

## Islam Practices: Revision Guide

**You should be able to explain the differences and similarities between the practices of a Sunni Muslim and a Shia Muslim.**

**Perception of Ali:** As the division between Sunni and Shia is about Muhammad's successor, there are differences in how the two branches view the historical succession. Sunni Muslims recognize and respect Ali as the fourth righteous caliph who replaced Uthman ibn Affan, the third caliph. In contrast, the largest sect of Shia Islam, known as Twelvers, tends to reject the first three Sunni caliphs, or at least downplay their role in Islam's development, and instead sees Ali as the first true leader, or imam, of Islam, some Shia Twelvers believe several of their initial imams were murdered by Sunni caliphs.

**Perception of Imams:** In most Shia Islam, imams are seen as spiritual leaders chosen by Allah who are thought to be free from sin. They are direct descendants of Muhammad. As such, the word of imams and their interpretation of theological matters is considered to be holy and final in a sense that is similar to how some Catholics view the words of the Pope.

Sunni Islam sees imams very differently. Imams are often important spiritual prayer leaders in the community, but they are not seen as infallible. In Sunni Islam caliphs are highly respected.

**Different Hadiths:** Hadiths are collections of reports regarding Muhammad's teachings and life, as remembered by a variety of narrators (and written later by others). Though the Qur'an takes precedence over hadiths, these texts are often used in Islamic law, especially to settle disputes. Shias and Sunnis sometimes recognize or reject different hadiths, or interpret the same hadiths differently.

**Day of Ashura (Holiday)** On the Day of Ashura, Muslims — both Sunni and Shia — mourn the martyrdom of Husayn ibn Ali, who was Ali's son and Muhammad's grandson. Because Shia Muslims put emphasis on Muhammad's bloodline, the Day of Ashura is often seen as a more important holy day for Shia Islam than Sunni Islam. It is common for Shias to mourn by way of chest-beating and self-flagellation; the latter practice is often rejected by Sunnis and sometimes even banned by law. In places where the Shia-Sunni divide is great, sectarian violence is common on the Day of Ashura.

**Wali (Saints)** Though both Shia and Sunni Muslims revere important holy figures from Islamic history, Shia Muslims are much more likely to pray to these deceased saints — many of whom were once imams — in a way that is similar to the prayers Catholics offer up to their saints.

**For Muslims who follow Twelver Shi'a Islam, there are ten duties called the Ten Obligatory Acts (also known as the Ancillaries of the Faith). They include all the Five Pillars except Shahadah (which is covered by some of the additional acts).**

**They are:**

1. Salah – prayer
2. Sawm – fasting
3. Zakah – charitable giving
4. Khums – a 20% tax on income once all expenses are deducted. Half goes to charity and half goes to Shi'a religious leaders
5. Hajj – pilgrimage
6. Jihad – the struggle to maintain the faith and defend Islam. For many Muslims this means the struggle to live by their faith as well as possible, for example by obeying the Five Pillars, contributing to the community or doing voluntary work.
7. Amr-bil-Maruf – encouraging people to do what is good
8. Nahi Anil Munkar – discouraging people from going what is wrong
9. Tawakkah – to be loving towards the friends of God, including Muhammad and the Imams
10. Tabarra – disassociating from the enemies of God.

**You should be able to explain what the 5 Pillars are and why they are significant for Muslims.**

**Shahadah:** is the Muslim declaration of faith *'I declare that there is no God by Allah And Muhammad (pbuh) is His messenger'*

Shi'as add *'I bear witness that Ali is the beloved of Allah and the rightful trustee Of the Prophet, and his immediate successor'*

Muslims reject anything but Allah as their focus of belief. They totally surrender to the will of Allah as found in the Qur'an. The second statement recognises the role of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and that his life was to be an example to follow. By following the Sunnah they also believe in Risalah (prophethood) and Akhirah (afterlife). The words are whispered into the ears of a newborn baby and they are a section of the Adhan – the call to prayer. They are heard 5 times a day and repeated before sleep. Muhammad (pbuh) taught that they should be the last words of a Muslim before they die. They are words from the heart. All pillars are equal but without this belief the others would not happen so Shahadah has to be the first or central pillar. This is the starting point and then the practices flow, as does a Muslim way of life. People who fully follow the Shahadah are called 'Ibad Allah' servants of Allah. Sincerely reciting this statement in front of witnesses is the only requirement for joining the Muslim community. For Shi'a it demonstrates the belief that Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law was the true successor of Muhammad, and that only he and his descendants know the true meaning of the revelation given to Muhammad (pbuh).

