


A teacher's guide to Islam

Religion Name	Islam
Followers are called	Muslims
Founder	Muhammad (peace be upon him)
When founded?	The prophet Muhammad (circa 570-632 A.D.) introduced Islam in 610 A.D.
Holy/Special book/s	The Qur'an
Holy/Special building/s	Mosque
Main Symbol	 <p>Although Islam has no symbol doctrinally associated with it, the symbol of the crescent moon and star is now widely used to symbolise Islam. The crescent represents progress and the five pointed star, light and knowledge.</p>

<p>Beliefs about God</p> <p>Allah is the name Muslims use for the supreme and unique God, who created and rules everything.</p> <p>The heart of faith for all Muslims is obedience to Allah's will.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allah is eternal, omniscient, and omnipotent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allah has always existed and will always exist. - Allah knows everything that can be known. - Allah can do anything that can be done. • Allah has no shape or form. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allah can't be seen. - Allah can't be heard. - Allah is neither male nor female. • Allah is just... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Allah rewards and punishes fairly but Allah is also merciful. <p>A believer can approach Allah by praying, and by reciting the Qur'an. Muslims worship only Allah because only Allah is worthy of worship.</p> <p>All Muslims believe that God is one alone: There is only one God. God has no children, no parents, and no partners. God was not created by a being. There are no equal, superior, or lesser Gods</p>
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Beliefs about the world including creation

What do Muslims believe?

The basic belief of Islam is that there is only one God, whose name in the Arabic language is Allah, and who is the sole and sovereign ruler of the universe.

Muslims have 6 main beliefs

- **Belief** in Allah as the one and only God.
- **Belief** in angels.
- **Belief** in the holy books.
- **Belief** in the Prophets (special messengers). e.g. Adam, Ibrahim (Abraham), Musa (Moses), Dawud (David), Isa (Jesus). Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the final prophet.
- **Belief** in the Day of Judgement... The day when the life of every human being will be assessed to decide whether they go to heaven or hell.
- **Belief** in Predestination - that Allah has already decided what will happen. Muslims believe that this doesn't stop human beings making free choices

Creation Story

In the space before time began, there was just Allah. And when Allah wanted to create something, all he had to say was 'be' and it became.

Allah created the world and the heavens.

He made all the creatures, which walk, swim, crawl and fly on the face of the Earth.

He made the angels, and the sun, moon and stars to dwell in the universe.

Allah poured down the rain in torrents, and broke up the soil to bring forth the corn, the grapes and other vegetation; the olive and the palm, the fruits trees and the grass.

Allah ordered the angels to go to the Earth, and to bring seven handfuls of soil, all of different colours, from which he could model man. Allah took the seven kinds of earth and moulded them into a model of a man. He breathed life and power into it, and it immediately sprang to life.

Beliefs about the Afterlife

Afterlife (akhirah)

Life after death is a fundamental concept for most religions. For Muslims the key to eternal life is to live a just life in the service of Allah

Islam teaches that Allah has full control over all that happens. Nothing can happen unless permitted by Allah. This life is a preparation for the eternal life to come, known as akhirah. Humans have one life and it is up to them how they choose to live it. In order to live according to the wishes of Allah and receive reward in Paradise, Muslims will attempt to undertake the five basic duties of Islam known as the Five Pillars of Islam. Many Muslims believe that their good deeds will count towards their place in Paradise, even if the rewards are not obvious in this life.

Muslims believe that on a day decided by Allah, and known only to Allah, life on Earth will come to an end and Allah will destroy everything. On this day all the people who have ever lived will be raised from the dead and will face judgement by Allah. Muslims believe that they will remain in their graves until this day. This day is called by several names:

the Day of Resurrection (Yawm al-Qiyamah)
the Day of Judgement (Yawm al-Din)
the Last Hour (as-sa'a)

Allah will balance the good deeds a person has done in their life against the bad deeds.

Those who have performed more good deeds than bad will enter Janna, or Paradise. Janna is a place described as a 'garden of everlasting bliss' and a 'home of peace'. In Janna there will be no sickness, pain or sadness. Those who have performed more bad deeds than good will enter Jahannam or Hell. This is a place of physical and spiritual suffering.

