 **The prophets** – respect for the prophets and particularly Muhammad, who received the final revelation of Islam from God.
- 5 **The Day of Judgement** – belief that at the end of the world, every person will be judged by God and sent to paradise or hell.
- 6 **The supremacy of God's will** – belief that nothing happens unless God wants it to happen.

### The five roots of 'Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam

- 1 **Tawhid** – belief that there is only one God.
- 2 **Prophethood** – respect for the prophets and particularly Muhammad, who received the final revelation of Islam from God.
- 3 **The justice of God (Adalat)** – belief that God will judge everyone on the Day of Judgement in a fair and just way, and hold them to account for their actions.
- 4 **The Imamate** – respect for the twelve Imams, who were chosen by God to lead Islam after Muhammad died.
- 5 **Resurrection** – belief that after death, Muslims will be resurrected and judged by God.

### APPLY



**A** Explain **two** contrasting Muslim beliefs about God's nature.

**B** 'The similarities between Sunni and Shi'a Islam are more important than the differences.'

Do you agree with this statement? Explain your reasoning. Make sure you refer to some of the key similarities and differences in your answer.

### TIP

Being able to understand and use key terms such as 'Tawhid', 'Sunnah' and others will gain you marks in the exam.

## 3.3 The nature of God

### RECAP

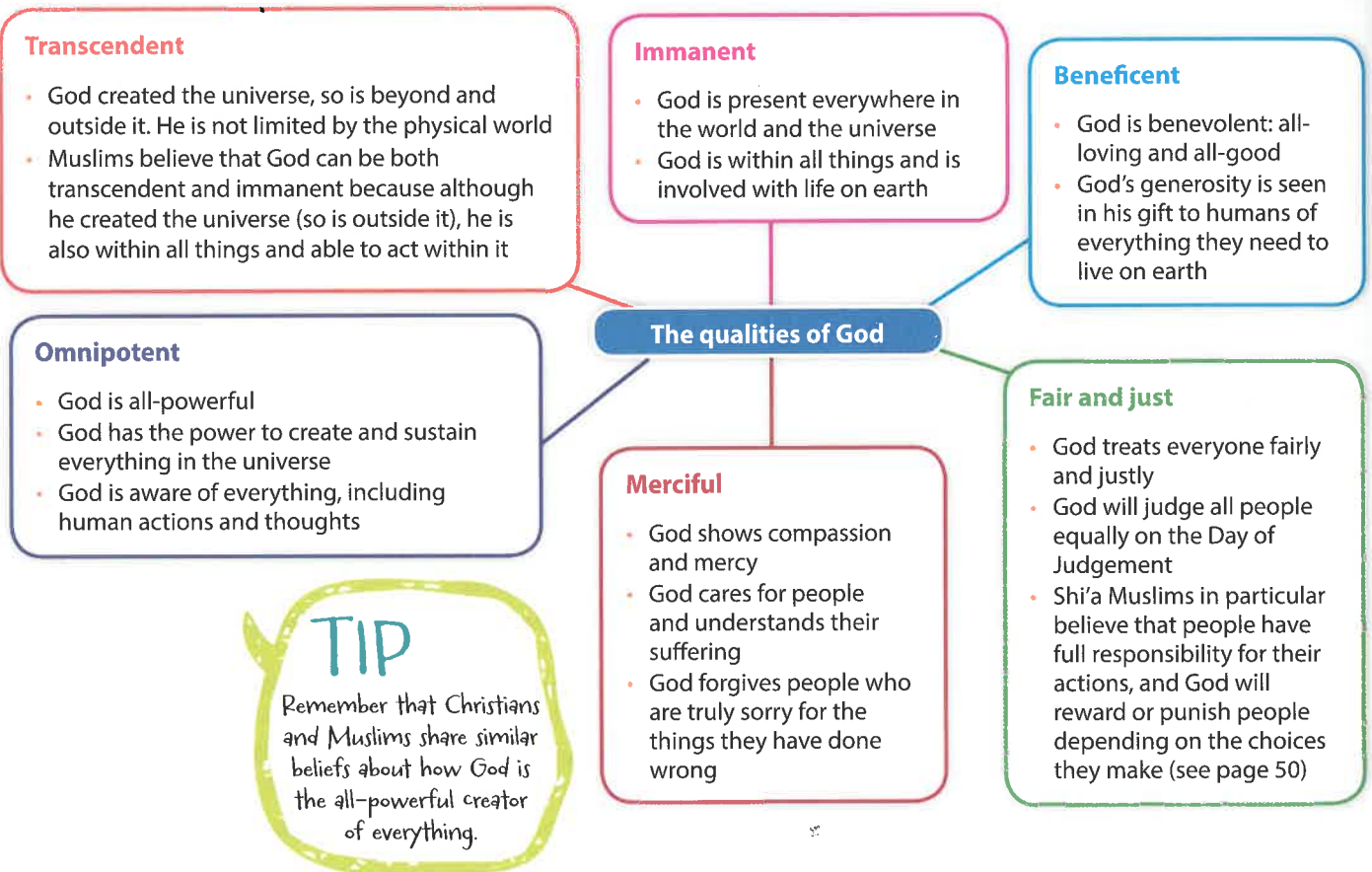


#### Essential information:

- There are 99 different names for God in the Qur'an and Hadith (Muhammad's sayings). These names describe God's characteristics, and help to give Muslims some idea of what God is like.
- Some of God's most important qualities are: **immanent**, **transcendent**, **omnipotent**, **benevolent**, **merciful**, **fair** and **just**.

### The main qualities of God

Muslims believe God is so great he is beyond human understanding and imagination. But the 99 names for God can help them to understand what God is like. These names are given in the Qur'an and Hadith, and help to describe God's different qualities.



### APPLY



- A** Explain how God can be both transcendent and immanent.
- B** 'Of all God's qualities, his omnipotence is the most important one for Muslims to know about.'

Read the following response:

*"I think it is more important for Muslims to know about God's mercy, because it's important to know that God will forgive them if they are sorry for what they have done wrong. People aren't perfect and always make mistakes, so knowing that God will forgive them helps people to keep trying to be better. Otherwise they might just give up, because it's impossible to be good all the time."*

Write your own short paragraphs explaining why the most important quality of God for Muslims to understand is:

- fairness and justice
- immanence
- omnipotence.

Now write a short conclusion, in which you weigh up the arguments you have just written, to decide whether you consider the statement is true or not.

### TIP

Remember, when you give your opinion in an answer, make sure you back it up by referring to religious beliefs and teachings.

## 3.4 Angels

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Angels** are spiritual beings who serve God and pass on his word to people through the prophets.
- Jibril** is the angel of revelation, who revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad.
- Mika'il** is the angel of mercy, who rewards good deeds and provides nourishment for the earth and human life.

#### The nature and role of angels



Muslims believe that angels have a number of different roles.

- Some act as **messengers of God**. They receive God's words directly from him and pass them on perfectly to the prophets.
- Some **take care of people** throughout their lives.
- Some **record everything a person does** in their own 'book of deeds'. This book is presented to God on the Day of Judgement, who will use it to judge the person and decide whether to send them to paradise or hell.
- Some **take people's souls to God** after they die, and escort them into paradise or hell.

#### Jibril and Mika'il

Jibril (Gabriel) and Mika'il (Michael) are two of the most important angels in Islam.

##### Jibril

The angel of revelation

Purified Muhammad's heart when he was a child, so he would later be able to receive God's revelation

Recited the Qur'an to Muhammad and continued to pass on God's messages to Muhammad to guide him through the rest of his life

Therefore played an important role in communicating the final version of Islam to humanity



##### Mika'il

The angel of mercy

Responsible for sending rain, thunder and lightning to earth

Brings nourishment to earth, and helps to provide food for humans, by sending rain to the ground

Believed to reward people who do good deeds



### APPLY



- Give **two** different roles that angels have in Islam.
- 'Without angels, Islam would not exist.'  
Do you think this statement is true or not? Explain your reasoning.

## 3.5 Predestination

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Predestination** is the idea that God knows or determines everything that will happen in the universe.
- Most Muslims believe that predestination means God knows everything that will happen, but people still have free will and can make their own choices.
- Most Muslims believe that they are responsible for their own actions, and will be rewarded or punished for them by God on the Day of Judgement.

### What is predestination?

In Islam, ideas about predestination vary. Some Sunni Muslims believe that **God has already determined everything that will happen in the universe**. They believe that:

- God has written down everything that will happen in a 'book of decrees'
- because God created people, they must act according to his will
- God's will is so powerful that he is able to make anything happen that he wants to happen (see page 46)
- humans do not have the freedom to change their destiny, or the overall plan that God has set for them; but they do have some choice over how they behave.

Surah 9:51 from the Qur'an is sometimes used to support the view that God has already determined everything that will happen:

“Only what God has decreed will happen to us.”

*Qur'an 9:51*

In contrast, many Shi'a Muslims believe that **God knows everything that is going to happen**, but this does not mean he *decides* what is going to happen. They believe that:

- as God is the creator of time, he is outside time and so not bound by it. This means that God can see everything that happens in the past, present and future
- God knows what choices people will make, but they still have the free will to make these choices for themselves.

Surah 13:11 from the Qur'an is sometimes used to support the view that people have the free will to change their own future:

“God does not change the condition of a people [for the worse] unless they change what is in themselves.”