**Salah:** prayer with and in worship of God, performed under conditions set by the prophet Muhammad *'Salah is a prescribed duty that has to be performed at the given time by the Qur'an'* Qur'an 4:103) *'Prostrate and draw near to Allah'* (Qur'an 96:19) Muslims believe that a person is closest to Allah when praying. 5 prayers were instructed by Allah so whoever does them will be admitted into paradise, it brings knowledge as a person's heart is opened to Allah and helps them become more aware of Allah and so more faithful. Muhammad (pbuh) considered anyone not praying 5 times a day to be not a good Muslim or counted as an unbeliever. People who pray properly will benefit on judgement day.

**Why pray so often? What benefits do Muslims gain from prayer?** Allah is the focus of a Muslim's mind all the time. They should

have said sorry for their actions, be mindful of Allah and their dependence on him. Life is hard and prayer gives support – if they did not pray sins would build up, they could be tempted by Shaytan and be overcome by bad emotions such as pride. Prayer reminds them of Allah's greatness and that everything comes from and belongs to Allah. It encourages positive and respectful behaviour and good qualities such as kindness and modesty. Preparation for prayer reminds Muslims of cleanliness, purity and determination. Standing with others reminds of the need to work for equality and work as a community. Benefits are to the character of the person and eventually to their judgement in the afterlife. It motivates Muslims to do Allah's will. Unites Muslims world-wide as all Muslims pray in the same way. Sins are said to be forgiven.

**Niyyah** or intention is made clearing the mind before Wudu begins

**Wudu:** ritual washing before prayer. Ablution – the instructions are detailed and in the Qur'an 'You who believe, when you are about to pray, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, wash your feet up to the ankles and, if required, wash your whole body' (Qur'an 5:6). Running water is used if possible but for example in a desert, a dry form of washing is allowed using sand or dust. It is spiritual cleanliness that is required and Wudu is a form of Spiritual preparation or purification to allow Muslims to focus fully on God in their prayers. Mosques have two special rooms for washing, one for men and one for women. **For Shi'a Wudu** is a part of prayer itself rather than preparation for prayer.

**Dress in prayer:** The body must be covered modestly – all must cover their heads men with a topi or prayer hat and women with a hijab or scarf. This shows Allah only looks at the concerns of the heart, not appearance.

**Rak'ah:** a sequence of movements in ritual prayer. (1st part) **Takbir** – Muslims raise their hands to their ears and say '*Allahu Akbar*' (God is Supreme) (4th part) **Sujud** – after declaring Allahu Akbar again, Muslims sink to their knees and place their forehead on the floor with hands pressed to the floor at the shoulders and say '*Glory be to my Lord, the Most Supreme. Allah is Greater than all else*'. They kneel again and sujud is repeated saying '*All praise be to my Lord the Most High*'. During prayers of longer than two Rak'ahs Muslims will turn their heads to the right and left to acknowledge other worshippers and their guardian angels after declaring their faith in Allah as One and their allegiance to Him.

**Shi'a (differences):** Shi'a do not cross their hands while standing in qiyam (2nd part) but have them by their sides. They touch their foreheads to a wooden block or clay tablet from Karbala rather than the floor when prostrating (sujud) and they position their feet differently during salah.

**Recitation:** repeating a passage of text from memory – this is done in Arabic.

**Prostration:** kneeling with the forehead, nose, hands, knees and toes touching the floor, in submission to God.

**Mihrab:** a niche in a wall that indicates the direction of Makkah

Times of prayer Fajr (just before sun-rise), Zuhr (just after midday), Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (just after sunset) and Isha (night) Shi'a Muslims combine the midday and afternoon prayers, and the sunset and night prayers, so they pray three times a day.

**Qiblah wall:** the wall in a mosque that contains the Mihrab.

All Muslims perform 17 sequences of prayer throughout the day. Each time of prayer involves a set sequence of movements and words known as rak'ah. Each sequence has key actions that must be done. Shi'a pray 5 prayers but at three different times.

**Jummah prayer:** a weekly communal prayer performed after midday on Friday, which includes a sermon (**khutbah**) at the mosque. All male Muslims are expected to attend this prayer. '*Believers! When the call to prayer is made on the day of congregation, hurry towards the reminder of God and leave off your trading*' (Qur'an 62:9). These are the most important prayers in the week. **To miss four Fridays would make a person like an unbeliever.** This is the only day that a sermon is delivered so it gives direct spiritual guidance. The khutbah is given in 2 parts – first part in the local language maybe about local or world issues, giving guidance on Islamic teachings. The second sermon is in Arabic and is a set speech. This prayer is the best attended of the week, and in Muslim countries it is common to see Muslims praying outside the mosque which is actually full.

