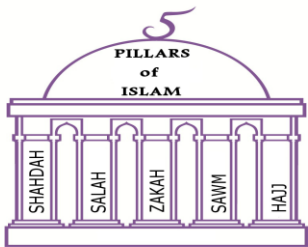


Islamic Practices



Key Words	Definition
Day of Ashura	A festival that is important for Shia Muslims who remember the battle of Karbala and the death of Husayn.
Greater jihad	The personal inward struggle of all Muslims to live in line with the teachings of their faith.
Hajj	The annual pilgrimage to Makkah that every Muslim should try to make at least once in their life.
Hajji	Someone who has complete Hajj.
Holy War	Fighting for a religious cause or God, controlled by a religious leader.
Id-ul-Fitr	A Muslim festival that celebrates the end of Ramadan.
Id-ul-Adha	A Muslim festival that celebrates the prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son for God.
Jihad	A struggle against evil; it may be an inward, personal struggle or outward, collective struggle.
Jummah Prayer	A weekly communal prayer performed after midday on Friday, which includes a sermon.
Ka'aba	The black cube shaped building in the centre of the Grand Mosque in Makkah.
Khums	A 20% tax paid by Shia Muslims on their excess income.
Lesser jihad	The outward struggle to defend one's faith, family and country from threat.
Mihrab	A niche in a wall that indicates the direction of Makkah.
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.
Pilgrimage	A journey by a believer to a holy site for religious reasons; an act of worship and devotion.
Quibla Wall	The wall in the mosque that contains the mihrab.
Rak'ah	A sequence of movements in ritual prayer.
Ramadan	The ninth month of the Muslim calendar when Muslims have to fast from sunrise to sunset.
Sadaqah	Good actions or voluntary payment done for charity.
Salah	Prayer with and in worship of God.
Shahadah	The Muslim declaration of faith.
The Five Pillars	The five most important duties for all Muslims: to believe, to pray, to give to charity, to fast and to go on pilgrimage.
The Ten Obligatory Acts	The ten most important duties for Shia Muslims, which include the Five Pillars.
Wudu	Ritual washing before prayer
Zakah	Purification of wealth by giving 2.5 % of savings each year to the poor.



The Five Pillars are central to Muslim practices and have a great impact on daily life. They support the main principles and beliefs of Islam just as pillars are used to support a building. They are the key to living the perfect Muslim life and allow the community to show their obedience and dedication to God.

The Ten Obligatory Acts are followed by **Shia** Muslims. They include all Five Pillars except Shahadah (which is covered by some of the additional acts.)

- The Ten Obligatory Acts in Shi'a Islam**
 1. Salah - prayer
 2. Sawm - fasting
 3. Zakah - charitable giving
 4. Khums - a 20% tax on all income once expenses are deducted
 5. Hajj - pilgrimage
 6. Jihad – the struggle to maintain faith and defend Islam
 7. Amr-bil-Maruf - encourage good
 8. Nahi Anil Munkar - discourage evil
 9. Tawallah - to be loving towards the friends of God
 10. Tabarra – disassociating from the enemies of God.

Shahadah

“There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger.”

The Shahadah is the basic belief in Islam. It is recited when a baby is born so is the first thing they hear. It is included in the daily prayers and so is said at the start and the end of the day. If possible it should be the last thing said or heard by a Muslim before they die. It is the foundation for the other four pillars.

Many **Shia** Muslims add an extra phrase : “and Ali is the friend of God.” this shows their belief that Ali was the true successor of Muhammad.



LONDON United Kingdom	
Fajr	05:20 AM
Sunrise	07:11 AM
Dhuhr	12:48 PM
Asr	03:45 PM
Maghrib	06:24 PM
Isha	08:08 PM

Salah

All Muslims must pray at five set times of the day, from sunrise to sunset. The times change depending on the country and the time of year.

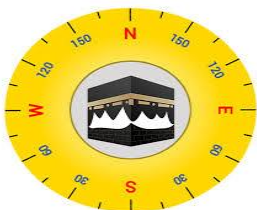
Shia Muslims combine the midday and afternoon prayers and the sunset and night prayers so they pray three times each day.