*Qur'an 13:11*

### The Day of Judgement

- Muslims who believe they have the free will to make their own choices also believe they will be judged by God for these choices.
- They believe that on the Day of Judgement, God will judge them for everything they have done during their lives, and reward or punish them as a result.
- Even though God knows everything that will happen, people are still responsible for their actions, and will be rewarded or punished for them on the Day of Judgement.

### APPLY



- A** Explain why Muslims believe it is important to take responsibility for their actions.
- B** 'Predestination means that Muslims have no free will to make their own choices.'  
Evaluate this statement.

### TIP

Sunni and Shi'a Muslims have slightly different ideas about whether or not predestination limits human freedom. Try to use their different understandings to support your evaluation of this issue.

## 3.6 Life after death

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Muslims believe in **Akhirah** – everlasting life after death.
- They believe that after death, they enter a state of waiting until the Day of Judgement, when God judges them and sends them to **heaven (jannah)** or **hell (jahannam)**.
- Belief in life after death encourages Muslims to take responsibility for their actions and to live in a way that pleases God.

### Life after death

Muslims believe that after death the following three stages happen:

#### Barzakh

- After death, the state of waiting until the Day of Judgement is called **barzakh**, which means a 'barrier'. People are unable to come back across the barrier to right wrongs or to warn people
- While they are waiting, God sends two angels to question them about their faith
- Depending on how they answer, they will either see the rewards that will come or the punishments they will have to endure after the Day of Judgement



#### The Day of Judgement

- When God's purpose for the universe has been fulfilled, the world will be destroyed
- Everyone who has ever lived will be raised from the dead (**resurrected**)
- Everyone will be given their own 'book of deeds', which is a record of everything they did during their lives
- If they are given the book in their right hand, they will go to heaven; if they are given it in their left hand, they will go to hell



#### Heaven and hell

- People who have kept their faith in God and done good deeds will be rewarded with heaven (paradise)
- Heaven is described as a beautiful garden – it is a state of eternal happiness in the presence of God
- People who have rejected God and done bad things will be punished with hell
- Hell is described as a place of fire and torment, where people are separated from God



### The importance of belief in Akhirah

- Belief in Akhirah encourages Muslims to **take responsibility for their actions**, because they know God will hold them accountable for their actions and reward or punish them accordingly.
- This motivates Muslims to follow the teachings in the Qur'an and to dedicate their lives to God.
- Belief in Akhirah helps to **give hope to Muslims who suffer**, as they know there is something better to look forward to. It also helps Muslims to **accept unjust situations**, because they know God will provide justice in the afterlife, and everyone will be fairly rewarded or punished for their actions on the Day of Judgement.

### APPLY



- A** Which **one** of the following is the name given to the state of waiting that a Muslim enters after they die?  
Akhirah/ Purgatory/ Paradise/ Barzakh
- B** 'A Muslim's approach to life should be based on their beliefs about the afterlife.'  
Explain why some Muslims would agree with this statement. Why might some people disagree with this statement?

## 3.7 Prophethood and Adam

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Prophethood** refers to when someone is made a **prophet**: a messenger of God's word.
- Risalah** is belief in the prophets and their importance as messengers of God.
- Muslims believe that Adam (the first human) was the first prophet.

### What is prophethood?

Muslims believe that:

- prophethood is a gift from God to help humans to understand his message
- when people have forgotten, misunderstood or changed God's message, God has sent prophets to call people back to the right path
- there have been around 124,000 prophets, who have been sent to every nation on earth
- Muhammad was the last and most important of the prophets (see page 54).

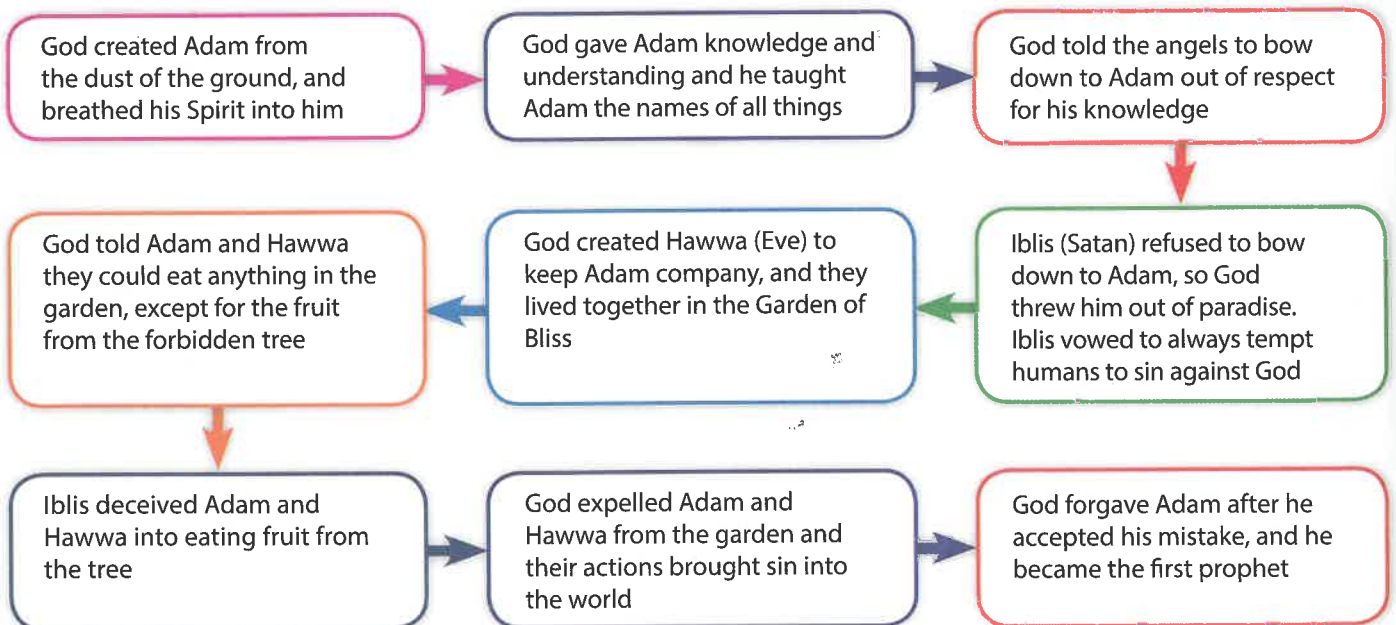
Prophets are important in Islam because they are good role models and help Muslims to understand how to follow God. They do this both by conveying God's words and by setting a good example for how to live a life in obedience to God.

### Adam

Adam is considered to be the father of the human race and the first prophet. The Qur'an teaches the following about Adam's beginnings:

### TIP

Jesus (Isa) is an important prophet in Islam. Muslims believe he was sent by God to help guide them in their faith. Muslims and Christians believe Jesus was fully human but only Christians believe that he was also fully God. Christians believe that Jesus had a unique relationship with God and they refer to him as the Son of God.



Adam is important to Muslims because God gave him knowledge and understanding. God taught Adam how to live a good life in obedience to God, and Adam passed on this knowledge to the rest of the human race through his descendants.

### APPLY



- A** Give **two** reasons why prophets are important in Islam.
- B** 'Adam is just as important a prophet as Muhammad.' Explain why many Muslims would disagree with this statement. What arguments could be given in support of this statement?

### TIP

Some questions in the exam will require you to combine your knowledge from different parts of the course. Here, page 54 will help you to explain why Muslims disagree with this statement.

## 3.8 Ibrahim

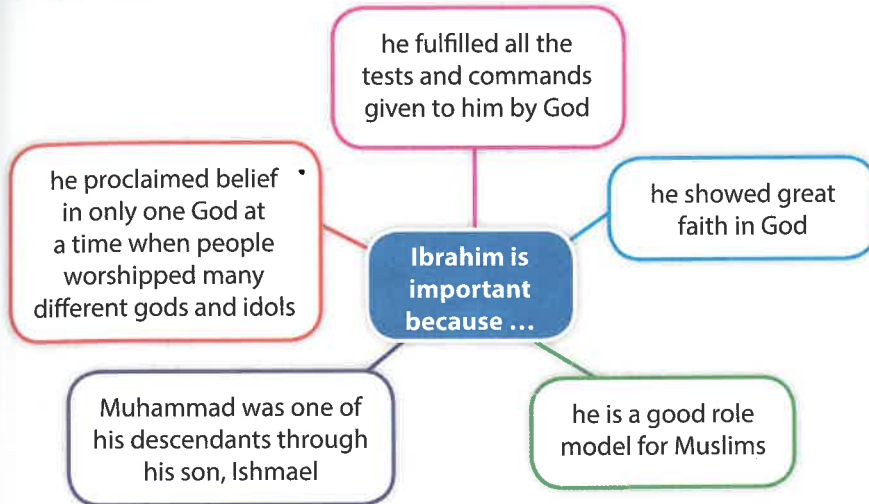
### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Ibrahim (Abraham) is an important prophet in Islam.
- Ibrahim is a good role model for Muslims because he always had faith in God and showed obedience to God, at a time when many people worshipped a variety of gods and idols (statues).