**Direction of Prayer:** When praying, Muslims should face the holy city of Makkah. This means that all Muslims are physically and mentally focusing on one place associate with God, in the same way that all Muslims should focus every part of their lives to God. If all prayers are taking place in a mosque, this is easy to achieve. All mosques have a **Mihrab**, this is a semi-circular niche built into the **Qiblah wall**. This shows the exact direction of Makkah from the mosque. Muslims face this in order to pray. Many mosques have special carpet that look like separate rows or prayer mats, facing the mihrab. This gives each person a suitable space to carry out their prayers properly. Men and women pray in separate spaces. The voice of the imam is often broadcast in the women's prayer room at the same time, so that he can lead their prayers along with the men's. Muslims are allowed to pray at home. They must perform wudu before prayer but they do not need a special room in their house to pray. The rewards for praying with others at the mosque is believed to be 27 times greater than praying alone, so Muslims try to attend mosque as often as possible.

**The Iqamah** (second call to prayer) signals the intention to start to pray. Muslims should have now blocked worldly issues out, are purified physically and have total focus on Allah. 'So woe to those who pray but are heedless of their prayer' (Qur'an 107:4-5)

**Praying at Home:** Muslims will use a prayer mat, which they position so it is facing Makkah, in the same way as it would in a mosque. Muslim women often find it useful to pray at home, especially if they have children to look after. Prayers are also said before mealtimes to thank Allah for the blessings of food, as a family breaks fasts on each day of Ramadan and on special occasions like Eid.

**Du'a prayers** – these are personal prayers and may be added on at the end of the final rak'ah. These do not have to be in Arabic and do not follow any set form. '*Your Lord says, 'Call on Me and I will answer you*' (Qur'an 40:60) These are done to talk to Allah on a more personal level maybe to ask for mercy or help for others. These are not set and do not require rak'ahs.

**Tahajjud** – these are prayers at night and are performed by someone showing real discipline. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) prayed at night and are not a one-off, they are done regularly.

**Zakah: Giving Alms - All** Muslims are **expected** to be charitable and to care for the wider community. The prophet Muhammad (pbuh) encouraged giving: *'He who eats and drinks while his brother goes hungry, is not one of us'. (Is not a Muslim). (Hadith)* Teachings in the **Qur'an**: *'Be steadfast in prayer and giving' (2:110) 'God is well aware of the good you do' (2:215) 'And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah – give them tidings of a painful punishment' (9:34) 'Zakah...[is] for bringing hearts together' (9:60) This verse also lists who zakah is for including the 'poor and needy'*

**Zakah** - For Muslims who have enough savings, it is compulsory to give 2.5% of those savings every year to help the poor. Many Muslims will work out how much they owe and give the money at the end of Ramadan. By giving Zakah, Muslims are acknowledging that everything they own comes from God and belongs to him, and that they should use their wealth to remember God and give to those in need. It frees people from desire, and teaches self-discipline and honesty.

Zakah literally means to purify or cleanse. Muslims believe that giving Zakah helps to purify the soul, removing selfishness and greed. 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.

Only Muslims with savings greater than a certain figure (known as nisab) are required to give Zakah. The nisab is either worked out as the value of 87 grams of gold, which in 2015 was around £2200, or 612 grams of silver, which in 2015 was around £200. Muslims can choose which figure they use and therefore how much they pay.

**Khums** is an important part of Muslim practice in Shi'a Islam in addition to giving Zakah. It literally means 'fifth'. Originally it referred to a requirement for Muslims to donate 20% of the spoils of war to the leader representing the state of Islam. Today, it refers to the excess income or earnings that a Shi'a Muslim makes, and is still set at 20%. It is split 6 ways. The first 3 portions can now be paid to religious teachers so half goes to Shi'a religious leaders, to be spent on behalf of God on the things considered necessary for religious matters, while the rest is given to charity or the poor- orphans, the needy and anyone who is away from home and has no money to return. Both Zakah and Khums are two of the 10 Obligatory Acts for Shi'a Muslims.

**Significance of Zakah:** Purify and cleanse – makes remaining money clean and purifies the soul. /Share blessings from Allah *'Alms are meant only for the poor, the needy'* (9:60)/ Fulfilling a duty imposed by God. /Reduces greed and is the sign of a true Muslim. / Teaches self-discipline and honesty/ Money is for the welfare of the people of the Ummah as a whole. / Benefits both giver and receiver – The Qur'an says the giver will receive a 'hundred-fold' back in the afterlife and therefore they do not need to fear Judgement Day./ Should feel the satisfaction of giving. Muslims say that anyone who gives will feel love in their heart for others and know that by helping they have strengthened the Ummah./ If everyone gave then there would be no poor in the world. / Zakah is a test. / Will feel love for others and get the satisfaction of helping others and have strengthened the Ummah. / If receive Zakah can really improve a person's life, i.e. provide decent food. / Support the community and strengthen its religious practice. Links with Salah – should pray for the needs of others. Puts beliefs into actions.

