

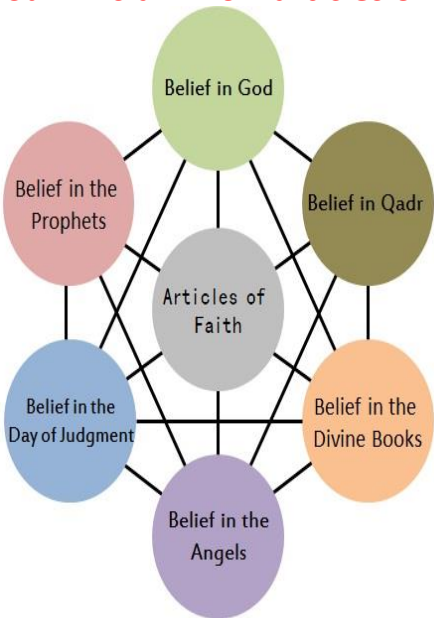


Islamic Beliefs



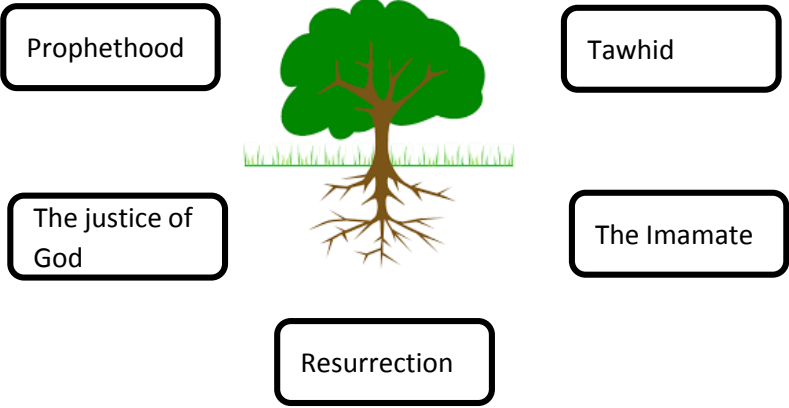
Key Words	Definition
Akhirah	Everlasting life after death
Allah	Arabic name for God
Angels	Spiritual beings believed to act as messengers of God
Day of Judgement	A time when the world will end and every soul will be judged by God and either rewarded or punished.
Imam	1. A person who leads communal prayer. 2. In Shi'a Islam the title given to Ali and his successors.
Imamate	The divine appointment of the imams.
Jibril	The Arabic name for Gabriel, the archangel who brought God's message to the prophets, particularly Muhammad.
Mikhail	The Arabic name for Michael, the archangel of mercy who rewards good deeds and provides nourishment to people.
Predestination	The idea that God knows or determines everything that will happen.
Prophet	A person who proclaims the message of God.
Prophethood	When God makes someone a prophet to communicate his message to people.
Qur'an	The holy book revealed to Muhammad by the angel Jibril;
Resurrection	Rising from the dead or returning to life.
Risalah	The belief that prophets are an important channel of communication between God and human.
Shi'a	Muslims who believe in the Imamate; Ali was the rightful successor to Muhammad
Sunni	Muslims who believe Abu Bakr was the rightful successor to Muhammad
Sunnah	The teachings and deeds of Muhammad
Tawhid	The Oneness and unity of God

Sunni Islam – Six articles of faith



- **Sunni** are the majority of the Muslim community.
- When Muhammad died they elected Abu Bakr as their leader.
- They believe in the authority of the Qur'an and Hadiths, interpreted by leading scholars.

Shi'a Islam – Five roots of Usul ad-Din



- **Shi'as** believe Muhammad appointed Ali as his successor and he became the first **imam**.
- **Shi'as** have their own interpretation of Islamic laws and only accept sayings of Muhammad that have been passed down through Ali.

Sunni and Shi'a Islam have many things in common such as belief in God, prophethood of Muhammad, guidance of the Qur'an and following the Sunnah. They differ in interpretations of certain aspects of belief and law.

The Nature and Oneness and God

“Say, ‘He is God the One, God the eternal. He begot no one nor was He begotten. No one is comparable to Him.’ “

TAWHID - one of the important beliefs in Islam : the belief that there is only one God. It is repeated daily in the Shahadah ; “There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet”.



God is unique. No one can picture God, there is nothing to compare him to. This is why there are no images or pictures of God in mosques, books or homes.

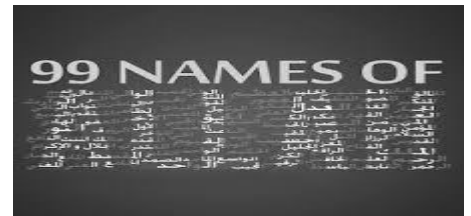
Supremacy of God’s Will – God is the one and only creator and controller of everything, nothing happens unless He allows it. This means that **Muslims must accept everything that happens, trust in God’s good intentions.**



Inshallah- God willing

The word ‘Muslim’ means ‘one who has submitted to God’ so a Muslim tries both to accept God’s will and to live according to God’s will in everyday life.