It is important to be clean before praying (both spiritually and physically) so Muslims wash beforehand. This is **wudu** and involves washing or wiping various parts of the face and body including hands, mouth, elbows and feet. The mosque provides running water and separate rooms for men and women.

Shia Muslims wipe the front of their head instead of their whole head as **Sunni s** do and they wipe the top of their feet instead of washing them.

“You who believe, when you are about to pray, wash your faces and your hands up to your elbows, wipe your heads, wash your feet up to the ankles and, if required, wash your whole body”. Qur’an 5: 6



Muslims should face Makkah when praying. They may have a compass or app to show them the way and in a mosque the **mihrab** in the **qibla wall** shows the exact direction.

Men and women pray separately in the mosque so they concentrate on Allah but many women perform salah in the home.

Each salah is made up of a set sequence of actions and prayers , the **rak’ah**. This changes slightly with each prayer but involves standing, bowing (showing the belief in the greatest of God) kneeling, prostrating (putting the forehead to the ground as a sign of submission). They must be done in Arabic and with full concentration.

Shia Muslims touch their foreheads to a clay or wooden tablet as they believe Muhammad advised they should put their foreheads to something natural as a reminder they came from the earth and will return to it after death.

Friday is the most important day of the week for Muslims and the midday prayer , the **Jummah prayer**, is special. All male Muslims are expected to attend.

“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

Why is prayer important?

- Muslims believe Allah has commanded them to pray and Muhammad has shown them how.
- It means they can communicate directly with Allah and have a personal relationship with Him; develop a greater awareness of Allah which in turn motivates them to do His will.
- It unites Muslims with the **Ummah** (worldwide Muslim community) as they all pray in the same way. They can go into a mosque anywhere in the world and join in.
- The actions of bowing and prostrating remind Muslims that Allah is greater and more important than they are.

Zakah



Zakah means giving money to the poor. Wealth is considered a blessing and it must be used responsibly so Zakah involves redistributing wealth. 'Zakah' means to purify so observing this pillar helps to purify the soul and remove selfishness and greed. Muslims who have enough savings (more than an agreed figure called the **nisab**) have to give up 2.5% It can be given to a charity, a mosque or to individuals to help relieve poverty and help those in need.



Click here to pay your
2.5% Zakah

“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.” Qur’an 9:60



As well as giving Zakah, Muslims are encouraged to give time and money to charity at other times – **Sadaqah**.



Shia Muslims believe they should give an additional 20% tax on any excess income. This is **Khums**. Half of this goes to religious leaders to be spent as needed on religious matters and the rest to charity or the poor.

Why is Zakah important?

- Giving Zakah is a duty imposed by God so is a sign of a true Muslim.
- It is a form of worship and links with prayers. It is a way of putting concern for others into action.
- Zakah strengthens communities by making the rich support the poor.
- It teaches Muslims not to be selfish or greedy, to share their good fortune.

Sawm

Sawm is the Arabic word for ‘fasting’. During the month of **Ramadan** all Muslim men and women of good health must observe fasts from sunrise to sunset. This is because it is believed that this is the month that the Qur’an started to be revealed to Muhammad. The fast is broken slowly with dates and then a larger meal – the **iftar meal**, often shared with family, friends or the larger community.



In Ramadan the whole focus is on God so Muslims are also forbidden to smoke or have sex during day light hours. They should try and read the Qur’an in sections over the month and avoid bad thoughts or actions. It is a time of self-discipline but gives Muslims an opportunity to show they can sacrifice their physical needs and also become more aware of the hunger of others so make more effort to support charity.



Not all Muslims have to fast during Ramadan: pregnant or breastfeeding women, children, those who are ill, travellers, the elderly. Many may make up for it later or pay money to charity instead.



The Night of Power is an important festival that marks the time that Muhammad received the Qur'an from Allah. The exact date is not known but is believed to be one of the odd-numbered dates in the second half of Ramadan.

"Read! In the name of your Lord who created: He created man from a clinging form. Read! Your Lord is the most Bountiful One who taught by the pen, who taught man what he did not know.." Qur'an 96:1-5

The Night of Power is the holiest night of the year – "**better than a thousand months**" Qur'an 97 – so Muslims try to keep awake throughout the night on each of the possible dates, praying and reading the Qur'an.



