

Revision notes – Islam and Ethics unit

Tawhid: This is the belief that Allah is ONE. THIS IS THE KEY BELIEF OF ISLAM.

God is the creator, **God is beyond comparison**. Allah is not the same as us and we will never fully understand him. He is **eternal** and so has always existed. Allah is not limited by time and space.

Allah comes first and is more important than anything else. Muslims should not put anything before Allah - person or money – this is called SHIRK and is the worst sin.

Muslims pray 5 times a day to help to **put God first**. Prayers must be focused on Allah – there are no pictures of Allah as this would mean that you would worship an idol.

Allah creates all things and science can help us understand Allah's creation. The study of science is therefore encouraged. 'It is He who created for you all things that are on earth; His design comprehended Heaven'. The earth is Allah's not ours – we need to look after it.

Allah has a plan for us – predestination – God can be trusted in his plan even when things are difficult.

Our'an (Surah 112) Say 'He is Allah, [who is] One, Allah, the Eternal Refuge. He neither begets nor is born, nor is there to Him any equivalent.'

Allah (Muslim name for God) – Muslims believe in one God called Allah. There are no statues of Allah to avoid Idol worshipping. To understand Allah and Allah's nature there are 99 names of Allah in the Quran and Hadith which reveal some of Allah's qualities or nature. Some of these are; Allah the patient, Allah the creator, Allah the judge, Allah the guide, the greatest, the pure one and Allah the guardian. **'The Most Excellent Names belong to God: use them to call on Him'.**

Nature of Allah 'God is the greatest' – Allah Akbar.

Immanent – active in the world. Transcendent – above and beyond the world. Omnipotent – all-powerful.

Beneficent – benevolent/loving. Merciful – compassion and forgiveness. Fairness – treats people fairly. Justice (Adalat in Shi'a Islam) means that God is fair and just and judges fairly.

Shahadah - This is the Muslim declaration of faith. All Muslims say it very often to confirm their faith as a Muslim. This Pillar is believing and saying the words **"There is no god except Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah"**. Shahadah is very brief but is very important to the Muslim way of life. Shahadah is included in the Muslim call to prayer (adhan) and **repeated during all prayers**. Faithful Muslims will repeat Shahadah thousands of times during their lives. It is repeated several times a day and is the first thing to be whispered into a baby's ear when s/he is born. It is taught to children as a matter of high importance and Muslims hope and pray it will be the last words they speak before they die. If they are unable to say it themselves then they are hopeful to be surrounded by a Muslim who can speak it to them.

This is the first pillar of faith for Sunni Muslims but underpins all the Sunni 5 pillars and the Shi'a Obligatory Acts.

Impact: If a person says this sincerely then they are Muslim so it is extremely important.

Shi'a Muslims: Add **'and Ali is the friend of God'**. Demonstrates the Shi'a belief that Ali was the true successor of the Prophet Muhammad.

The following are part of the 5 Pillars of Sunni Islam and are also part of the Shi'a 10 Obligatory Acts.

Salah - This is prayer. **All Muslims who are old enough aim to pray 5 times a day**. Five times a day Salah offers a wonderful opportunity for a Muslim to improve his/her life. It is a system of spiritual, moral and physical training. It shows obedience to his/or her creator.

Sunni Muslims pray 5 times a day. Shi'a Muslims also do 5 prayers but join up the 2nd and 3rd prayer and the 4th and 5th prayer so pray at 3 times. Salah begins with ritual washing called Wudu - *involves a set pattern of washing. Starts with saying "In the name of Allah" and then washing hands 3 times. Rinsing the mouth out 3 times. Sniffing water into the nose to clean it three times. Washing the face 3 times, from the right ear to the left ear and the forehead to the throat. Washing the right arm then the left arm from the elbow. Passing wet hands over hair and inside and outside of ears. Washing the right foot then the left foot as far as the ankle – all 3 times.*

What is Wudu for? Helps a Muslim get in the right frame of mind for prayer. Purifies the soul, cleaning away sin before prayer. **Wudu** is also called **Ablution** – making pure.