#### Why is Ibrahim important?



The Ka'aba in Makkah

#### How was Ibrahim a good role model?

How was Ibrahim a good role model?	Further explanation
He refused to worship idols and instead preached that there is only one God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When Ibrahim was a young man, many people worshipped a number of different gods and idols</li> <li>• Ibrahim questioned their beliefs and decided there was only one God who had created everything in the universe</li> <li>• Ibrahim became determined to stop idol worship. One day, he took an axe and destroyed all the idols in the temple of his town</li> <li>• People were furious and demanded that Ibrahim be burned alive. He was thrown into a huge fire, but the fire only burned his chains and he walked out of it alive</li> <li>• This miracle prompted many people to start following Allah</li> </ul>
He rebuilt the Ka'aba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Ka'aba</b> is a small, cube-shaped building in the centre of the Grand Mosque in Makkah (Mecca). It is considered to be the house of God and the holiest place in Islam</li> <li>• The original Ka'aba was built by Adam but destroyed in the great flood</li> <li>• Following God's command, Ibrahim rebuilt the Ka'aba on the same site (see page 65)</li> <li>• When Muslims take part in Hajj (see pages 65–66), which starts at the Ka'aba, they remember Ibrahim and the steadfastness of his faith</li> </ul>
He was willing to sacrifice his son to God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ibrahim had a dream in which God asked him to sacrifice his son to him</li> <li>• Ibrahim was willing to do this, but just before he carried out the sacrifice God stopped him, and told him he had passed the test</li> <li>• During the festival of Id-ul-Adha each year, Muslims kill an animal to remember Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his own son out of obedience to God</li> </ul>

### APPLY



**A** What is the Ka'aba, and why is it important to Muslims?

**B** 'Ibrahim is the perfect role model for Muslims.'

**Evaluate this statement.**

### TIP

To 'evaluate' this statement, consider whether you think it is true or not and explain why. Are there any reasons why Ibrahim might not be a perfect role model (for example, regarding how he tried to stop idol worship)?

## 3.9 Muhammad and the Imamate

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Muhammad is the last and most important prophet in Islam. He received the final revelation of Islam from God, which is recorded in the Qur'an.
- Shi'a Muslims believe in the importance of the **Imamate**: the leadership of the **Imams**. Shi'as believe that as the Imams have been appointed by God, they are able to maintain and interpret Islamic teachings without fault.

### Why is Muhammad important?

Muhammad is the most important prophet in Islam because he is 'God's messenger' (Qur'an 33:40). He received the Qur'an from God, which all Muslims use as the basis of their faith. He is also remembered for helping to fully establish the religion by conquering Makkah, and for having travelled to heaven where he was in the presence of God.

#### Revelation of the Qur'an

- Muhammad grew up in Makkah (Mecca) and he would sometimes visit a cave in the mountains nearby to meditate and pray
- In 610 CE, Muhammad visited the cave and experienced a revelation from the angel Jibril
- Over the next 22 or so years, Muhammad continued to receive revelations from Jibril
- These were combined together to form the Qur'an



#### Conquering Makkah

- After the first revelation from Jibril, Muhammad started challenging people in Makkah to follow God's teachings
- Muhammad was persecuted for his preaching and fled with his followers to Madinah
- In Madinah he united the warring tribes, and with their help he conquered Makkah, converting the city to Islam
- This helped to bring harmony to the region, and firmly established Islam as a religion



#### The Night Journey

- Before Muhammad fled to Madinah, the angel Jibril took him on a miraculous journey to Jerusalem and then into heaven, where he spoke to prophets and saw great signs of God
- In heaven, Muhammad agreed with God that Muslims should pray five times a day
- Sunni Muslims still follow this practice (see page 61)



### The Imamate

- The leader of Shi'a Muslims is called the Imam. The leadership of the Imams is known as the Imamate.
- Shi'as believe the Imam should be a **descendent of Muhammad and chosen by God**.
- The Twelver branch of Shi'a Islam teaches there have been **twelve Imams in total**. Each has been related to Muhammad in some way. The twelfth Imam has been kept alive by God and hidden somewhere on earth. He will return in the future to bring justice and equality to all.
- Because the Imams have been appointed by God, they are able to **interpret the Qur'an and Islamic law without fault**.
- Shi'as believe the Imams are necessary because people **need divine guidance on how to live correctly**. Although the final version of God's law was received by Muhammad, the Imams are important for helping to preserve and explain this law.

### APPLY



- A Give **two** reasons why the Imamate is important to Shi'a Muslims.
- B 'Muhammad has had more impact on Muslims' lives than any other prophet.'  
List arguments to support this statement, and arguments to support a different point of view.

## 3.10 The holy books in Islam

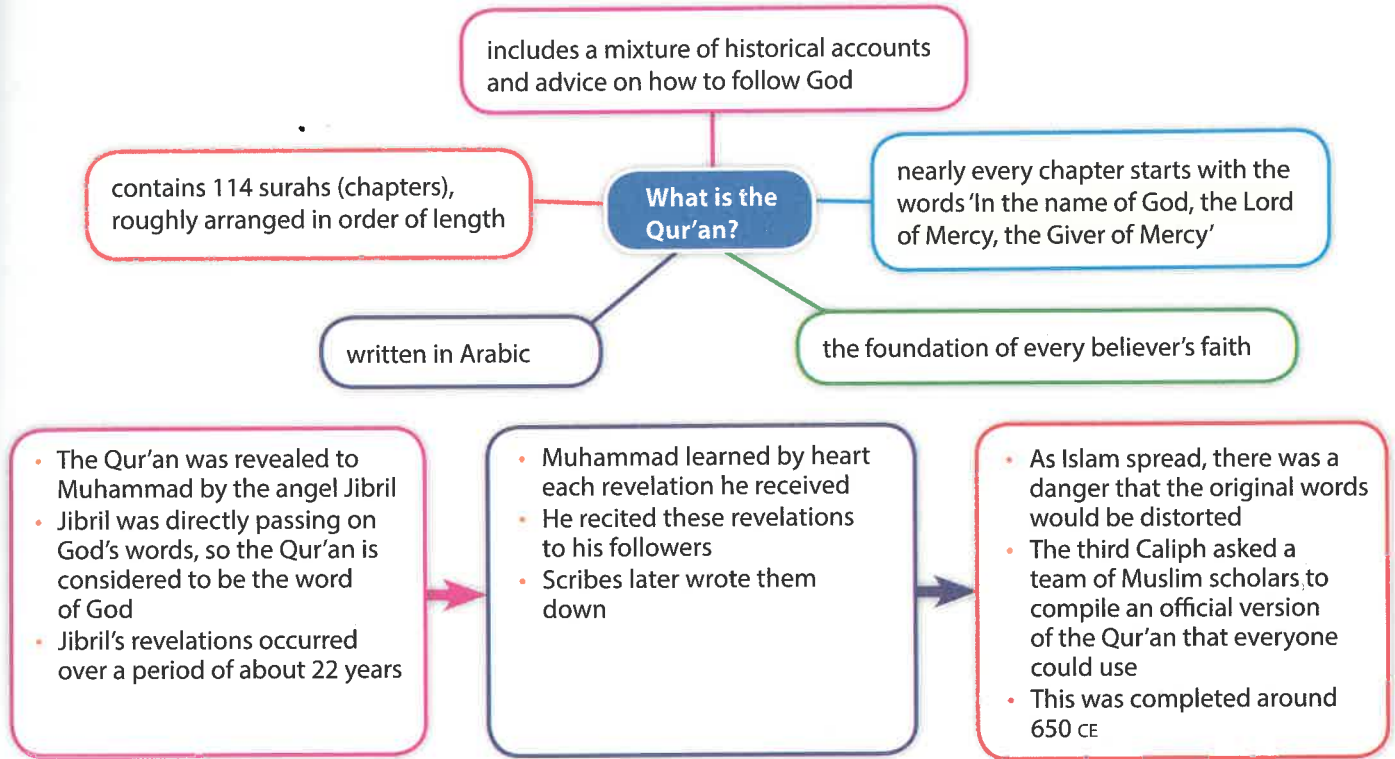
### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- The Qur'an is the most important holy book in Islam, and the highest source of authority for all matters relating to Islamic teaching, practice and law.
- The Qur'an was revealed to the prophet Muhammad by the angel Jibril.
- Other holy books in Islam are the Torah, Psalms, Gospel and Scrolls of Abraham.

### The Qur'an



### Other holy books

- Muslims believe there are other holy books that have been revealed by God.
- These holy books are mentioned in the Qur'an.
- Some Muslims think these books have been completely lost and no longer exist today.
- Others think they can still be found to some extent in the Bible. However, the original text has been corrupted or distorted, so it does not have the same authority as the Qur'an.

Name of the book	Who it was revealed to	Its authority in Islam
The Torah	Moses (Musa)	Some Muslims think the Torah is the first five books of the Bible, but altered from the original text
The Psalms	David	Many Muslims accept that the Psalms mentioned in the Qur'an are similar to the ones in the Bible
The Gospel	Jesus (Isa)	Muslims believe the Gospel has been lost but some of its message is still found in the Bible
The Scrolls of Abraham	Ibrahim	These are considered to be one of the earliest scriptures in Islam, and no longer exist

### APPLY



- A** What is the name of the holy book that was revealed to David?
- B** 'The Qur'an is the highest authority in Islam.'  
Why would many Muslims agree with this statement? List arguments to support it.