“The Most Excellent Names belong to God: use them to call on Him.”



“He is with you wherever you are.”

“He is above all comprehension.”

Transcendent - God is beyond all things. He is not limited by the rules of nature or time

Immanent - the idea that God is active in the world.

Omnipotent – all powerful, God is the creator, sustainer and owner of all things.



“This is God, your Lord, **there is no God but Him, the Creator of all things**, so worship Him; **He is in charge of everything**. No vision can take Him in but He takes in all vision. He is the All Subtle, the **All Aware.**” Qur’an 6

Beneficent – all loving. This is linked to him being **merciful** – understanding people’s suffering, caring for them and forgiving if they are truly sorry.



Fair and Just – He treats people equally and asks people do this too. He will judge with fairness on the Day of Judgement. (This is **Adalat** in Shi’a Islam).



How these beliefs **influence** Muslims

- Belief in **tawhid and the supremacy of** Allah means Muslims will give their whole life to the will of Allah and they will obey all commands. They understand that everything they have is due to Allah and they are completely dependent on Him. This means they should be humble in front of Allah, they should not boast.
- Belief that Allah is just makes Muslims feel they have to be just to their fellow man too, they will be judged on their actions.
- Nothing can be placed above Allah, this is **shirk** and the worst of all sins.
- Muslims believe they must trust Allah, they have nothing to fear even if they do not understand His plan.

Angels

What are they?

Angels bring the word of God to the prophets, for Sunni Muslims they are part of the Six Articles of Faith but Shi's Muslims believe in them too. They are supernatural, created by God from light. They are pure and sinless and have no free will.

What do they do?

Angels watch over humans, some are guardian angels who take care of everyone throughout their lives; others record everything a person does in a 'book of deeds' ready for Judgement Day. The angel Israfil will blow a trumpet to announce the Day of Judgement. The Angel of Death will take people's souls to God. They can take on human form when God wants to pass on a message e.g angels appeared as men to Ibrahim and Mary (Maryam).

Teachings

"Praise be to God, creator of the heavens and earth, who made angels messengers with two, three, four, pairs of wings."

"We do not descend except for the command of our Lord."

"Each person has angels before him and behind, watching over him by God's command."

Jibril

An archangel with higher status, a special messenger. He passed on the Qur'an to Muhammad in a blaze of light.



Mika'il

An archangel, of mercy, assigned to reward good people. Sends rain, thunder and lightning, brings nourishment to the earth.



Predestination

This can be compared to the example of a caterpillar not knowing that it will become a butterfly. It is programmed to eat a lot and become a chrysalis. We know it will become a butterfly.



"Only what God has decreed will happen to us. He is our Master: let the believers put their trust in God."

Many Muslims do not see any problems with the supremacy of God's will and the freedom to act and freely make choices because God is outside time. He has created it.

A mother will give a choice to a small boy whether to eat peas or ice cream, she knows he will choose ice cream but he has been given the choice.



The Day of Judgement

Muslims believe that on the Day of Judgement God will judge humans on everything they have done in their lives. God has given people free will so they are responsible for the choices they have made and will be rewarded or punished.

Life is a test

How these beliefs **influence** Muslims

Belief in predestination would make some Muslims trust that God knows best. God is omniscient and has planned your life for you, even if you don't understand why some things happen in your life.

Muslims would try to help others when life is difficult. They could donate to a charity such as Islamic Relief, knowing that God will judge them on their actions on Judgement day.



Life after death - Akirah

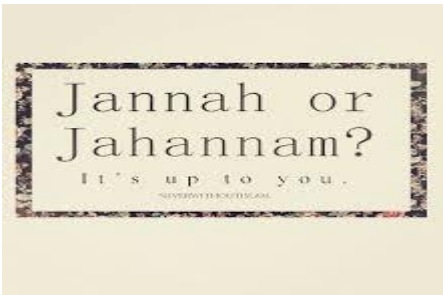
Perfect peace and happiness can be reached by living a good life on earth. Death is not the end but the start of a new stage (**Akhirah**).

Two angels are sent to question the dead – there will be rewards or punishment.

On the **Day of Judgement** the present world will be transformed into a new world – **Akirah** – and everyone who has ever lived will be raised from the dead and judged. New bodies will be given and people are separated into those who have done good works and those who have not.

Many Muslims believe that after death the person still has a conscious existence in the grave. They enter a state of waiting 'barzakh' which means 'barrier'. No one can cross the barrier to amend things they have done or warn the living.

Jannah
Heaven – a garden of happiness. "a reward for what they used to do"
Qur'an 56



Jahannam
Hell – a place of fire and great torment. "They will dwell amid scorching wind and scalding water..."
Qur'an 56



Are these real places?
Some Muslims think these are literal descriptions.
Others say they are symbolic of being either with or without God.



How these beliefs influence Muslims



Belief in life after death encourages Muslims to be responsible and to face up to their wrongs. It reminds them to avoid sin and do the right thing. It encourages faith in justice – people will not "get away with" their wrongdoing and people who have suffered will have something better to look forward to.