**Who has to give?** It is given by any adult Muslim who has paid all debts and expenses and has over a certain amount left over – the nisab. (It differs depending on what valuables and cash are being considered). The actual % varies depending on what a person owns; their wealth may be in animals, properties, businesses, and so on. It is not a tax as it is only paid by those who can afford it. Children do not have to give Zakah but many still do. All adults who meet the criteria must give. In Muslim countries, Muslims pay Zakah as Shari'ah law proscribes; Muslims in the West usually have to give a cash equivalent. Zakah should be given anonymously so that the money remains pure and so there is no pride or arrogance or smugness in the amount given. In non-Muslim countries it is either collected by mosques during Ramadan, or given directly to specific organisations or individuals. It should be paid with good grace and not given grudgingly.

**The nisab:** Is either worked out as the value of 87 g of gold (2015 – was around £2200) or 612 g of silver (2015 -£200). Using the gold nisab is more common. Therefore a Muslim with £1000 of savings would not be required to give zakah if using the gold nisab but would be if using the silver nisab. A Muslim with savings of £4000 would pay £100.

**What is it used for?** *'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.'* (9:60) To help the poor and homeless, for Islamic education – could be given to students so that they can afford to study, to help people attend Hajj so that they are able to go once in their life time, on buying Qur'ans for study, to help pay for the upkeep of the mosque. If a person receives Zakah they should not be embarrassed as wealth is a blessing from Allah and they are being tested by Allah. Therefore what they are given from the rich is Allah's will. They are helping others to fulfil their duty of giving.

**Dangers with Zakah:** No one records what is given and the giving is in secret. Only Allah knows what a person gives. Therefore only Allah can deal with non-payment or underpayment or reluctant giving. The Qur'an is clear however that they will be held accountable for their attitude and what is given or not given on Judgement Day.

**Shi'a Islam** - Imam Ali says that the purpose of Zakah is to test the rich and provide for the poor. Imam Ali also said that if Sadaqah, Zakah and Khums were all paid in full, people's lives would be more equitable. Shi'a Muslims believe that Zakah is an obligatory tax specifically on silver and gold coins, cows, sheep goats, camels, wheat, barley, dates and raisins. Shi'a Imams taught to be absolutely precise to the letter of the law. Shi'a Muslims argue that some of the kinds of things that it is payable on are outdated, sheep, camels etc. none of which fits with the modern life style. Zakah is a complicated issue in terms of what it has to be paid on and how much. This is possibly why it is not always paid in full, and that fact makes it difficult to see how it can solve poverty as Imam Ali said it should. Therefore Shi'a use Khums.

**Sadaqah:** This is charitable giving and is voluntary. Muslims are encouraged to give as the need arises. It is good actions or voluntary payments that are undertaken for charitable reasons.

**Sawm: Fasting** One of the 5 pillars commanding Muslims to fast during the month of Ramadan

**Fasting:** not eating or drinking for a certain length of time, usually for a religious purpose.

**Ramadan:** the ninth month of the Muslim calendar, during which Muslims have to fast from dusk to sunset. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and for Muslims the most important. They believe that it was during Ramadan that the Qur'an started to be revealed to Muhammad. The exact date this happened is not agreed on, but it is believed to be one of the odd-number dates in the second half of Ramadan. *'It was in the month of Ramadan that the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind... So any one who is present that month should fast, and anyone who is ill or on a journey should make up for the lost days by fasting on other days later'.* Qur'an 2:18

The whole focus during the month of Ramadan is on God, for which purity of thought is required in order to cleanse the soul and free it from harm. Fasting requires considerable self-discipline, but it allows Muslims to show they can sacrifice their physical needs as evidence of their submission to God. Muslims get up early and eat before the fajr prayer and then at dusk they eat iftar, which is usually something sweet like dates, before going to maghrib prayer. After this Muslims will eat dinner before spending the evening reading the Qur'an or praying du'as (personal prayers). Often there are later prayers in the mosque called tarawih prayers with 20 rak'ahs behind the imam.

**Oh believers! Fasting is prescribed to you as it was for those before you that you may learn self-restraint' (Qur'an 2:183)**

**What is given up?** Not only food and drink in daylight hours but also sexual relations. Time should not be wasted on material things such as TV, video games and idle chat. Ramadan should not be used as an excuse to avoid things that Muslims know they should do but do not really want to. This would in fact break the fast because the intention is incorrect. They should consider their behaviour towards others making it always helpful and friendly. Many Muslims will aim to read the Qur'an over the 30 days, they will pray Du'as and there are later prayers in the mosque.

**The Night of Power:** (1) the night when the first revelation of the Qur'an was made to Muhammad (2) the festival that marks the start of God's revelation to Muhammad. *'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. This means that observing the night of power gives Muslims the benefits of worshipping for a thousand months. Because of this, Muslims try to keep awake throughout the night on each of the possible dates, devoting themselves to prayers and studying the Qur'an.