Test the 1 mark question

- 1 Which **one** of the following is the name of the holy book that was revealed to Moses?  
 A The Gospel  B The Psalms  
 C The Scrolls of Abraham  D The Torah

[1 mark]

- 2 Which **one** of the following revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad?  
 A Iblis  B Israfil  C Jibril  D Mika'il

[1 mark]

Test the 2 mark question

- 3 Give **two** differences between Sunni and Shi'a Islam.  
 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_

[2 marks]

- 4 Give **two** of the six articles of faith in Sunni Islam.  
 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_

[2 marks]

Test the 4 mark question

- 5 Explain **two** ways in which a belief in prophethood influences Muslims today.

[4 marks]

● <b>Explain one way.</b>	<i>A belief in prophethood influences Muslims to respect and follow the teachings in the Qur'an.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	<i>This is because the Qur'an was revealed to the prophet Muhammad. Believing in prophethood means believing that Muhammad passed on God's words in the Qur'an.</i>
● <b>Explain a second way.</b>	<i>A belief in prophethood also influences Muslims by encouraging them to show complete obedience to God.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	<i>This is because the prophets were always obedient to God. For example, Ibrahim was willing to sacrifice his son to God after God told him to.</i>

**TIP**

If you see a question asking you to explain how a belief in something influences people today, make sure your answer focuses on how people in the world today are affected by the belief. How does the belief change the way they practise their faith?

- 6 Explain **two** of God's qualities.

[4 marks]

● <b>Explain one quality.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	
● <b>Explain a second quality.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	

- 7 Explain **two** ways in which a belief in the afterlife influences Muslims today.

[4 marks]

# 3 Exam practice

## Test the 5 mark question



8 Explain **two** Muslim teachings about predestination.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

● <b>Explain one teaching.</b>	<i>One teaching about predestination is that God has already determined everything that will happen in the universe.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	<i>God has already written down everything that will happen in a 'book of decrees', and people have limited freedom to change their future.</i>
● <b>Explain a second teaching.</b>	<i>Another teaching about predestination is that God knows everything that will happen, but hasn't already decided what will happen.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	<i>Because God is outside time, he already knows everything that will happen, but people can still make their own choices.</i>
● Add a reference to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching. If you prefer, you can add this reference to your first belief instead.	<i>This teaching is supported by Surah 13:11 in the Qur'an: 'God does not change the condition of a people... unless they change what is in themselves.'</i>

**TIP**  
To refer to Muslim belief and teaching in your answer, you could write out a short quote from the Qur'an or mention a specific passage from this text.

**TIP**  
This answer is good because it explains a teaching about predestination and then supports it by referring to a specific passage from the Qur'an. If you cannot remember an exact quotation you can always paraphrase it.

9 Explain **two** reasons why Muhammad is considered to be the most important prophet in Islam.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

● <b>Explain one reason.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	
● <b>Explain a second reason.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	
● Add a reference to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching. If you prefer, you can add this reference to your first belief instead.	

10 Explain **two** meanings of the concept of Tawhid.

Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.

[5 marks]

## Test the 12 mark question

11 'The best way of understanding God is to describe God as transcendent.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

**TIP**  
 'Some [Muslims/Christians/Jews, etc.] might [agree/disagree] with this answer because...' can be a good way to introduce your arguments in the 12 mark answer.

[12 marks]  
 Plus SPaG 3 marks

<p><b>REASONED ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE STATEMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Explain why some people would agree with the statement.</b></li> <li>● Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.</li> <li>● Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.</li> <li>● <b>Evaluate the arguments.</b> Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.</li> </ul>	<p>Some Muslims might agree that the best way of understanding God's nature is to think of God as transcendent because this makes sense of God's ability to do things that humans can't. 'Transcendence' means that God is beyond and outside the universe. Because he is outside the universe, God is not limited by its rules. This is a good description of God because Muslims believe that God is above them and much greater than them. God created the universe, something humans cannot do. It also suggests that God can be omniscient and know everything that happens in the past, present and future because he is outside time. The Qur'an says, 'He is in charge of everything.'</p>
<p><b>REASONED ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING A DIFFERENT VIEW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Explain why some people would support a different view.</b></li> <li>● Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.</li> <li>● Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.</li> <li>● <b>Evaluate the arguments.</b> Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.</li> </ul>	<p>Some Muslims might disagree with this statement because they think there are other qualities that describe God better. For example, God is also immanent. This means he is present in the world and involved with life on earth. Some Muslims might think this is the best way to understand God because it shows how people are able to have a relationship with God and be guided by him in their everyday lives. Another example of a way that God can be described is omnipotent. This means he is all-powerful. Some Muslims might think this is a good word for understanding God because it explains how he is able to create the whole universe, and make anything happen that he wants to happen.</p>
<p><b>CONCLUSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Give a justified conclusion.</b></li> <li>● Include your own opinion together with your own reasoning.</li> <li>● <b>Include evaluation.</b> Explain why you think one viewpoint is stronger than the other or why you think they are equally strong.</li> <li>● Do not just repeat arguments you have already used without explaining how they apply to your reasoned opinion/conclusion.</li> </ul>	<p>In conclusion, I think all of the different qualities of God probably help Muslims to understand him in different ways. Knowing that God is transcendent helps to understand his greatness and special abilities, but knowing that God is immanent helps to understand how he can be close to humanity, and other qualities, for example that he is One, help to understand God in other ways too. All of these qualities teach Muslims something important about God.</p>

**TIP**  
 It is helpful to explain what transcendence means before evaluating whether it is a good description of God. Also, accurate use of key religious terms gains more marks for SPaG.

### 3 Exam practice

12 'The Qur'an contains all the guidance that Muslims need to live a perfect Muslim life.'  
Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

<p><b>REASONED ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE STATEMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Explain why some people would agree with the statement.</b></li> <li>● Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.</li> <li>● Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.</li> <li>● <b>Evaluate the arguments.</b> Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>REASONED ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING A DIFFERENT VIEW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Explain why some people would support a different view.</b></li> <li>● Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.</li> <li>● Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.</li> <li>● <b>Evaluate the arguments.</b> Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>CONCLUSION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Give a justified conclusion.</b></li> <li>● Include your own opinion together with your own reasoning.</li> <li>● <b>Include evaluation.</b> Explain why you think one viewpoint is stronger than the other or why you think they are equally strong.</li> <li>● Do not just repeat arguments you have already used without explaining how they apply to your reasoned opinion/conclusion.</li> </ul>	

[12 marks]  
Plus SPaG 3 marks

13 'For Muslims, the prophets make better role models than the angels.'  
Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]  
Plus SPaG 3 marks



Check your answers using the mark scheme on page 153. How did you do?  
To feel more secure in the content you need to remember, re-read pages 46–55.  
To remind yourself of what the examiner is looking for in your answers, go to pages 6–11.

# 4 Islam: practices

## 4.1 The Five Pillars, the Ten Obligatory Acts and the Shahadah

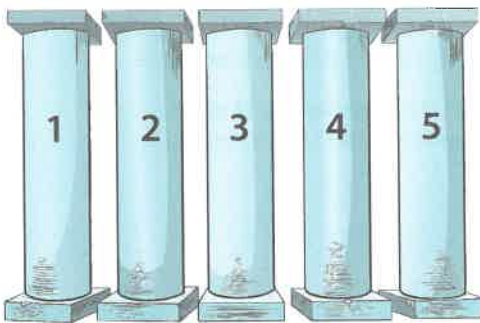
### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- The **Five Pillars** are the five most important duties for all Muslims. They are the fundamental practices of Islam on which everything else is built, and are seen as the key to living a perfect Muslim life.
- The **Ten Obligatory Acts** combine the Five Pillars with some additional duties. These are followed by Twelver Shi'a Muslims.
- The **Shahadah** is the Muslim declaration of faith. It expresses the basic beliefs of Islam.

### The Five Pillars



1. **Shahadah** – the declaration of faith
2. **Salah** – prayer
3. **Zakah** – charitable giving
4. **Sawm** – fasting
5. **Hajj** – pilgrimage

### The Ten Obligatory Acts

- Salah** – prayer
- Sawm** – fasting
- Zakah** – charitable giving
- Khums** – 20% tax (half goes to charity and half to religious leaders)
- Hajj** – pilgrimage
- Jihad** – the struggle to maintain the faith and defend Islam
- Amr-bil-Maruf** – encouraging people to do what is good
- Nahi Anil Munkar** – discouraging people from doing what is wrong
- Tawallah** – showing love for God and people who follow him
- Tabarra** – not associating with the enemies of God

### Shahadah

“There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah.”

- This phrase is called the Shahadah. It is important to Muslims because it **expresses the core beliefs of Islam**.
- The Shahadah is considered to provide the foundation for the other four pillars, which tell a Muslim how to live according to the beliefs expressed in the Shahadah.
- Shi'a Muslims add an extra phrase to the Shahadah: **'and Ali is the friend of God'**. This shows their belief that Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, was the true successor to Muhammad (see page 47).
- To become a Muslim, a person only has to **sincerely recite the Shahadah in front of Muslim witnesses**.
- The Shahadah is recited many times during a Muslim's life. If they are born into a Muslim family, it is the first thing they hear. If possible, it is also the last thing they say before they die.

### APPLY



- A** Name **two** of the Ten Obligatory Acts, and describe what they are.
- B** 'The Shahadah summarises the most important beliefs in Islam.'  
Give arguments to support this statement.  
As part of your answer, explain how these beliefs influence Muslims in their practice of Islam.

