

Islam Practices

The 5 Pillars of Islam

Central to Muslim practices. They are key to living a perfect Muslim life. They show obedience and dedication to God.

SHAHADAH	The Muslim declaration of faith. All Muslims know the words of the Shahadah and it is repeated multiple times during the day.
SALAH	Prayer, which is compulsory for Muslims to take part in five times a day.
SAWM	The obligation to fast during Ramadan, which teaches Muslims self-discipline, in turn bringing them closer to Allah.
HAJJ	The pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca). The trip is compulsory at least once in a lifetime for Muslims as long as they are fit and healthy and can afford to make the trip.
ZAKAH	Charitable giving, encourages generosity and compassion.

The 10 Obligatory Acts

SALAH	Committing to daily prayers
SAWM	Fasting from just before dawn until sunset
ZAKAH	Giving a proportion of your wealth to help the poor
HAJJ	Pilgrimage to Mecca
JIHAD	The struggle to keep belief in Allah and follow his rules, to follow the Five Pillars of Islam successfully and to defend Islam
KHUMS	20% annual tax. This tax is paid on any profit earned by Shi'a Muslims. The money is split between charities supporting Islamic education and anyone who is descended from Muhammad who is in need.
AMR-BIL-MAROOF	Encouraging people to do what is good – anything that had been approved in Shari'ah law
NAHIL ANRIL MUNKAR	Forbidding evil by discouraging people from doing what is wrong
TAWALIA	Showing love. This includes both love for God and love for those who follow him
TABARRA	Disassociation from those who are God's enemies

SAWM

Ramadan	The most important month of the Islamic calendar. The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad during Ramadan. Many will recite the whole Qur'an over the 30 days of Ramadan. Muslims focus on fasting, charity and pleasing God.
Charity	Being hungry reminds them that the poor feel that way all the time. Many pay Zakah.
Fasting	During the daylight hours, Muslims will fast. Some get up before sunrise in order to eat. The fast is broken at sunset. The evening meal is shared with family and friends, followed by extra prayers and readings from the Qur'an. Smoking and having sex is also not allowed. Focus for the month is on God. Fasting purifies and cleanses the soul. Considerable amount of discipline needed.
Exempt	If Muslims cannot fast, they can make it up later if they can. Health problems, Pregnant women, Mother's nursing babies or children, children
The Night of Power	Marks the beginning of God's revelation to Muhammad. Angel Jirbil instructed Muhammad to start reading. Observing the night of power gives Muslims the benefits of worshipping for a thousand months. Muslims will try to keep awake throughout the night on each of the possible dates (of the night of power) to read and pray. "The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months."

SHAHADAH

'There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah (and Ali is the friend of God)'

- Muslims recite this in front of Muslim witnesses to join the Muslim community.
- It is said many times in a Muslim's life. When a baby is born, so the first thing they hear is the basic belief of the faith they are born into. If possible, it becomes the last words of a Muslim before they die.
- It is included in the daily prayers.

Significance

- * It is the foundation for the other four pillars since the other pillars are the Shahadah put into practice

SALAH

- Sunni Muslims are required to pray at five set times during the day. Shi'a Muslims combine the midday + afternoon prayers and the sunset + night prayers, so they pray 3 times a day.
- Prayer times change because of the sun, therefore differs from summer to winter.
- It's a part of the self-discipline required in submitting themselves to God.

Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims must be spiritually clean before they pray – Wuzu – as instructed by the Qur'an • Washing is done under running water, so they are clean. • Shoes are often also taken off as the mosque is the House of Allah, symbolising respect * It symbolises spiritual cleanliness rather than physical cleanliness. * It allows Muslims to focus fully on God in their prayers. 				
Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslim's must face the holy city of Mecca. • All Mosques have a Mihrab on the Qiblah wall, which shows the direction they face when praying. Sometimes Muslim's have a special compass to show the way. * Meaning that they are physically and mentally focusing on a place associated with God. 				
Timings	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Prayer at Home</th> <th>Prayer in the mosque</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fajr – just before sunrise • Zuhr – just after midday • Asr - afternoon • Mahrib – just after sunset • Isha - night </td> <td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosques have special carpets that look like rows of prayer mats, facing mihrab- giving them a suitable space. • Prayers are led by Imam who is at the front of the congregation but also facing the mihrab. • Men and women are separated by a curtain or they pray in separate rooms. The imam's voice is broadcasted in the women's room. </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Prayer at Home	Prayer in the mosque	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fajr – just before sunrise • Zuhr – just after midday • Asr - afternoon • Mahrib – just after sunset • Isha - night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mosques have special carpets that look like rows of prayer mats, facing mihrab- giving them a suitable space. • Prayers are led by Imam who is at the front of the congregation but also facing the mihrab. • Men and women are separated by a curtain or they pray in separate rooms. The imam's voice is broadcasted in the women's room.
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- * One of the 5 Pillars. God commanded them to prayer
- * Prayer gives a greater awareness of God. Motivates them to do God's will
- * Unites Muslims worldwide as they all pray the same
- * Reciting from the Qur'an reminds them of its importance
- * The actions of bowing reminds Muslims God is more important