Challenge: A Muslim would need to be self-disciplined to pray so often in a day and it can be difficult to pray at the correct time when working or in school so many Muslims will catch up prayers. Also having the correct facilities at work to wash before prayer and having a quiet clean place to pray in can present a challenge.

Benefits: Physical and Spiritual training. Demonstrates obedience to Allah. Opportunity to improve their life. Worship Allah and pray for forgiveness and concerns. Chance to refocus throughout the day.

Objects are used to help with Salah. The objects are **prayer rugs** (used for cleanliness) and **tasbeeh** – (prayer beads used to help praise Allah. There are 99 beads). Muslim men will also cover their heads with a **Topi** and women a headscarf called **Hijab**, as a sign of respect and an awareness that Allah is always above them. Muslims prostrate to the ground during prayer to show that they are submitting to Allah.

Zakat – This is the compulsory giving of a percentage of a Muslim's wealth to charity. It is regarded as a type of worship and of self-purification. Zakat does not refer to charitable gifts given out of kindness or generosity (Sadaqah), but to the systematic giving of 2.5% of one's wealth each year to benefit the poor. **This is given by Sunni Muslims. It is 2.5% of an individual's surplus income once they have paid for their needs.** There is a cut-off point so the poor, who need every single thing they have in order to raise their families, pay nothing at all. Muslims must pay 2.5% of their profit or surplus (after necessary expenditure e.g. food, bills, clothes etc) as Zakat. There are a number of ways in which Zakat might be distributed such as to people who are poor, the prisoners of war or their families or to hospitals, schools and Mosques. In Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia, Zakat is collected and shared out by the government. In Britain, Muslim organisations and Mosques might collect money from Muslims donating Zakat. They will then decide who should receive the money.

Shi'a Muslims pay Zakat on specific goods – mentioned in the Qur'an – gold, silver, cattle. They give **Khums** – compulsory giving of 20% of their wealth to God. (One of the 10 Obligations) Believe the reference in the Qur'an does not mean war booty – which is what Sunni Muslims believe but actually translates as 'everything you acquire' i.e. savings.

Alms – this is a term used for giving to the poor.

Challenge: You would need to be honest and generous to pay Zakat – it means putting others before your own wants and the things you would like.

Benefits: share wealth, brings equality, stops greed and focus on money, purifies wealth, ensures Muslims remember that all belongs to Allah and he has loaned it to each person. Is fair as only when needs are met do you pay. A very poor person would not pay anything.

Sawm - This is fasting. **All Muslims who are physically able must fast for a month during Ramadan. They cannot eat or drink in daylight hours.** Muslims break their fast every evening after sunset, this meal is called iftar – families come together and it is a special time. Muslims who are elderly, pregnant, young or suffering from an illness must not fast – if they are ill and fast it is seen as a sin. Some children do join in and start for example by missing one meal a day.

Challenge: This can be a big challenge especially if your friends are not fasting. It takes a lot of self-discipline and effort to follow this pillar/obligation. Muslims will find it particularly hard when fasting falls in the summer months as the days are very long. It also means getting up in the early hours of the morning to eat and drink before fasting starts. It can be hard to concentrate on work and a Muslim will feel extremely tired. People may not necessarily realise you are fasting when you live in Britain and so can expect the same work from you.

Benefits: There are many reasons why Muslims fast. Some of the reasons are; to follow the practice of Muhammad (pbuh), to enter paradise, to please Allah (as it is a duty/obligation), To learn empathy with the poor and this encourages them to work for justice and equality, to learn to control your bodily desires, to focus on spiritual rather than physical needs and to appreciate the good things you take for granted every day. Enriches the soul and refocuses on Allah. Learn self-discipline which helps them to have discipline in other areas of life and keeps them on the right path.