**Exceptions to fasting** Those excused are supposed to make up for it later if they can. They can be excused for health reasons – for example pregnant women, mothers nursing babies. The ill – they need medication and nutrition. The young and elderly as they need nourishment. Travellers and menstruating women can make up the fasting days later.

**Benefits of Ramadan:** Brings them closer to Allah. It is the month of forgiveness. Muhammad said all sins are forgiven for those who fast. Focus on the important things in life – put their faith first and hopefully keep this focus for the rest of the year. Each year Ramadan reminds them. Sawm is designed to keep putting people back on the right path. Self-discipline – able to resist temptation. To put the Spiritual before the material. Reminds Muslims of the poor who feel hungry all the time – gives them empathy. Inspires Muslims to find ways to help the poor. Appreciate what Allah has given them. Zakah is given in Ramadan. Builds personal qualities like self-determination, piety, humility and courage.

**Shi'a Islam:** Imam Ali (1<sup>st</sup>) said that the hunger and thirst in Ramadan should remind Muslims of their hunger and thirst on Judgement Day. The 11<sup>th</sup> Imam said that the purpose of Ramadan is to experience the hunger and pain of the poor in order to become generous with gifts to the poor.

There are therefore TWO purposes for fasting for Shi'a:

- Give generous practical help to the poor – having empathy
- Reminder of what awaits on Judgement Day.

It is also expected that each Muslim will benefit and grow spiritually themselves so to live a better life in the year to come. Help them be stronger at rejecting munkar (evil) and at doing what is ma'roof (good).

**Eid Ul Fitr:** It means the 'festival of breaking of the fast' but is also called the Sweet Festival or Lesser Eid. The first Eid was celebrated in 624 CE by the Prophet Muhammad with his friends and relatives after the victory of the battle of Jang-e-Badar. Muslims are not only celebrating the end of fasting, but thanking Allah for the help and strength that he gave them throughout the previous month to help them practise self-control. Muslims also give thanks to God for providing his guidance and wisdom in the Qur'an, the first revelation of which was made during the month of Ramadan. It reminds Muslims that Allah needs to be the focus of everything and time should not be wasted on material things. The Qur'an and prayer should dominate time. Behaviour should be modest, polite and peaceful. Their wealth is not their own and should be used as Allah would want. Eid celebrates achievement and betterment, so these ideas should continue so as to make the community a better Ummah and improve each Muslim's prospects for a good afterlife. Muslims reflect on the previous year and look into the future for the next year in terms of how they live up to the Prophet's example. The festival begins when the first sight of the new moon is seen in the sky. Muslims in most countries rely on news of an official sighting, rather than looking at the sky themselves.

**How is it celebrated:** The celebratory atmosphere is increased by everyone wearing best or new clothes, and decorating their homes. There are special services out of doors and in mosques, processions through the streets, and of course, a special celebratory meal - eaten during daytime, the first daytime meal Muslims will have had in a month. Eid is also a time of forgiveness, and making amends. Id-ul-Fitr may be celebrated for One, Two or Three days. Muslims gather together in mosques or large outdoor areas to say special prayers. The imam's sermon usually reminds Muslims that they should forgive and forget any differences or disputes that have occurred during the year and focus instead on helping the poor. The prayers include two sermons explaining the rules for paying Zakah. Often it is the men who attend a special Eid prayers. Give greetings of Eid Mubarak as the fast is broken by the simple eating of dates. Cards and presents are exchanged. Women may decorate hands and feet with henna the night before. Special finger biscuits and baklava are often made. In Britain – many Muslims may be granted the day off work to celebrate the festival and attend morning

prayers. They also go to their local cemetery to remember family members who have died and pray for them. In Muslim countries it is a public holiday. Eid is the day zakah becomes due – often mosques put up boards showing the families that attend and names are crossed off when zakah is given, though what they give is not written up.

**Shi'a Islam** Imam Ali said *'Verily it is only a festival for he whose fast Allah has accepted and whose prayers he has acknowledged....'* Eid prayers vary slightly between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims in the number of rak'ahs, positions and prayers. Shi'a pay khums as well as zakah.

**Origins:** It is said that the Prophet Muhammad said that God had appointed two days that were better to celebrate - Id-ul-Fitr ('festival of breaking of the fast' – Lesser Eid) and Id-ul-Adha (festival that performs part of Hajj – Greater Eid) than festivals that were celebrated before Islam came to Madinah.