Muslims believe that Allah is forgiving, merciful and compassionate, so not all bad actions will be punished. Allah will forgive those who have repented for their sins and those who have done some good in their lives, for example showing kindness to others.

There are, however, some sins that many Muslims believe to be unforgivable.

Beliefs about Heaven and Hell

Janna- In Islam, Heaven or Paradise is known as Janna. In the Qur'an, the language used to describe Heaven is very descriptive. It is regarded as a place of: bliss, reward and pleasure for eternity. Muslims believe that people will be reunited with their families in Janna, where they will enjoy the pleasures of being in a beautiful garden.

Jahannam- Muslims often refer to Hell as Jahannam. It is a place of: eternal punishment, mental torment and physical torment.

Descriptions of Hell detail some of the physical punishments that people will suffer for eternity. Hell is often described as a place of fire for those who have lived an evil life and not believed in Allah.

Other key beliefs

Belief – 5 Pillars - see Important practices for more information

These are guides for daily life for putting the beliefs of Muslims into practice:

Shahadah (declaration of faith)—to bear witness or testify that there is no god except one God (Allah) and Muhammad is His prophet or messenger.

Salat (ritual prayer)—the five daily prayers are performed at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset and night. The prayers are offered in Arabic language and facing the direction of Mecca.

Zakah (alms tax) –Giving 2.5% of one's wealth to the poor and needy.

Sawm (fasting)—Muslims fast during the daylight hours in the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar called Ramadan. The purpose is to remind people of the goodness of what they have and to show equality with the poor. Ramadan is a time for study and self-discipline.

Hajj (pilgrimage): Muslims believe in making a pilgrimage to Mecca to the Ka'bah at least once in their lifetime. The Ka'bah is believed to have been built by Ibrahim (Abraham) and one of his sons. Muhammad restored it to worship Allah. For this reason it is a very sacred place to Muslims.

Important stories

Please see hyperlinks for relevant stories:

<https://www.islamcan.com/increaseiman/index.shtml>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvWYP-vFhIS1-XENpD6w68A> (cartoons of the videos)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/z9tqb82> (for KS1)

How should we treat others?

The Golden Rule

Treat others as you would like to be treated:

Islam: "None of you believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself." (An-Nawawi's Forty Hadith 13)

Holy Buildings

- **Masjid** (Arabic) – **Mosque**
- Traditionally have a domed roof and at least one minaret (tower.)
- The **muezzin** calls followers to prayer from the minaret (sometimes broadcast on the radio in the UK)
- There are no pictures or statues, but the building is decorated with patterns and verses from the **Qur'an**.
- Every mosque has a fountain, pool or area with water for cleansing before prayer – wudu.
- Every mosque has a Quibla wall with an empty arch facing **Makkah**.
- There are services daily in the Mosque, the most important being at noon on Fridays.
- Women have their own area for prayer within the Mosque that is often screened off.

Places of pilgrimage

- **Makkah** - the birthplace of Muhammad (pbuh.)
- Pilgrimage is known as **Hajj**, and is one of the 5 pillars of Islam.
- All Muslims aim to make the pilgrimage to Makkah at least once during their lifetime.

Holy books

- The Muslim scripture is the holy **Qur'an**. It is regarded by Muslims as the unaltered word of God, revealed to Muhammad (pbuh) through the Angel Gabriel.
- Muslim beliefs and practices are rooted in the Qur'an.
- It is treated with great respect, as every word and letter is sacred to Muslims. It is often placed on a special wooden stand when being read. Out of respect, nothing should be placed on top of the Qur'an.
- Divided into Suwar (chapters) and Ayat (verses.)
- Muslims believe that God revealed holy books or scriptures to a number of God's messengers. These include the Quran (given to Muhammad), the Torah (given to Moses), the Gospel (given to Jesus), the Psalms (given to David), and the Scrolls (given to Abraham). Muslims believe that these earlier scriptures in their original form were divinely revealed, but that only the Quran remains as it was first revealed to the prophet Muhammad.