Haji - This is pilgrimage to Mecca. All Muslims who can afford it should take at least one trip in their lifetime. Muslims have been performing the Hajj since the time of Muhammad (pbuh) 1400 years ago. One of the Obligations of Shi'a Islam and one of the Sunni 5 pillars. Takes place in the 12th month of the Muslim calendar. If you are too old, sick disabled or are poor you are excused from the Hajj.

Before pilgrims arrive to Saudi Arabia they enter **Ihram** – 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.

During Hajj pilgrims:

- **Circle the Ka'bah 7 times and will visit the Ka'bah first.** Tawaf. This is believed to be the first place where man worshipped God. Say a prayer every time they circle it, Symbolises the unity of Allah.

- Sa'y Pilgrims then **run between two hills, Safa and Marwah 7 times**. 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 zamzam well – which was a reward for Hagar's patience. **Muslims drink from the Zamzam well.**
- Next the pilgrims travel out into the desert at **Mina**. The roads are blocked by the huge numbers of people on the move. The pilgrims come from all over the world and **camp together in a city of tents**. Men and women sleep in separate tents.
- **Prayer on Mount Arafat**: this is the most important part of Hajj. They will pray on a mountain and **ask for forgiveness 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.
- Leave Arafat and spend night at **Muzdalifah, collecting stones** needed for the next part of Hajj.
- Go to Mina, Spend 3 days. **On each day throw 7 stones at each of the 3 pillars which represent the devil**. Show they reject the devil just like the Prophet Ibrahim and his family did when they threw rocks at the devil.
- Pilgrims then return to **Mecca to circle the Ka'bah 7 times more**. They then return to Mina to spend two more nights there, remembering God and reflecting on his blessings, before Hajj ends.
- To represent a new start men shave their hair at the end of the Hajj and women will cut some of their hair too.
- The celebration of Eid ul- Adha 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). Left over meat is canned or frozen to be given to the poor.

Benefits: 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 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. 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 Muslims to be humble, develops self-discipline, 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.

Challenge: It can be expensive to attend hajj as well as physically and mentally demanding to perform the different parts of hajj. Could argue the money would be better spent on the poor as Allah is omnipotent he can be worshipped anywhere.

The Qur'an - The Qur'an is the Muslim holy book. Muslims believe that it was revealed to Muhammad (pbuh) by the angel Jibril (Gabriel). It was then written down by his followers. It is written in Arabic and Muslims believe that it must not be changed. They do not accept translations as being a 'proper' version of the Qur'an. It is organised in 114 chapters called Surahs, each of these has a name and a number. Apart from Surah 9 each of these starts with "In the name of Allah, most gracious, most merciful".

Muslims believe that the Qur'an contains guidance for us to live by and also reveals Allah's nature. This is called REVELATION. Muslims believe the Qur'an is ALLAH'S WORD revealed to the prophet Muhammad and that it has not been corrupted or changed.

For Muslims the Qur'an is the most important object that they possess. Muslims respect the Quran. The Qur'an is never laid on the floor. When not in use it is wrapped in silk and kept on top of the highest piece of furniture in the room. Muslims try to sit in a special position to read the Qur'an to remind themselves that it is no ordinary book. They often sit cross-legged on the floor, with the Qur'an on a special stand. It influences them throughout their life – birth, marriage etc. It contains basic worship that Muhammad developed and legal and social systems, it explains ultimate questions about why we are here and what happens when we die.

Other Holy Books: Muslims believe that Allah has revealed his word and teachings prior to the Qur'an. The other Holy books were revealed to previous Prophets.

The scrolls of Ibrahim – were revealed to Ibrahim – they were written on parchment and have been lost as they perished over time. They are believed to have contained parable like stories.

The Torah – Given to Musa (Moses) by Allah on Mount Sinai. It is mentioned 18 times in the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad used them in his evening prayers. It is not in its original language and was written down by Musa's followers along time after his death and some was changed. This means some of it is the word of Allah and other parts are human addition.