**Hajj:** the annual pilgrimage to Makkah that every Muslim should try to make at least once in their life.

**Pilgrimage:** a journey by a believer to a holy site for religious reasons; an act of worship and devotion.

**Ka'aba:** the black, cube-shaped building in the centre of the Grand Mosque in Makkah, the holiest place in Islam.

Action performed on Hajj	Significance
Before pilgrims arrive to Saudi Arabia they enter <b>Ihram</b> – this means they have to wear certain clothes and behave in a certain way. Must not use soap or perfumes, not wear jewellery so cannot show off wealth. Men wear two white cotton sheets. Women wear a long plain dress and a head covering – veils are forbidden. Shows everyone is equal. Before they enter Makkah pilgrims pray to God, stating their intention to perform the Hajj.	Shows all Muslims stand equal before Allah with no material differences – just as they will stand before Allah on Judgement Day.
<b>Circle the Ka'bah 7 times.</b> Tawaf. This is believed to be the first place where man worshipped God. It is the holiest shrine to Allah on earth. Say a prayer every time they circle it, symbolises the unity of Allah.	Circling shows a Muslims love for Allah.
Sa'y <b>Pilgrims then run between two hills, Safa and Marwah 7 times.</b> The path between the hills is covered to protect pilgrims from the heat of the desert. Remembers when Hagar searched for water for her son. When she returned to Ishmael her son – his foot struck the ground and a spring had arose. This is known as the <b>Zamzam</b> well – which was a reward for Hagar's patience. Muslims drink from the Zamzam well.	Demonstrates Muslim dependence on Allah – Allah is vital for spiritual life and will reward determination.
Next the pilgrims <b>travel out into the desert at Mina.</b> The roads are blocked by the huge numbers of people on the move. The pilgrims come from all over the world and <b>camp together in a city of tents.</b> Men and women sleep in separate tents.	
<b>Prayer on Mount Arafat: this is the most important part of Hajj.</b> They will pray on a mountain and ask for <b>forgiveness</b> from Allah from their sins and reconnect with Allah. The mountain is sometimes known as the Mount of Mercy. It is the place where Adam – the first Prophet- asked for Allah's forgiveness for his sins. Make way to the mountain at sunrise and pray from noon until sunset. Muhammad gave his last sermon here.	Muslims hope to be forgiven for their sins after meditating and praying
Leave Arafat and spend night at <b>Muzdalifah, collecting stones</b> (for the next part of Hajj).	
Go to <b>Mina, Spend 3 days. On each day throw 7 stones at each of the 3 pillars - jamarat - which represent the devil.</b> Show they reject the devil just like the Prophet Ibrahim and his family did when they threw rocks at the devil. A sacrifice is also made here called Qurbani. Men shave their heads and women cut a lock of hair.	Muslims show their own rejection of Shaytan, hoping to pass any test Allah asks of them.
The <b>celebration of Eid ul- Adha</b> takes place. Remembers that the prophet Ibrahim was so faithful to Allah that he was willing to sacrifice his son Ishmael on Allah's command. An animal is slaughtered as part of the celebration to remember his willingness (Allah stopped Ibrahim and provided a ram). Leftover meat is canned or frozen to be given to the poor.	Celebrated by all Muslims (on Hajj or not) showing their responsibility and commitment to the poor.
Pilgrims <b>then return to Mecca to circle the Ka'bah 7 times more.</b> They then <b>return to Mina to spend two more nights</b> there, remembering God and reflecting on his blessings, before Hajj ends.	
Once Hajj is completed, many pilgrims take the opportunity to travel to Madinah to visit Al-Masjid an-Nabawi (the Prophet's Mosque). This is a huge mosque, placed on the site of a much smaller mosque that Muhammad built in 622 CE. It contains the tomb of Muhammad and of some early Muslim leaders.	All prayers made here will be heard and accepted by Allah.

**Entering the state of Ihram:** This is the first part of the pilgrimage. Ihram literally means “sacred”. A pilgrim must enter into this state before crossing the pilgrimage boundary, known as Miqat, by performing the cleansing rituals and wearing the correct clothes (white robes) Man's Ihram differs from woman's and while man's Ihram is two sheets of white cloths that leaves some parts of his body naked, woman's Ihram is dress that completely conceals her, leaving her face and hands revealed. A woman cannot cover her face if she wants to because it is prohibited during pilgrimage. *”During the...Hajj, if you break the state of Ihram (sanctity)... you shall make amends by offering an animal sacrifice. If you cannot afford it, you shall fast three days during Hajj and seven when you return home” Quran 2:196*

**Ka’aba:** The first house established for the people was at Makkah, a Holy place and guidance to all beings. The Qur’an firmly establishes the fact that Prophet Ibrahim was the real founder of the Holy Shrine. When Prophet Ibrahim built the Holy Shrine in Makkah, his prayers were that this place should remain a centre of worship for all good and pious people; that Allah should keep his family the custodians of the Holy place. Muslims will circle the Ka’aba 7 times when they arrive and before they leave the Hajj. It is the focal point in the great mosque in Mecca. *“And remember Ibrahim and Ishmael raised the foundations of the House (With this prayer): ”Our Lord! Accept (this service) from us: For Thou art the All-Hearing, the All-knowing” Quran, 2: 127*