Important people within the tradition

- **Allah** – the name that Muslims use for their supreme God. All Muslims try to follow Allah's will.
- **Adam** – considered to be the first in a line of Allah's prophets.
- **Moses (Musa)** – also a prophet of Allah
- **Abraham (Ibrahim)** – another prophet, seen as the father of Arab people and Jewish people through his sons Isaac and Ishmael.
- **Jesus (Isa)** - Muslims believe that Jesus was a prophet who was given a special message - (*injl*) to convey to all people.
- **Muhammad (pbuh)** – the final prophet, who memorised Allah's words and lived by them.

Festivals

- **Ramadan** – takes place during the 9th month of the Islamic calendar (which is lunar, so Ramadan is 10/11 days earlier each year) and begins with the sighting of the new moon. It is a time for worship and contemplation. Muslims fast during Ramadan, not consuming any food or drink during daylight hours. During this time they believe that the gates of heaven (Jannah) are open and those of hell (Jahanam) are closed.
- **Eid Ul-Fitr** – is celebrated at the end of Ramadan and breaks the fasting. Takes place over 3 days. It is a time for family and friends to be together. Games are played, children receive gifts and donations are made to charity.
- **Eid Ul-Adha** – takes place 70 days later, on the 10th day of the last month (Dhul Hajj) of the Islamic calendar, marking the end of Hajj. It is a time to remember when Abraham was going to sacrifice his son.
- **Al Hijra** – Islamic New Year, marks the day that Muhammad (pbuh) left Makkah to travel to Medina.

Rites of passage/important life events

- **Adhan** – on the day a child is born, many Muslims recite the Adhan (call to prayer) in the baby's ear so that the call to serve Allah is immediately present.
- **Aqiqah** – when a child is 7 days old, their hair is shaved as part of the naming ceremony. This signifies a new life in the presence of Allah. The parents thank Allah for the gift of the child. At this time male babies are traditionally circumcised. Aqiqah is seen as desirable although not compulsory.
- **Bismillah** – Muslim children are considered to be born Muslim, so there is no formal commitment ceremony, however, there is a Bismillah ceremony when they are 4. The child wears traditional or their best clothing and reads from the **Qur'an**. The child then learns how to perform **Wudu**.
- **Marriage** – is expected for all Muslims and parents may play a part in arranging a suitable partner, however the couple have to agree to their parents' choice. Forced marriage is generally not acceptable to Muslims. The bride and groom accept each other in the presence of witnesses. The groom hands over a marriage gift called **mahr** to the bride. Most Muslims will have a reading from the Qur'an. There may be an exchange of vows and rings. Those witnessing the marriage may be asked to pray for the couple, their families and the Islamic community.
- **Death Rites** – when a Muslim nears death they say the words of the **Shahadah** if possible. After death the body is washed three times by members of the same sex as the deceased and wrapped in a white cloth. The body is then taken outside and prayers said. The deceased are buried as soon as possible, laying on their side with their head pointing towards **Makkah**. A mound of soil is placed under the head, chin and shoulder. Following this there is a 3 day mourning period. Muslims tend not to practise cremation as they believe that Allah will raise the body on the day of Judgement – **Yawm al-Din**.

Important practices

The following 5 practices are known as the 5 Pillars of Islam. They are the key ways in which Muslims live out their faith.

- **Shahadah** - sincerely reciting the Muslim profession of faith. "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger." This is the fundamental statement of the Muslim faith.
- **Salat** – saying ritual prayers 5 times a day in the correct way. **Fajr**: This prayer starts off the day with the remembrance of God; it is performed before sunrise. **Dhuhr**: After the day's work has begun, one breaks shortly after noon to again remember God and seek His guidance. **Asr**: In the late afternoon, people take a few minutes to remember God and the greater meaning of their lives. **Maghrib**: Just after the sun goes down, Muslims remember God again as the day begins to come to a close. **Isha**: Before retiring for the night, Muslims again take the time to remember God's presence, guidance, mercy, and forgiveness.
- **Zakat** – the giving of 2.5% of one's wealth each year for the benefit of the poor. This is aside from any charitable gifts made out of kindness.
- **Sawm** – fasting during the month of **Ramadan**.
- **Hajj** – pilgrimage to Makkah made at least once in a Muslim's lifetime.

Other important information

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