### TIP

To answer this question, think about why these beliefs are important and how they affect a Muslim's everyday life. For example, why is the belief that there is only one God central to Islam? And how does this belief affect the way a Muslim practises Islam?

## 4.2 Salah: the daily prayers (1)

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- To observe the duty of **salah** (prayer), Sunni Muslims pray five times a day and Shi'a Muslims three times a day.
- Muslims perform ritual washing (**wudu**) before they pray to make themselves spiritually clean. They always face the city of Makkah when they pray.
- When Muslims pray in a mosque, men and women are divided into separate groups. The prayers are led by an imam (religious leader).

#### The times of prayer

The times for each prayer are worked out from the times of sunrise and sunset, so they change slightly each day. Prayer timetables help Muslims to know when to pray. For Sunni Muslims, the five times for prayer are:



**Fajr:** just before sunrise



**Zuhr:** just after midday



**Asr:** afternoon



**Maghrib:** just after sunset



**Isha:** night

#### Differences between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims in prayer

Shi'a Muslims combine the midday and afternoon prayers, and sunset and night prayers, so they pray the same prayers but only pray three times a day. There are also a few differences in the movements Shi'a and Sunni Muslims make during salah. Another difference is that Shi'a Muslims believe in using only natural elements when prostrating themselves in prayer, so they place a clay tablet at the spot where their forehead will rest.

#### Preparing for prayer and the direction of prayer

	Preparing for prayer	The direction of prayer
<b>What should Muslims do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform ritual washing (wudu) before they pray, to make themselves spiritually clean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face the city of Makkah</li> </ul>
<b>How is this achieved?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muslims wash their faces, hands and feet under running water</li> <li>• Mosques have two special rooms set aside for this, one for women and one for men</li> <li>• If water isn't available, Muslims can 'wash' themselves using sand or dust instead. This illustrates the fact that wudu is about becoming spiritually clean, not physically clean</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a mosque, the <b>mihrab</b> indicates the direction of Makkah</li> <li>• This is a small niche in the <b>qiblah wall</b>, which is the wall that faces Makkah. Muslims use this to face the right direction when they pray</li> <li>• Muslims can also use a special compass to indicate the right direction</li> </ul>
<b>Why is it important?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The purification of wudu helps Muslims to fully focus on God in their prayers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praying in the same direction means that all Muslims are focusing on one place associated with God</li> </ul>

#### Prayer inside a mosque

- Many mosques have carpets that look like rows of prayer mats, giving each person their own space to pray.
- Prayers in the mosque are led by an imam, who is positioned at the front of the congregation, facing the mihrab.
- Men and women pray at the same time but in separate spaces.
- The imam will lead the prayers from the men's prayer room, but his voice is usually also broadcast in the women's prayer room, so he can lead everyone's prayers together.

### APPLY



A

Explain how Muslims prepare for prayer, and why this is important.

B

'Prayer is the most difficult of the Five Pillars for Muslims to follow.'

Give arguments for and against this statement.

Then write a short conclusion where you weigh up the arguments and decide whether you agree with the statement or not.

**TIP**

Some questions in the exam will require you to combine your knowledge from different sections of the course. This is one example.

## 4.3 Salah: the daily prayers (2)

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Prayers are made up of a number of **rak'ah**: set sequences of actions and recitations.
- The **Jummah prayer** is a special prayer that is held at midday on Friday. Men are expected to attend a mosque for this prayer, but Muslims are otherwise allowed to pray at home if they want to.
- God commanded Muslims to pray, so it is important for Muslims to observe this pillar of Islam. Prayer is also important because it unites Muslims and brings them closer to God.

### The rak'ah

Each prayer consists of a certain number of rak'ah. The rak'ah changes slightly depending on which prayer it is used in, and where it comes in the overall sequence, but it usually includes the following basic actions:



Stand and recite the first chapter from the Qur'an



Bow (showing respect to God) and recite in Arabic 'Glory be to my Lord who is the very greatest' three times



Stand and make a recitation praising God



Kneel with the forehead, nose, hands, knees and toes touching the floor (**prostration**) – this shows complete obedience to God. Recite 'How perfect is my Lord the most high'



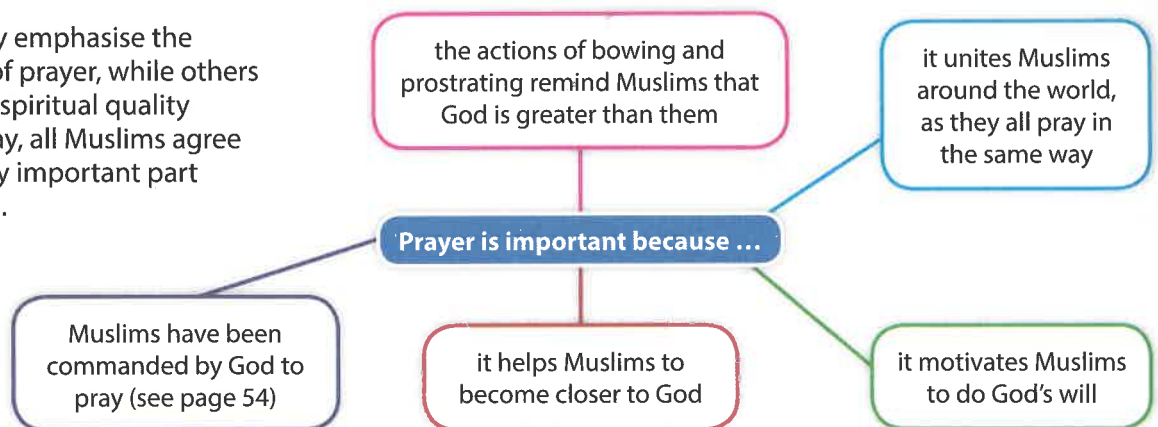
Recite 'God is the greatest', first while sitting and then while prostrating

### Jummah prayer and prayer at home

- The Jummah prayer is a special communal prayer held every Friday at midday.
- All men are expected to attend a mosque for this prayer, and women may do so if they wish.
- After the prayer, the imam will give a sermon that reminds Muslims about their duties to God.
- Muslims are otherwise allowed to pray at home, and women often do so if they have children to look after or find it hard to attend a mosque.
- Muslims must still perform wudu at home, although they do not need a special room to pray in.
- Many Muslims use a prayer mat at home, which is positioned facing Makkah.

### The significance of prayer

Some Muslims may emphasise the ritualistic aspects of prayer, while others focus more on the spiritual quality of prayer. Either way, all Muslims agree that prayer is a very important part of worship in Islam.



### APPLY



- Explain **two** contrasting ways in which prayer is practised in Islam.
- 'It is best that prayers are structured, with set actions and recitations.'  
Give your opinion on this statement. Explain your reasoning, referring to Muslim practices in your answer.

### TIP

Page 61 in this Revision Guide might help you to develop your opinion on this statement. But make sure your answer focuses on the religion in question, which in this case is Islam.

## 4.4 Sawm: fasting during Ramadan

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Ramadan** is the most important month in the Islamic calendar, as it is when the angel Jibril started to reveal the Qur'an to Muhammad (see page 54).
- Muslims focus on their faith during this month by **fasting** (not eating or drinking during daylight hours), studying the Qur'an, giving to charity, and trying to please God.
- The **Night of Power** is the night when Jibril first started to recite the Qur'an to Muhammad. Muslims celebrate this night during Ramadan.

### Fasting during Ramadan

<b>Origins of fasting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The command to fast was revealed to Muhammad and can be found in the Qur'an: 'It was in the month of Ramadan that the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind ... So any one of you who sees in that month should fast' (Qur'an 2:185)</li><li>It has been obligatory for Muslims to fast during Ramadan since the seventh century</li></ul>
<b>What it involves</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Muslims get up every day before sunrise to eat and drink enough to keep them going until sunset</li><li>Food, drink, smoking and sex are forbidden during daylight hours</li><li>The fast is broken at sunset. The evening meal is often shared with family and friends, and followed by extra prayers and readings from the Qur'an</li></ul>
<b>The exceptions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Children and people who are ill, pregnant or breastfeeding can be excused from fasting</li><li>People who can't fast are expected to make up for it later if they can</li></ul>
<b>Its importance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The self-discipline that is required to fast shows obedience and dedication to God</li><li>Fasting inspires Muslims to help those in poverty who can't afford enough to eat or drink</li></ul>

### The Night of Power

- The Night of Power is when Jibril first appeared to Muhammad and started revealing the Qur'an.
- The words that Jibril spoke to Muhammad on this night can be found in Qur'an 96:1–5. They describe how Jibril instructed Muhammad to start reciting his words:

“Read! In the name of your Lord who created: He created man from a clinging form [a blood clot]. Read! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One who taught by [means of] the pen, who taught man what he did not know.”

*Qur'an 96:1–5*

- The exact date of the Night of Power is unclear, but it is believed to be one of the odd-numbered dates in the second half of Ramadan.
- Muslims try to stay awake throughout the night on each of these dates, praying and studying the Qur'an.
- Observing the Night of Power is thought to give Muslims the benefits of worshipping for a thousand months.