**Travelling to Arafat:** This stage of the pilgrimage is when Muslims walk along a covered walkway linking the hills and Safa and Marwah, which feature in the story of Ibrahim, Hajira and Ismael. Performing the *Sa’i* is to remember Hajira's search for water for her son and God's mercy in answering prayers. The walkway is entirely covered by a gallery and is divided into four one-way lanes, of which the inner two are reserved for the elderly and Disabled.

**Eid Ul Adha:** This is a four-day public holiday in Muslim countries. The festival remembers the prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son when God ordered him to.

**Ibrahim's sacrifice:** God appeared in a dream to Ibrahim and told him to sacrifice his son Isma'il. Ibrahim and Isma'il set off to Mina for the sacrifice. As they went, the devil attempted to persuade Ibrahim to disobey God and not to sacrifice his beloved son. But Ibrahim stayed true to God, and drove the devil away. As Ibrahim prepared to kill his son God stopped him and gave him a sheep to sacrifice instead.

**Celebrations:** Ibrahim's complete obedience to the will of God is celebrated by Muslims each year. Each Muslim, as they celebrate, reminds themselves of their own submission to God, and their own willingness to sacrifice anything to God's wishes.

How is it celebrated? Eid ul Adha is a public holiday in Muslim countries. Today Muslims all over the world who can afford it, sacrifice a sheep (sometimes a goat) as a reminder of Ibrahim's obedience to Allah. In Britain, the animal has to be killed at a slaughterhouse. They share out the meat among family, friends and the poor, who each get a third share. Many families pay charity money in place of having a lamb sacrificed. Eid usually starts with Muslims going to the Mosque for prayers, dressed in their best clothes, and thanking Allah for all the blessings they have received. It is also a time when they visit family and friends as well as offering presents. At Eid it is obligatory to give a set amount of money to charity to be used to help poor people buy new clothes and food so they too can celebrate.

**Impact – Influence: The Significance of Hajj:(Benefits) Someone who has completed the Hajj is known as a Hajji**

Many Muslims describe Hajj as a life changing or significant experience. They believe they are forgiven by God and it is a time of spiritual reflection, getting closer to God and concentrating on their faith. It can bring spiritual transformation and make them a better person. Become more aware of God. It is also a shared experience with Muslims from around the world and gives a sense of shared community no matter your back ground or race. Emphasises unity and equality. Brotherhood. Many describe hajj as giving a new focus to their lives and helping them to be equipped for their life by deepening the strength of their faith. Teaches sincerity and humility in a person's relationship with God. It produces inner peace which shows in the values of justice, honesty, respect, kindness, mercy and forgiveness. It can lead to forgiveness for sins. Teaches Muslims to be humble, develops self-discipline (both physical and mental), emphasises unity and equality (ihram). Reminds Muslims of the example of the Prophets – Ibrahim and Adam as well as following the Prophet Muhammad's example. Also of the example set by Hajira and Ishmael. Makes prayer in the future more meaningful as have seen the Ka'bah. On returning home: The pilgrims are respected members of the community. People seek advice from them. People see them as more spiritual and that they have more understanding of the religion. People's reactions make individuals try to live up to the respect others give them so their life is more centred on Allah. Some Hadith say it cleanses the hajji of all sins *‘he will return (after Hajj free from all sins) as if he were born anew’ Sahih al-Bukhari 26:596*

**The Value of Hajj for Shi’a Muslims:** Hajj unites all Muslims and gives them all the same purpose and the same value from participating in it. Anyone who visits Arafat (the Mount of Mercy), according to Imam Sadiq, gains forgiveness for themselves or their family. Imam Abedin said that performing the Hajj sees bodies become healthy, sustenance expanded and faith improved. For Shi’a Muslims, Hajj is important in their spiritual lives and moves them forward in their personal struggle for Allah.

**Ashura:** Ashura has been a day of fasting for Sunni Muslims since the days of the early Muslim community. It marks two historical events: the day Nuh (Noah) left the Ark, and the day that Musa (Moses) was saved from the Egyptians by Allah.

Shi’a Muslims in particular use the day to commemorate the martyrdom of Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet, in 680 CE.

In Shi’ite communities this is a solemn day: plays re-enacting the martyrdom are often staged and many take part in mourning rituals. Every year in London Shi’a Muslims gather for a mourning procession and speeches at Marble Arch. The procession attracts up to 3000 men, women and children from many different ethnic backgrounds.