The Rak'ah

Sequence of actions and recitations, changes slightly depending on which prayer it is used in.

Jumma Prayer

- The midday Friday prayer is considered special.
- All male Muslims are expected to attend; and women can if they want. Muslim's must leave their work and close their businesses to attend.
- The Imam delivers a sermon to remind Muslim's of their obligations and duties to God.

Standing	Muslims recite the first chapter from the Qur'an.
Bowing	Muslims say in Arabic "Glory be to my Lord who is the very greatest" three times. The bowing position shows they believe God to be great.
Upright position	They make a recitation praising God.
Kneel	They kneel with their forehead, nose, hands, knees and toes touching the floor. This is called prostration and shows complete obedience to God. They recite "How perfect is my Lord the most High"
Sitting	They sit while reciting 'God is the greatest' and after pause for a few seconds.
Prostrating	While prostrated they repeat 'God is the greatest'
Kneeling	Once the number of Rak'ah' are completed, while kneeling, Muslims turn their face to the right and the left. Reciting "Peace be upon you, and the mercy and blessings of God."
Personal Prayers	Can be added at the end of the final rak'ah. They do not have to be in Arabic or follow any set form.

ZAKAH

What?	Where did it come from?	How is it given?	Significance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Means to purify or cleanse. Giving alms (money to the poor) It is compulsory to give 2.5% of savings to the poor Many give it at the end of Ramadan. Muslims acknowledge that everything belongs to God. Wealth should remember God and therefore help those in need. 	<p>It is an instruction in the Qur'an. The Qur'an does not specify how much should be given, the percentage was worked out at a later date by Muslim scholars.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only Muslim's with a greater saving than the nisab (a figure) are required to give. It can be donated directly to a charity such as Islamic Relief or Muslim Aid. It can also be put into a collection box in the mosque to be distributed among the poor. Muslims are encouraged to voluntarily give their money and time to charity at any point of the year called Sadaqah. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It frees people from desire and teaches self-discipline and honesty. Giving helps purify the soul, removing selfishness and greed. Duty imposed by God. Sign of a true Muslim. Gives good attitude towards money. Teaches people to share. Strengthens community by making the rich support the poor. Links to prayer- feel concern for others and puts concern into action.

Jihad

- Refers to the struggle against evil, either as an individual or as the collective faith of Islam.
- Muslims should strive to improve themselves and the societies in which they live in a way that God would approve of.
- Links back to the time of Muhammad.

Greater Jihad	Lesser Jihad	Holy War Criteria
The personal inward struggle to live in line with the teachings of their faith	The outward struggle to defend Islam from threat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declared by a fair religious leader. Cannot be used to make people convert to Islam. Must be in response to threat to the faith, Must not be used to gain territory or wealth. Must be the last resort after all other methods have been tried first.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observing the five pillars is a required part of greater Jihad. It is the constant struggle to purify one's heart from all evil traits. Must devote their lives to God and avoid temptations and distractions. Some will learn the Qur'an by heart which requires a great discipline and practice. Some make great efforts to improve life for people in the community. Zakah and Sadaqah. They aim to deepen their relationship with God. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered less important than greater Jihad. Muslims who are persecuted should protect their freedom to practice their faith. The Qur'an has sometimes allowed extreme violence in the name of lesser Jihad. Some believe behaving in such a violent way is justified in the context of war. However it does not justify terrorism that targets innocent civilians. Fighting for a religious course is sometimes referred to as a Holy war. 	
	Never allowed to justify terrorism- this is not greater jihad nor lesser. It does not bring you closer to God therefore this would not be accepted by 'true Muslims'.	