Why is Ramadan important?

- Muslims believe fasting will help them get closer to Allah and helps remind them of his commandments.
- Experiencing hunger and thirst helps Muslims appreciate the challenges for the poor.
- It can teach self discipline and gives Muslims a time to reflect on what they say and do, how they behave and teach others, and try to change for the better.
- Ramadan helps Muslims feel part of the Ummah as they will all be fasting together.
- It encourages forgiveness: Muslims should use this month to forgive those that have wronged them.

Hajj

Hajj is the **pilgrimage** to Makkah. It should be made at least once in a Muslim's lifetime as long as they can afford it and are healthy enough to go. Some religious communities give financial support to help poor Muslims make the pilgrimage. It takes place in the Muslim month of Dhul-Hijjah and those that complete it are known as **Hajjis**.

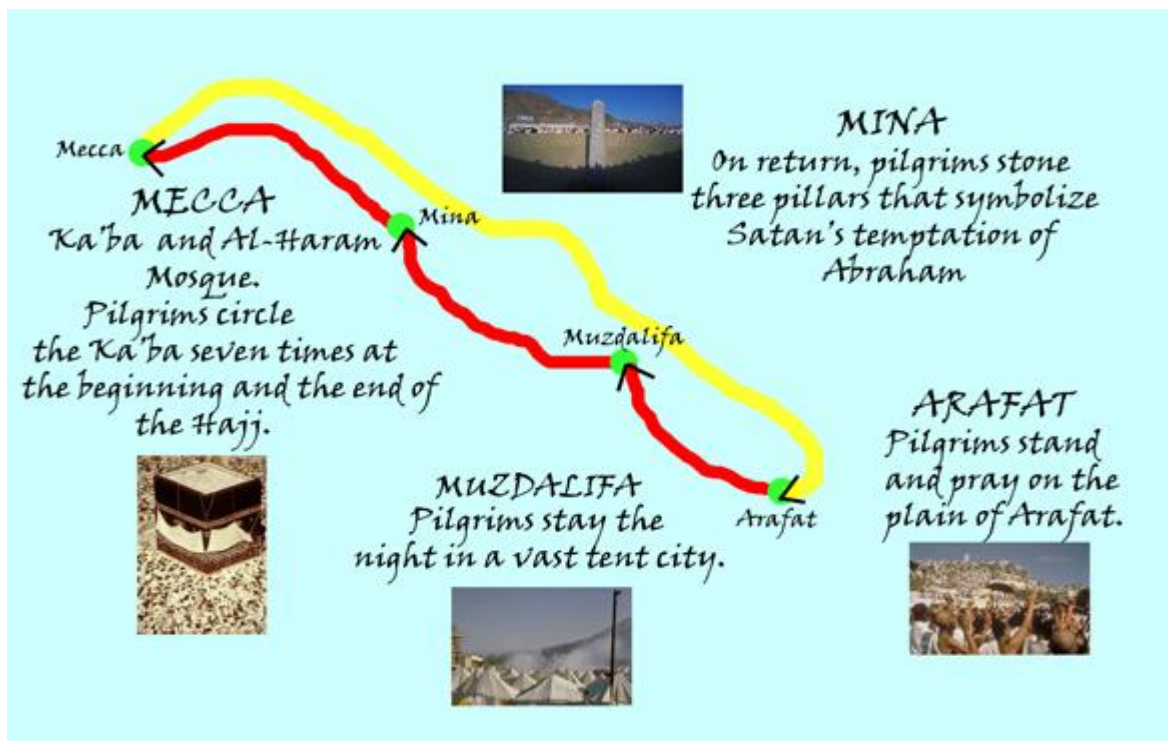


"Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to undertake it." Qur'an 3: 97

Muslims believe that around 4000 years ago the prophet Ibrahim was told by God to take his wife Hajira and son Ishmael to Arabia and leave them in the desert. When their supplies ran out Hajira ran frantically between the two of hills Safa and Marwa before collapsing. The spring of Zamzam sprang up at this spot. Ibrahim returned and built the **Ka'aba**, as a place of worship to the one true God.