"Grant us good things in this world and in the life to come." Qur'an Surah 7

Prophethood

Muslims believe God has chosen prophets to teach mankind the right way to live. They are an important channel of communication between God and humans : this belief is called **risalah**.

Muhammad said there have been more than 124,000 prophets, sent to every part of the world. They set an example of how to live and many Muslims name their children after them.



Adam

Believed to be the first man and prophet. He and Hawwa (Eve) were tricked into eating fruit from the forbidden tree so were thrown out of the Garden of Bliss. He was given understanding and he passed this on. He was the first to learn to plant seeds, harvest crops and cook food. God told him how to bury the dead, what food to eat and how to repent.



Ibrahim

An example to others, obedient to God, descended from Muhammad. He refused to worship idols and destroyed their images which meant he was to be punished by fire. He was rescued by a miracle and many were inspired by him, following his message that there was only one God.. He rebuilt the Ka'aba in Makkah and was willing to sacrifice his son when tested.

"God took Ibrahim as a friend."
Qur'an 4



"he is God's messenger and the seal of the prophets."
Qur'an 33

"God and His angels bless the Prophet so,,, bless him too and give him greetings of peace." Qur'an 33

Other important prophets are :
Musa (Moses)
Dawud (David)
Isa (Jesus)

Muhammad

The last and greatest of the prophets. Orphaned young, brought up by his uncle, he became an honest trader. He often meditated on Mt Hira and one day the angel Jibril came to him with a message – the first revelation that combined with many more to become the Qur'an. He spent his life preaching and setting an example. He and his followers fled Makkah (the Hajirah –departure) and the Islamic calendar starts from this date. He returned to Makkah and conquered it, established Muslim law and reclaimed the Kaa'ba. His teachings and practices (**Sunnah**) are recorded in the **Hadith**.

The Imamate

Sunni Islam

Sunni Muslims believe Abu Bakr was the right leader after the Prophet's death. They have a lot of respect for the first leaders or caliphs (Omar is a popular boys name)

Shia Islam

Shia Muslims believe Ali should have been the first leader and they don't recognise the other 3 caliphs as proper leaders. They say the successors of Ali are **Imams**.

The Twelver branch of Shia Islam believes there have been 12 imams, the last is Muhammad al-Mahdi who is hidden on the earth. The imams are faultless and give divine guidance. They are protected by Allah from committing any sin in order to keep the religion true and pure. They are the final authority on all matters of faith and law.



The Qur'an



Muslims believe the Qur'an is the direct word of God revealed to Muhammad via the angel Jibril. It is the only scripture for all times, all people, all places; it is without error and above all other books. If it is read in the original Arabic then God's words are spoken directly.

The Qur'an :

- Influences a person throughout their life – birth, marriage, death, prayers
- Contains the basics of worship
- Contains the **Shariah Law** and social systems
- Explains creation and other ultimate questions about the purpose of life and what happens when we die.
- Reveals scientific ideas
- Provides personal and spiritual guidance for all life's situations and challenges

The word 'Qur'an' means 'recital'.

It has 114 **surahs** (chapters)

The other holy books

Holy books revealed to mankind before the Qur'an are believed to be earlier forms of **revelation** and so do not have the same final authority. However, they are still highly respected by Muslims, they gave important moral guidance to the people at the time.



The Torah (Tawrat)

Believed to be revealed to Moses (Musa). Contains many good teachings and laws, mentioned 18 times in the Qur'an.

The Psalms (Zabur)

The Psalms were revealed to David (Dawud). 150 songs, prayers, psalms inspired by Allah.

The Scrolls of Abraham (Ibrahim)

Lost, thought to be the earliest scriptures.

The Gospel (Injil)

The original gospel taught by Jesus (Isa), now lost. Not to be confused with the four gospels in the New Testament. **"We sent Jesus.... gave him the gospel.....a guide and lesson for those to take heed of God". Qur'an 5**

Practice questions

Two mark questions

- Give two Muslim beliefs about 'akirah'.
- Name two of the prophets of Islam
- Give two reasons why the Qur'an is important.
- Give two of the roles of angels in Islam
- Name two of the books of authority for Islam

Four mark questions

- Explain two ways in which beliefs about the afterlife influences Muslims today.
- Explain two ways in which beliefs about Allah being just might influence Muslims today
- Explain two ways in which a belief in the Supremacy of God's will influences Muslims today
- Explain two ways in which believing in Risalah might influence Muslims today

Five mark questions

- Explain two Muslim teachings about paradise.
- Explain two Muslim teachings about the imamate in Shi'a Islam.
- Explain two Muslim teachings about creation.
- Explain two Muslim teachings about life after death.
- Explain two Muslim teachings about angels.
- *Refer to scripture or sacred writing in your answer*

Twelve mark questions

- "Muslims should be more concerned about this life than the next."
- "For Muslims, following the example of Muhammad is more important than following the teachings of the Qur'an".
- "Belief in angels has no impact on the life of Muslims today."
- *"Evaluate this statement. In your answer you should:*
- *refer to Muslim teaching*
- *give developed arguments to support this statement*
- *give developed arguments to support a different point of view*
- *reach a justified conclusion*