Id-UI-Fitr and Id-UI-Adha

	The Origins	Why is the festival important?	How is it celebrated?
Id-UI-Fitr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prophet Ibrahim noticed other festivals being celebrated in Madinah, Muhammad said God had appointed two other days that are better to be celebrated. Festival of breaking the fast. Known as lesser Eid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Celebrated the end of Ramadan. Muslims thank God for giving them the strength to help them fast for the month. Give thanks to God for guidance and wisdom from the Qur'an. Remembers that the Qur'an was revealed during the month of Ramadan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 1,2 or 3 days. Muslims gather in Mosques or large outdoor areas to say special prayers. The imam's sermon reminds Muslims that they should forgive and settle disputes. They help the poor. Women decorate their hands with henna. Special biscuits are made. Men go to mosques. Visit family members. Children are given gifts.
Id-UI-Adha	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Eid or festival of sacrifice. Remembers and honours prophet Ibrahim who was willing to sacrifice his son. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is a part of Hajj but is celebrated all over the world. Reminds Muslim's of the importance of sacrifice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lasts for 4 days. People visit family and friends. Enjoy festival meals. Go to the mosque where a sermon is given about sacrifice. On Hajj many Muslims will sacrifice an animal. Meat is given as charity People in Britain will give money instead of meat to support those in need. Cards and gifts are given.

HAJJ

Preparation	Before Hajj, pilgrims enter a sacred state called Ihram. It involves ritual washing, praying and putting on Ihram clothing. Men dress in 2 pieces of white. Women wear a single colour that cover their whole body apart from their face. * It is a sign of equality and purity.
Mecca	Pilgrims circle the Ka'aba 7 times - Tawaf. They touch the black stone or raise their hand to acknowledge it. Muslim's circle and recite ' At your command Lord, at your command ' * Ka'aba is the oldest shrine to Allah on Earth
Zamzam	Drink water from the Zamzam well, take some home and dip their garments in it to be used at their burial.
Hills of Safa and Marwah	They walk between them 7 times * Hajar searched for water and as a reward, Allah produced the Zamzam well – Muslims are saying that they will not give up when their lives are difficult
Arafat	Mount Arafat is the Mount of Mercy. They stand from noon to sunset meditating, praying and asking for forgiveness. * Muhammad gave his final sermon here * They walk away feeling they have been given a second chance
Muzdalifah	On their way to the camp, they collect 49 small pebbles for Mina * Prepare their minds for their own battle with Shaytan
Mina	They throw pebbles at the 3 Jamarat which represent Shaytan . Many sacrifice an animal here as a part of Eid ul Adha – Qurbani. * Represent Ibrahim rejecting Shaytan and Hajar refusing to stop searching for water, and Ismail volunteering to be sacrificed
Madinah	Some travel to visit the Prophet's Mosque – contains the tomb of Muhammad and some early Muslim leaders.
Mecca	The tawaf is repeated

The festival of Ashura

Sunni

- The Day of Atonement.
- It remembers the day when the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt.
- Some believe it remembers the day Noah left the ark after the flood.

Celebrations

- Some believe that Muhammad nominated it to be a day of fasting.
- Show kindness to family and the poor.
- Recite prayers and learn from Islamic scholars.

Shi'a

- Remember the death of Husayn (Grandson of Muhammad) in Karbala in Iraq.
- The battle was fought between Husayn and his supporters and the army of Caliph. With 70 men, women, children. Their camp was set on fire and their bodies were trampled upon by the horses of their enemy, he and his male followers were killed.

Celebrations

- A day of great sorrow because of the tragic events of Karbala. Day of mourning- reading out the poems that retell the story.
- Public holiday in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan.
- Some beat and cut themselves to connect with Husayn's sufferings and death. In London, people gather in the street and some men beat themselves as a mourning ritual. Some believe they should shed blood
- Some will go on pilgrimage to the tomb of Husayn

Problems: Some religious leaders have condemned self-harm and believe that it is wrong to harm the body God gave them. UK leaders encourage people to donate blood instead.