“What will explain to you what that Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months”

*Qur'an 97:2–3*

### APPLY



- A** Explain **two** Muslim beliefs about the Night of Power. Refer to scripture or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer.
- B** 'It is more important to study the Qur'an during Ramadan than it is to fast.'

**Evaluate this statement.**

### TIP

To 'evaluate' this statement, explain whether you think it is true or not and why. Consider arguments for and against the statement, then weigh them up to decide whether you agree or disagree with it.

## 4.5 Zakah: almsgiving

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Zakah** requires Muslims to give 2.5% of their savings to charity every year. Muslims believe that giving Zakah helps them to purify their souls, by removing selfishness and greed.
- In addition to giving Zakah, Shi'a Muslims also give **Khums**. This is 20% of their savings, half of which goes to Shi'a religious leaders and half to charity.

### Zakah

<b>Origins of Zakah</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giving to charity is mentioned a number of times in the Qur'an; for example 'Whatever ... you give should be for parents, close relatives, orphans, the needy, and travellers. God is well aware of whatever good you do.' (Qur'an 2:215)</li> <li>• The exact amount that should be given was worked out at a later date by Muslim scholars</li> </ul>
<b>How much is given</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only Muslims with savings greater than a certain amount (known as the nisab) are required to give Zakah</li> <li>• Muslims with savings greater than the nisab are expected to give 2.5% of their savings once a year</li> </ul>
<b>Who it is given to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zakah can be donated directly to a charity such as Islamic Relief or Muslim Aid</li> <li>• It can also be collected by a mosque, which will distribute the money among those in need</li> </ul>
<b>The importance of Zakah</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By giving Zakah, Muslims are fulfilling a duty to God</li> <li>• It helps to strengthen the Muslim community by supporting the poorest and weakest</li> <li>• It encourages Muslims to have a good attitude towards money, and to use their wealth in a way that would please God</li> <li>• It is a type of purification that helps Muslims to become closer to God</li> </ul>

### Khums

- Khums means 'fifth'. The giving of Khums started as a requirement for Muslim armies to donate one fifth (20%) of the spoils of war to their religious leader.
- Today, Shi'a Muslims give 20% of their savings.
- Half goes to Shi'a religious leaders, to be used for religious education or other religious matters, and the other half is given to charity or the poor.

In addition to giving Zakah, Muslims are encouraged to voluntarily give their money and time to charity at any point of the year. This is called Sadaqah.



“Alms are meant only for the poor, the needy, those who administer them, those whose hearts need winning over, to free slaves and help those in debt, for God's cause, and for travellers in need.”

*Qur'an 9:60*

### APPLY



- A** Give **two** differences between Zakah and Khums.
- B** 'The most important reason to give Zakah or Khums is because it teaches Muslims to have a good attitude towards money.'
- Do you agree with this statement? Explain your reasons.
- Then explain why someone else might have a different point of view.

### TIP

When you evaluate this question think about what 'a good attitude to money' would mean for a Muslim compared to a non-religious person.

## 4.6 Hajj: pilgrimage – origins and significance

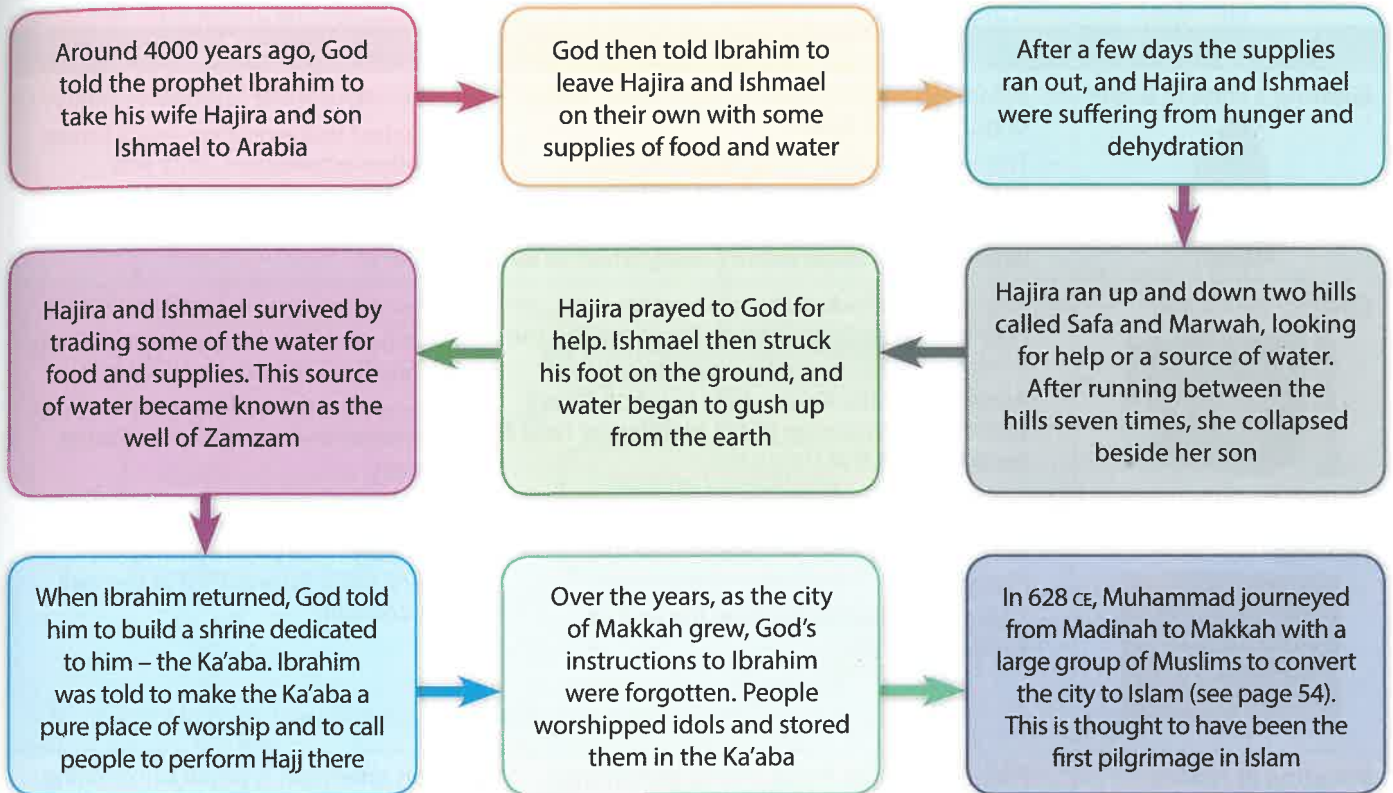
### RECAP



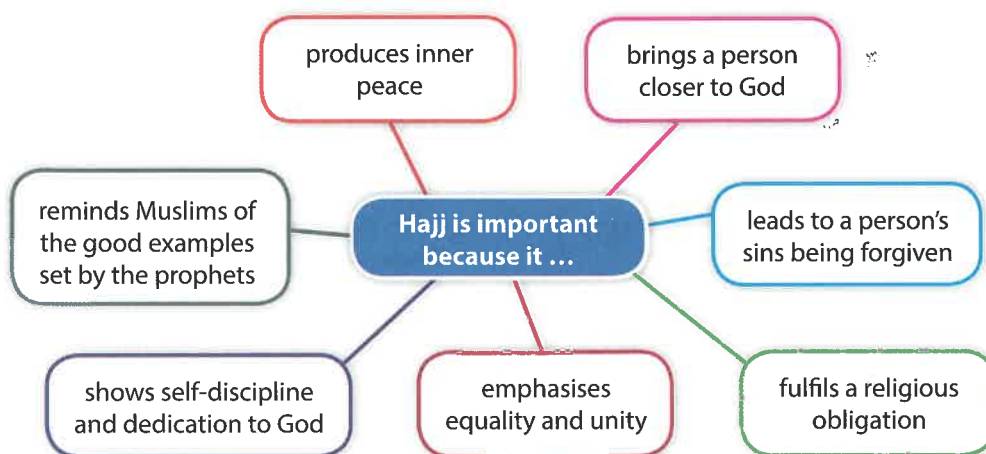
#### Essential information:

- Hajj** is an annual pilgrimage that starts and ends in the city of Makkah (Mecca) in Saudi Arabia. Every Muslim is expected to take part in Hajj at least once during their life.
- Hajj remembers the actions of the prophet Ibrahim and his family, who rebuilt the **Ka'aba** (the cube-shaped building in the centre of the Grand Mosque, and the holiest place in Islam).
- Hajj strengthens a Muslim's faith and shows their commitment to God.

#### The origins of Hajj



#### The significance of Hajj



“Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to undertake it.”

*Qur'an 3:97*

### APPLY



- A** Explain why the Ka'aba is important to Muslims.
- B** 'Going on Hajj is the best way for a Muslim to show their commitment to Islam.'  
Give arguments for and against this statement. Then write a short conclusion where you weigh up these arguments and decide whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

### TIP

To answer this question, you need to explain why particular actions (such as going on Hajj, praying or fasting) show commitment to Islam. Then think about which of these actions is the 'best' way to show commitment to Islam, and why.

## 4.7 Hajj: pilgrimage – how Hajj is performed



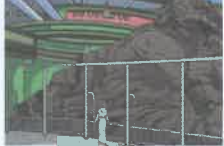



### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Hajj takes place over five days, during which time pilgrims travel from Makkah to Mina, Arafat, Muzdalifah and back to Makkah.
- The actions that are performed on Hajj remember events in the lives of the prophet Ibrahim and his family, such as Hajira's search for water and Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his own son.