The Zabur – Psalms of Dawud (David)- poems. Refer to the Masih or Messiah.

The Injil – about Isa who is a prophet born of a virgin mother, not the son of Allah. The Injil were written along time after Isa’s death so Muslims believe that the Gospels found in the Christian Bible contain mistakes and so the Injil were corrupted.

Prophethood: When God makes someone a Prophet to communicate his message to people.

Prophet: a person who proclaims the message of Allah. This helps people to understand how to live the way Allah wants them to. Muslims believe that when humans forgot, misunderstood or changed God’s message, Allah sent a prophet to call people back to the right path. Muslims believe that there have been 124,000 prophets 25 of which are named in the Qur’an.

Adam: First man on earth and first prophet. He built the Ka’bah as the first place of worship. Repented of sin and prayed for forgiveness to Allah. Was taught how to bury the dead, what was halal and haram. **‘God taught Adam the names of things’**

Ibrahim: Obedient to Allah, only worshipped Allah even when brought up with idol worship, was willing to sacrifice his son Ishmael, rejected the devil (some of Ibrahim’s actions are remembered on Hajj). **‘God took Ibrahim as a friend’** (Qur’an 4:125)

Muhammad: known as the **‘seal of the Prophets’** Muslims believe he handed down the Qur’an faithfully and without corruption or changes. He was known as an honest and trust worthy man. Taught Muslims how to pray, educated his daughters – shows his belief in equality. Also chose Bilal – freed black African slave as his first prayer leader, **‘He is God’s Messenger and the seal of the prophets: God knows everything’**. Qur’an 33:40. Cleared Mecca and the Ka’bah of Idol worship. Kind to animals. Muslims understand him to be a good role model.

There are no more prophets – this can be difficult for Shi’a Muslims who believe that Allah can speak through the Imam’s.

Sunni Muslims	Shi’a Muslims
Caliphs – worldwide leaders. Abu Bakr was the first Caliph – enforce the laws.	Imams – worldwide leaders. Shi’a Muslims believe that Ali was the true successor to Muhammad. The Imams were believed to be chosen by Allah and were descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Believe the Imam cannot get it wrong when speaking about spiritual matters and interpreting the Qur’an.
Sunni Pray 5 times a day	Pray 5 times a day but join 2 of the prayers together in afternoon and evening so pray in 3 blocks. Also do not put their forehead on a carpet but place a clay tile there as the Prophet Muhammad prayed on the ground.
Six Pillars of Faith	5 Roots of Shi’a Islam
The Shahadah is the first pillar of Islam ‘There is no God except Allah, Muhammad is the messenger of Allah’	Say the Shahadah and add ‘and Ali is God’s friend to the Shahadah
Believe in Tawhid – there is only ONE GOD ALLAH and only Allah should be worshipped. Allah is the creator and is all-powerful.	Believe in Tawhid - there is only ONE GOD ALLAH and only Allah should be worshipped. Allah is the creator and is all-powerful.
Follow the 5 pillars <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shahadah – declaration 2. Salah – prayer 5 times a day 3. Zakah – giving 2.5 % surplus wealth 4. Sawm – fasting during Ramadan 5. Hajj – pilgrimage to Mecca. 	Follow 10 Obligatory Acts – 4 are the same. Salah, Zakat, Sawm, Hajj. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salah - prayer • Sawm - fasting • Hajj - pilgrimage • Zakah - similar to Sunni Islam, it applies to money, cattle, silver, gold, dates, raisins, wheat, and barley. • Khums: an annual taxation of one-fifth (20%) of the wealth of that year. • Jihad • Amr-bil-Marooof: enjoining what is right. • Nahi Anil Munkar: forbidding what is wrong. • Tawalla: expressing love towards Good. • Tabarra: expressing disassociation and hatred towards Evil.