Over the years the city of Makkah became established in this place but people became used to worshipping idols, many of them stored in the Ka'aba.

Muhammad was born in Makkah and it was here that he received the first revelations from God. After years spent in Medina he returned in 628 CE with a large group of Muslims – the first pilgrimage to Makkah. The route of the Hajj reflects these stories.



All pilgrims wear simple white clothing – **Ihram** – so they are equal and pure before Allah. Putting on the two sheets of white cloth symbolises entering a sacred state.



Why is Hajj important?

- Hajj is a chance for all Muslims to leave the distractions of the world behind for a short while and focus on their own spirituality and relationship with God.
- It is an opportunity for a person's sins to be forgiven, the time spent at Arafat is a foretaste of the Day of Judgement and makes Muslims face their wrongdoing.
- It makes a Hajji a better person, they are more aware that God is with them and watching them.
- It shows self discipline, it is physically and mentally demanding.
- Hajj emphasises unity and equality. Ihram clothing demonstrates there is no distinction between rich and poor and the thousands of tents the pilgrims stay in at Mina strengthen the feeling of brotherhood and sisterhood.
- It reminds Muslims of the faith and examples set by Ibrahim, Hajira and Ishmael.

Jihad

Jihad means '**struggle**'. It is one of the Ten Obligatory Acts for Shia Muslims and is important for Sunnis too. Muslims strive to improve themselves and their societies in a way God would approve of. There are two kinds.

Greater jihad is the personal **inward** struggle of all Muslims to follow Allah's teachings and become a better Muslim. It means they must complete the Five Pillars, put God above everything else, avoid the distractions of alcohol, drugs, greed, and jealousy and always help the poor. This will help them improve spiritually and deepen their relationship with God.



Lesser Jihad is the **outward** struggle to defend Islam from threat. In the early days of Islam Muslims had to fight to protect themselves from persecution. The Qur'an reflects this struggle which is why it refers to Islam defending itself against its enemies.

Fighting for a religious cause is sometimes called a **holy war** and this can only take place if these criteria are met:

- Authorised by a fair religious leader
- In response to a threat to the faith (suffering because of your beliefs have reached an extreme level)
- Not to gain wealth or territory
- Not to convert people
- A last resort
- Innocent civilians including women, children and the elderly are not targeted.

Lesser jihad and holy war CANNOT be used to justify terrorist acts and they have been misinterpreted by some groups in modern times. Muslim scholars and clerics across the world have been very clear in their condemnation of these people.

Amman Declaration 2005 (200 leading scholars) :

"We denounce and condemn extremism, radicalism and fanaticism...Islam is a religion of noble character ...that strives for the good of the people, their happiness....a religion that can only be defended in ways that are ethical.

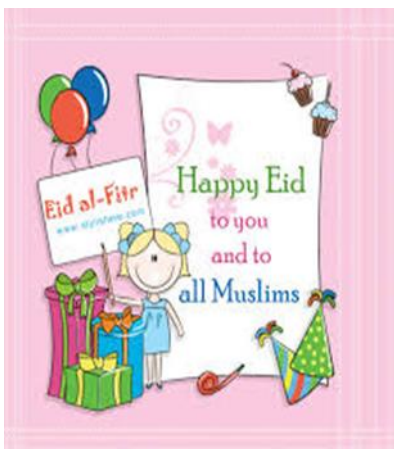
June 5th 2017 130 Imams and religious leaders issued a response to the London Bridge terrorist attack : "We will not perform the traditional Islamic funeral prayer over the perpetrators and we also urge fellow imams and religious authorities to withdraw such a privilege. This is because such indefensible actions are completely at odds with the lofty teachings of Islam."



2007 Islamabad:

Religious scholars from all schools of thought issued a **fatwa** (religious decree) that declared suicide attacks, armed insurgency against a state and use of force in the name of imposing Shariah as **'Haram'** or forbidden in Islam.

Festivals



Id-ul- Fitr

Id-ul-Fitr is celebrated at the end of Ramadan and is known as 'the festival of the breaking of the fast.' Also the Sugar Feast, Sweet Festival or Lesser Eid. Muslims thank God for the strength God has given them to get through the month and for the guidance and wisdom revealed in the Qur'an. There are special prayers and sermons remind people to forgive and reconcile and help the poor.