### What happens on Hajj?

	What is involved	Its significance
<b>Entering a state of Ihram</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before Hajj begins, pilgrims must enter a state of purity called <b>Ihram</b></li> <li>• This involves performing ritual washing, praying, and putting on Ihram clothing</li> <li>• Men dress in two sheets of white cloth, and women wear a single colour (usually white) as well</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The colour white symbolises purity</li> <li>• The fact that everyone wears similar clothes emphasises unity and equality</li> <li>• It shows everyone is equal before God</li> </ul>
<b>Circling the Ka'aba</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hajj starts in Makkah at the Grand Mosque. Pilgrims walk in a circle seven times around the Ka'aba</li> <li>• As they circle the Ka'aba, they touch the black stone set into a corner of the building, or raise a hand towards it as they pass</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This stone is an ancient Islamic relic</li> <li>• It is believed to be the only surviving stone from the original Ka'aba</li> <li>• Some Muslims believe it comes from paradise, and was given by God to Adam</li> </ul>
<b>Walking between the two hills</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After circling the Ka'aba, pilgrims walk seven times between the two hills of Safa and Marwah</li> <li>• They then collect water from the well of Zamzam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This remembers Hajira's search for water (see page 65), and the miraculous appearance of the well of Zamzam</li> </ul>
<b>Standing at Arafat</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilgrims travel to Arafat, where Muhammad preached his last sermon</li> <li>• They spend a whole afternoon praying under the hot summer sun (a reminder of what the Day of Judgement will be like)</li> <li>• Some Muslims stand while they pray to show the depth of their faith</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This afternoon is physically draining but allows Muslims to show their devotion to God</li> <li>• God is believed to forgive the sins of everyone at Arafat, providing they are sincerely sorry for what they have done wrong</li> </ul>
<b>Throwing pebbles at Mina</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilgrims walk to Muzdalifah, where they spend the night. On their way they collect a handful of pebbles</li> <li>• The next day, at Mina, they throw these pebbles at three stone walls called the Jamarat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The walls represent the devil and temptation</li> <li>• Pilgrims throw pebbles at the walls to show they reject evil and the temptation to sin</li> </ul>
<b>Sacrificing an animal</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If they can, pilgrims then sacrifice an animal, as part of the celebration of Id-ul-Adha (see page 68)</li> <li>• The leftover meat is given to the poor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This sacrifice remembers Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his own son out of obedience to God (see page 53)</li> </ul>

### APPLY



- A** Describe what must happen before Hajj starts, and what this signifies.
- B** 'The most important reason for performing Hajj is to remember the actions of the prophets.' What is your opinion on this statement? **Explain your reasoning.**

## 4.8 Jihad

### RECAP

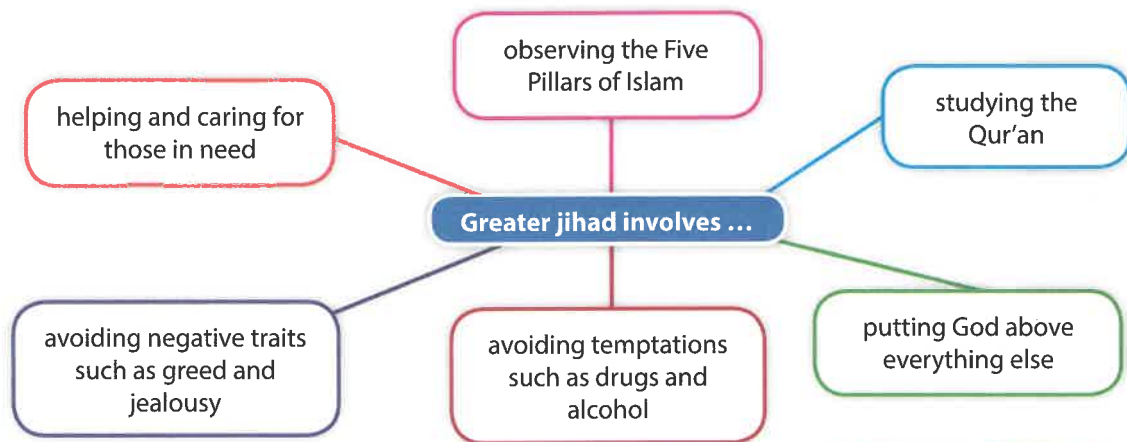


#### Essential information:

- Jihad** refers to the struggle against evil. It requires Muslims to strive to improve themselves and the societies they live in, in a way that would please God.
- Greater jihad** is the inward, personal struggle to live according to the teachings of Islam.
- Lesser jihad** is the outward, collective struggle to defend Islam from threat.

### Greater jihad

Greater jihad refers to the constant struggle that Muslims undertake to improve themselves spiritually and to deepen their relationship with God, by living according to the teachings of Islam. It is considered to be more important than lesser jihad, and might involve some of the following actions.



### TIP

You can use this quote in your exam to show that greater jihad requires Muslims to follow God as best as they can.

“... this is My path, leading straight, so follow it, and do not follow other ways”

*Qur'an 6:153*

### Lesser jihad

Lesser jihad refers to the outward struggle to defend Islam from threat. In the early days of Islam, this was important when Muslims were being persecuted and they needed to fight for their freedom to practise the faith.

Fighting for a religious cause is also sometimes called **holy war**. This refers to a war that must be:

- approved by a fair religious leader
- fought in self-defence in response to a threat
- not used to gain territory or wealth
- not used to convert people to Islam
- fought only after all peaceful methods to resolve the situation have been tried first.

This list shows that lesser jihad or holy war can only be used as a last resort, to defend the faith when it is under severe attack. Islam teaches that lesser jihad or holy war can never be used to justify terrorist attacks.

### APPLY



- Explain **two** ways in which a belief in greater jihad influences Muslims today.
- 'Greater jihad is harder to follow than lesser jihad in today's world.' Give arguments for and against this statement.

## 4.9 The festivals of Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- Id-ul-Fitr** is a Muslim festival that celebrates the end of Ramadan.
- Id-ul-Adha** is a Muslim festival that celebrates Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son to God, and marks the end of Hajj.

### Id-ul-Fitr

<b>Origins</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The festival was started by Muhammad after he arrived in Madinah, having fled from persecution in Makkah (see page 54)</li><li>Muhammad told the people in Madinah that God had set aside two days for festivities: Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha</li></ul>
<b>Celebrations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Muslims gather together in mosques or large outdoor areas to say special prayers. The imam's sermon usually reminds Muslims to forgive any disputes that have happened during the year, and focus instead on helping the poor</li><li>Muslims decorate their homes, wear new clothes, eat special foods, and exchange cards and presents</li><li>Many Muslims visit their local cemetery to remember and pray for family members who have died</li><li>In the UK, Islamic businesses may give Muslims time off to celebrate</li></ul>
<b>Importance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The festival allows Muslims to celebrate the end of a month of fasting (see page 63)</li><li>It is a way for Muslims to give thanks to God for giving them the strength to complete the fast</li><li>It is also a way for Muslims to thank God for giving his wisdom and guidance in the Qur'an, which was first revealed to Muhammad during Ramadan</li></ul>

### Id-ul-Adha

<b>Origins</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Like Id-ul-Fitr, this festival was started by Muhammad (see above)</li></ul>
<b>Celebrations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Special prayers are held in the mosque, and the sermon will usually be on the theme of sacrifice</li><li>Muslims visit family and friends, and enjoy meals together. An effort is made to make sure everyone is included in the celebrations</li><li>Muslims who are able to, including those who are taking part in Hajj, will slaughter an animal (see page 66)</li><li>In Britain, some Muslims buy an animal from their local slaughterhouse, and share the meat with their family and friends. Traditionally some of the meat is given to the poor, but today Muslims usually donate money to the poor instead</li></ul>
<b>Importance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The festival remembers and celebrates Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son to God, as described in Surah 37 in the Qur'an. This reminds Muslims about the importance of showing complete obedience to God</li><li>The festival also celebrates the completion of Hajj, which is a demanding pilgrimage that helps strengthen a Muslim's faith</li><li>The festival allows Muslims around the world to connect with those on Hajj, even if they can't be there themselves</li></ul>

### APPLY



- A** Describe the origins of Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha.
- B** 'Muslim festivals are mainly about having fun.'

Read the following response:

*"During Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha, Muslims give each other presents, eat lots of nice food and have fun together. If they were really thinking about the religious meaning of the festival then they would be more solemn. Also, Id-ul-Adha remembers an event that happened years and years ago which isn't relevant to Muslims today, so I think the festival is mainly an opportunity to get together and share a meal with family and friends."*

Write a paragraph in reply to this response, which argues against the statement above. Keep your answer focused on the festivals of Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha.

## 4.10 The festival of Ashura

### RECAP



#### Essential information:

- The **Day of Ashura** (Day of Remembrance) is an important Shi'a festival that remembers the death of Husayn at the battle of Karbala.
- Many Shi'a Muslims observe Ashura by taking part in mourning rituals or processions.
- Ashura is also observed by Sunni Muslims, for whom the festival is known as the Day of Atonement. However, for Sunni Muslims it is not as important or solemn an occasion as for Shi'a Muslims.