**Ashura in the Islamic Calendar:** Ashura (from the Arabic word "ashr," or "ten") is the 10th day of Muharram, the first month out of 12 total in the Islamic calendar year. The Islamic calendar began with the Hijra, or Muhammad's move from Mecca to Medina, in 622, or 1 A.H. (After the Hijra). Since 12 lunar cycles are shorter in length than one solar year, the exact date of Ashura moves roughly five days sooner in the Gregorian calendar every year.

**The Practical Meaning of Fasting during Ashura:** The religious significance of Ashura in Sunni Islam is to remember the role of Allah in saving Moses and the Israelites from the Egyptian pharaoh. Islam includes many aspects of Jewish tradition, including the example of Allah bestowing his benevolence on Moses by splitting the Red Sea. The general purpose of fasting in Islam is to raise awareness of an important religious theme by denying everyday pleasures. This is obligatory during the Islamic month of Ramadan in order to recognize the plight of less fortunate Muslims in the world. In the case of Ashura in Sunni Islam, fasting is not obligatory, but it is recommended as a way for Muslims to recognize the omnipotence and benevolence of Allah.

**How do Sunni Muslims observe Ashura?** Many Muslims remember Ashura as a Day of atonement, that is, a day sins are forgiven if repented. Many fast on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of the Month – but they do not have to.

Sunni Muslims do not accept the whipping of their bodies because according to teaching the body should not be harmed. Many Sunni will fast voluntarily, give to charity, show kindness to their family and the poor and recite prayers.

**How do Shi'a Muslims observe Ashura?** For Shi'a it is a really significant festival based on sorrow. It remembers the martyrdom of the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad – Hussein – who was killed in the battle of Karbala on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Muharram in 680CE along with 72 members of his family. Many Shi'a wear black as a sign of grief and mosques are covered in black cloths. In the afternoon prayers, poems about the tragedy are read and people will cry. Some Shi'a will beat themselves with whips, or cut themselves to connect with Hussain's sufferings. This has traditionally happened in Iraq in Karbala but this is becoming less common.

**Shi'a learn:** Hussein should never be forgotten, nor the actions of the imams. Muslims must stand up for justice and a better society. A Shi'a's love for Allah is shown through their love of the imams.

**Jihad:** Jihad means 'to strive or struggle in the way of Allah'. There are different levels of Jihad. ***'But those who have believed, migrated, and striven for God's cause, it is they who can look forward to God's mercy'*** (Qur'an 2:218)

**The Greater Jihad:** Greater Jihad the personal spiritual struggle or effort of every Muslim to follow the teachings of Allah (God) in their own lives e.g. overcoming things such as anger greed, pride and hatred; forgiving someone who has hurt them; working for social justice. ***'The person who struggles so that Allah's word is supreme is the one serving Allah's cause'*** (Hadith – Prophet Muhammad.) It includes following the pillars or obligations and striving to do them properly. Those who are hafiz (learnt the whole of the Qur'an off by heart) forgiving someone who had insulted you. Giving up things for the poor and working for social justice. Many Muslims do not accept this term at all. Majid Khadduri an Iraqi academic said there were four jihads, jihad of the heart, jihad of the tongue, jihad of the hand and jihad of the sword. All these point to believing, thinking, saying and doing the right things.

**The Lesser Jihad:** Lesser Jihad the struggle to build a good Muslim society; also Holy War (the struggle to defend against oppression; with force if necessary).

When the Prophet Muhammad was asked which people fought in the name of Allah, he said: ***"The person who struggles so that Allah's word is supreme is the one serving Allah's cause"***. The idea of Jihad is often misunderstood. Most Muslim scholars believe that the internal struggle is the greater jihad, based on something the Prophet Muhammad said. There are some scholars who believe that this is unreliable and that 'jihad' meaning Holy War is the more important meaning. The following two teachings are attributed to Muhammad ***'The best jihad is the word of justice in front of an oppressive ruler'*** and ***'the best jihad is the one in which your horse is slain and your blood spilled'***. It is the existence of such quotations whether authentic or not, that cause some people to take up arms against any enemy of Islam as they see it. Holy books can be interpreted in different ways but even if people follow these and believe them to be genuine there are still rules that should be followed. These are the rules of lesser jihad or holy war. They should be fighting for faith but Islam should not be forced on people. It should be to defend Allah and not for conquest, to restore peace, fought until the enemy lay down their weapons, women and children should not be harmed and crops should not be destroyed. Mosques should be protected absolutely. Mercy should be applied to enemies that are captured and women left unarmed and not abused or raped. The enemy should never be executed. Border disputes, wars for personal power, and wars to exploit others are not jihad. ***'Repel evil with what is seen as better; then your enemy will become your friend'*** (Quran 41:34)