Id-ul-Fitr is a joyful time, with new clothes, presents, processions and special foods. Often lots of sharing with other faiths. Celebrated by both Sunnis and Shias.

Id-ul- Adha

Id-ul-Fitr is the festival of sacrifice or Greater Eid and it remembers the story of Ibrahim who was willing to sacrifice his son Ishmael on God's command. God stopped him from carrying it out, this was a test of his loyalty and obedience. Muslims are reminded of these qualities and the importance of sacrifice, there are communal prayers, family visits etc. In Muslim countries an animal may be sacrificed, a third kept, a third given to poor, a third to friends and neighbours. In Britain the meat is bought and money may be given to poor instead.

It is marked at the end of Hajj but celebrated all over the world by both Sunnis and Shias.



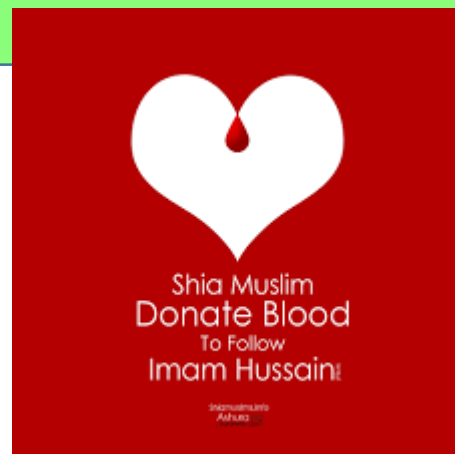
Ashura -Sunni

Sunni Muslims mark Ashura as the Day of Atonement and remember the Israelites escaping from Egypt with Musa (Moses). It is a voluntary fast day.

Ashura - Shia

The Shia festival of Ashura is very important for Shias, a day of mourning remembering the martyrdom of Muhammad's grandson Husayn at the Battle of Karbala in 680 CE along with over 70 friends and relatives.

People wear black, have processions and passion plays, express grief and some may beat or cut themselves. In Britain Shias are urged to donate blood instead. Many visit the shrine of Huseyn. It is a reminder of suffering but has been marked by political conflict in recent times.



The Ten Obligatory Acts

Shia Muslims have a duty to fulfil these ten acts as best they can. Four of them are the same as the Five Pillars. They are way of showing commitment to Islam through words and deeds. They are a way to connect with Allah, purify their hearts, help the poor and promote a better society. They are a means for Shia Muslims to be blessed with a good afterlife.

The Ten Obligatory Acts in Shi'a Islam

1. Salah - prayer
2. Sawm - fasting
3. Zakah - charitable giving
4. Khums - a 20% tax on all income once expenses are deducted. Supports Muslim education and needy descendants of Muhammad
5. Hajj - pilgrimage
6. Jihad – the struggle to maintain faith and defend Islam
7. Amr-bil-Maruf - encourage good Nahi Anil Munkar - discourage evil
8. Tawallah - to be loving towards the friends of God
9. Tabarra – disassociating from the enemies of God.

Practice questions

Two mark questions

- Give two reasons why Shahadah is the first pillar.
- Name two of the Five Pillars of Islam
- Give two ways that Muslims can demonstrate jihad .
- Give two ways in which Khums can be given.
- Name two of the Ten Obligatory Acts.

- **Four mark questions**

- Explain two contrasting Muslim views about the importance of sawm.
- Explain two ways in which Muslim beliefs about jihad influence Muslims today.
- Explain two contrasting ways in which Muslims celebrate Eid ul-Adha.
- Explain two contrasting ways in which Muslims celebrate Ashura.

- **Five mark questions**

- Explain two ways in which Muslims celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr
- Explain two ways in which Muslims view Salah as important.
- Explain two ways in which Muslims think Zakah is important.
- *Refer to scripture or sacred writing in your answer*

Twelve mark questions

- “Prayer is more beneficial than going on Hajj..”
- “Shahadah is the most important of the Five Pillars”.
- “It is important that Muslims celebrate their festivals in Great Britain 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*