### The origins and meaning of Ashura

- The Day of Ashura is important for Shi'a Muslims in particular, who view it as a day of great sorrow. This is because it remembers the death of Husayn, who was the son of Imam Ali and grandson of Muhammad.
- Husayn died in the battle of Karbala. This battle was held on 10 October 680 CE in Karbala, Iraq. It was fought between Husayn and his supporters (around 70 men, women and children) against the much larger army of Caliph Yazid I. Husayn and most of his supporters were killed in the battle.
- Husayn's death is seen by Shi'a Muslims as a symbol of the struggle against injustice, tyranny and oppression.

Sunni Muslims also observe Ashura, which they call the Day of Atonement. For some Sunni Muslims the festival celebrates the day the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt, while for others it celebrates the day Noah left the ark after the flood.

### How Ashura is commemorated

Shi'a Muslims commemorate Ashura in the following ways:

Action	Further explanation
Shi'a Muslims perform plays and re-enactments to tell the story of Husayn's death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>These help Muslims to remember the events at Karbala</li></ul>
Many Shi'a Muslims take part in public expressions of grief and mourning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In London, thousands of Shi'a Muslims gather at Marble Arch to listen to speeches and take part in a procession of mourning</li><li>In some cities in Britain, some Shi'a men gather in the streets and beat themselves on their chests as part of a mourning ritual</li><li>Some Muslims believe they should cut themselves and shed blood to connect with Husayn's suffering and death</li><li>Some Shi'a religious leaders condemn this practice and encourage Muslims to donate blood to the blood transfusion service instead</li></ul>
In Iraq, many Shi'a Muslims visit Husayn's tomb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Husayn's tomb is believed to be located in the Mashhad al-Husayn, which is a shrine in Karbala</li><li>Many Shi'a Muslims go on pilgrimage to the Mashhad al-Husayn each year for Ashura</li></ul>

Many Sunni Muslims observe Ashura by fasting for the day. They may also give to charity, show extra kindness to their family and the poor, recite prayers, and learn from Islamic scholars.

### APPLY



- Give **two** ways in which Shi'a Muslims observe Ashura.
- On page 68, question B asked you to write a paragraph arguing against the statement 'Muslim festivals are mainly about having fun', focusing on the festivals of Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha.

Now add another paragraph to your answer, arguing that the festival of Ashura is not 'mainly about having fun.'

### TIP

When writing about Ashura, try to be specific about whether you are referring to Shi'a or Sunni Muslims. Remember that each group observes the festival in different ways, for different reasons.



Test the 1 mark question

- 1 Which **one** of the following is *not* one of the Ten Obligatory Acts? [1 mark]  
 A Hajj       B Jihad       C Shahadah       D Zakah
- 2 Which **one** of the following people do Shi'a Muslims remember on the Day of Ashura? [1 mark]  
 A Hajira       B Husayn       C Muhammad       D Ali

Test the 2 mark question

- 3 Give **two** objects or features that Muslims can use to know they are facing the right direction when they pray. [2 marks]  
 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Give **two** ways in which Muslims can give Zakah. [2 marks]  
 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_

Test the 4 mark question

- 5 Explain **two** ways in which a belief in the importance of prayer influences Muslims today. [4 marks]

● <b>Explain one way.</b>	<i>A belief in the importance of prayer means that Muslims pray at least three times a day.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	<i>Muslims believe prayer is an important duty in their daily lives because it is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. One way that Muslims show it is important is by praying five times a day (Sunni Muslims) or three times a day (Shi'a Muslims). This helps Muslims remember God is with them throughout each day of their lives.</i>
● <b>Explain a second way.</b>	<i>A belief in the importance of prayer also means that Muslim men are expected to attend a mosque every Friday lunchtime.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	<i>Another way in which a belief in the importance of prayer is shown is by attending Friday prayers in the mosque to take part in the Jummah prayer, a special communal prayer that is said once a week. This is important to Muslims because it unites them with other members of the Muslim community and helps to strengthen their faith in God.</i>

**TIP**  
 Remember to be careful not to make generalisations in your answers. For example, here the student has correctly pointed out that Shi'a and Sunni Muslims pray a different number of times each day.

- 6 Explain **two** ways in which the actions of the prophet Ibrahim and his family are remembered on Hajj. [4 marks]

● <b>Explain one way.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	
● <b>Explain a second way.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example/reference to a religious teaching or quotation.	

- 7 Explain **two** contrasting Muslim beliefs about why it is important to fast during Ramadan. [4 marks]



## Test the 5 mark question

8 Explain **two** Muslim beliefs about the importance of festivals.  
Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer. **[5 marks]**

● <b>Explain one belief.</b>	<i>Muslims believe festivals are important because they allow them to give thanks to God.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	<i>For example, during the festival of Id-ul-Fitr Muslims give thanks to God for giving them the strength to complete a month of fasting.</i>
● <b>Explain a second belief.</b>	<i>Muslims also believe festivals are important because they help them to remember important events in the history of Islam.</i>
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	<i>For example, Id-ul-Adha remembers Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son to God.</i>
● Add a reference to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching. If you prefer, you can add this reference to your first belief instead.	<i>In Surah 37, the Qur'an describes the dream Ibrahim had where God asked him to sacrifice his son, and tells how Ibrahim was willing to obey God's command.</i>

9 Explain **two** reasons why Muslims go on Hajj.  
Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer. **[5 marks]**

● <b>Explain one reason.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	
● <b>Explain a second reason.</b>	
● Develop your explanation with more detail/an example.	
● Add a reference to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching. If you prefer, you can add this reference to your first belief instead.	

10 Explain **two** Muslim beliefs about jihad.  
Refer to sacred writings or another source of Muslim belief and teaching in your answer. **[5 marks]**

# 4 Exam practice

## Test the 12 mark question

11 'The Shahadah is the most important pillar of Islam.'  
Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

### TIP

Try to use religious terms in your answer, if it is appropriate, as this helps you to demonstrate your knowledge of the subject. For example, in this answer some of the names of the different pillars are given.

[12 marks]

#### REASONED ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE STATEMENT

- **Explain why some people would agree with the statement.**
- Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.
- Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.
- **Evaluate the arguments.** Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.

Many Muslims would agree with this statement because the Shahadah expresses the core belief of Islam. It provides the foundation for the other four pillars, which tell Muslims how to put into practice the belief expressed in the Shahadah. It is also the only pillar which people have to observe in order to become a Muslim, by reciting it sincerely in front of other Muslims.

The Shahadah states that 'There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah'. Muslims should carry out the other four pillars with this statement in mind. This means when they pray, they should pray only to God. When they go on Hajj, they should focus on God throughout the pilgrimage. If Muslims don't believe in the Shahadah, the other pillars become meaningless.

#### REASONED ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING A DIFFERENT VIEW

- **Explain why some people would support a different view.**
- Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.
- Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.
- **Evaluate the arguments.** Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.

Some Muslims might disagree with this statement because the Shahadah doesn't tell Muslims how to live in a way that pleases God. It just tells Muslims what they should believe. But the other four pillars tell Muslims how to live a good life that gets them closer to God and helps them to get into heaven when they die.

For example, the pillar of salah teaches Muslims they should pray three or five times a day. The pillar of sawm teaches Muslims they should fast during Ramadan. Observing these pillars helps Muslims to develop their relationship with God, so it could be argued they are more important than the Shahadah.

#### CONCLUSION

- **Give a justified conclusion.**
- Include your own opinion together with your own reasoning.
- **Include evaluation.** Explain why you think one viewpoint is stronger than the other or why you think they are equally strong.
- Do not just repeat arguments you have already used without explaining how they apply to your reasoned opinion/conclusion.

I think all of the pillars are important in Islam, because they all teach Muslims how to live in a way that would please God. This is important for becoming closer to God and getting into heaven in the afterlife. However, I also agree with the statement because Muslims have to believe in the Shahadah before they can observe the other four pillars. Also the Shahadah is a clear summary of the faith which Muslims share.

### TIP

This is a good answer that compares the Shahadah with the other pillars and comes to a justified conclusion about which is the most important.

## 4 Exam practice

12 'Giving to charity is the most important practice in Islam.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]

### REASONED ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF THE STATEMENT

- **Explain why some people would agree with the statement.**
- Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.
- Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.
- **Evaluate the arguments.** Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.

### REASONED ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING A DIFFERENT VIEW

- **Explain why some people would support a different view.**
- Develop your explanation with more detail and examples.
- Refer to religious teaching. Use a quote or paraphrase or refer to a religious authority.
- **Evaluate the arguments.** Is this a good argument or not? Explain why you think this.

### CONCLUSION

- **Give a justified conclusion.**
- Include your own opinion together with your own reasoning.
- **Include evaluation.** Explain why you think one viewpoint is stronger than the other or why you think they are equally strong.
- Do not just repeat arguments you have already used without explaining how they apply to your reasoned opinion/conclusion.

13 'Id-ul-Fitr should be made an official public holiday in Britain.'

Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:

- refer to Muslim teaching
- give reasoned arguments to support this statement
- give reasoned arguments to support a different point of view
- reach a justified conclusion.

[12 marks]



Check your answers using the mark scheme on page 154. How did you do?  
To feel more secure in the content you need to remember, re-read pages 60–69.  
To remind yourself of what the examiner is looking for in your answers, go to pages 6–11.