

Islam Beliefs

Key beliefs

1.	How many gods do Muslims believe in?	One, Allah
2.	What is the Qur'an?	Muslim holy book. Infallible speech of God.
3.	Whose teachings do Muslims also follow?	Prophet Muhammed
4.	How many traditions is Islam divided into?	Two traditions - Sunni and Shi'a
5.	Who did Allah reveal the Qur'an to?	Muhammad
6.	Who did Muslims have to lead them after Muhammed died?	Muslims chose a new leader (caliph) - the next four caliphs were Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali.
7.	What are the six articles of faith in Sunni Islam?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allah is the one and only god (Tawhid) 2. Belief in angels (Malaikah) 3. Belief in holy books 4. Belief in Allah's prophets (Nubuwwah) 5. Belief in the Day of Judgement 6. Belief that Allah knows and decides everything that's going to happen (predestination - al-Qadr)
8.	What are the five articles of faith in Shi'a Islam?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allah is the one and only god (Tawhid) 2. Belief in divine justice (Adalat) 3. Belief in prophet hood (Nubuwwah) 4. Belief in the authority of imams (Imamah) 5. Belief in the Day of the Resurrection (Ma'ad)

Characteristics of Allah and prophets

9	What four reasons suggest that Tawhid is central to Islam?	The word Allah means the one (ie the only god); saying Allah is the only one is the first part of the shahadah; shirk (believing in other gods is the worst sin) and according to the hadith Muhammad said that when telling non-Muslims about Islam, the first thing Muslims should mention is Tawhid.
10	What are the 6 characteristics of Allah?	Allah is merciful, omnipotent, benevolent, just, immanent and transcendent.
11	How did Allah get messages to humans?	Via angels who then gave messages to human prophets.
12	What do Muslims believe Prophets did?	Perform miracles to prove they were really prophets.
13	Who was the first Prophet?	Adam (he was also the first man). He was considered to be the first Muslim. Some believe he built the Ka'aba.
14	Was Ibrahim a prophet?	Yes. He proved his faith by being willing to sacrifice his own son Isma'il.
15	Was Isma'il a prophet?	Yes. He helped build the Ka'aba.
16	Who was Muhammad?	A prophet. One day when meditating, Allah sent angel Jibril with a message. 'Iqra' being the first word.
17	Where were these messages written?	The Qur'an - seen by Muslims as a miracle, the final revelation from Allah. Written after the Prophet's death, spread through oracy at first (word of mouth) which is where the tradition of hafiz comes from.
18	Is the Qur'an regarded as the most important holy book?	Yes, because Muslims believe it's a complete record of Allah's exact words to Muhammad 'he revealed to His servant what he revealed. The heart did not lie about what it saw.' (Qur'an 53:10-11)
19	What does the Qur'an tell	How to live their lives and how to please Allah? Key themes: Judgement

	Muslims about?	Day, 5 pillars etc.
20	What five things do Muslims do to treat the Qur'an with great respect?	1. Ornately decorate it. 2. Keep it wrapped up. 3. Wash hands before touching it. 4. Keep it on a higher shelf than all other books. 5. Place on a special stand when they read it.
Other holy books and Allah's Messengers		
21	Were there other holy books (other than the Qur'an)?	Yes - they were revealed to the other prophets
22	Do Muslims believe the other holy books are accurate?	They only believe the Qur'an exists in its original form. They believe the other books have been edited over time. (distorted)
23	What is the Tawrat?	This is the book given to Musa. It's the main Jewish holy book and includes the 10 commandments (basic rules for a religious life.)
24	What is the Zabur?	This is the book given to Dawud. Many believe it is linked to the Psalms of David in the Christian Bible and the Jewish Tenakh.
25	What is the Injil?	This is the book given to Isa. This book prophesises the coming of Muhammed.
26	What is the Hadith?	These are reports of Muhammad's words and actions recorded by his followers. They're not in the Qur'an - they weren't revealed by Allah. They guide Muslims. Quran says what. Hadith says how.
27	What is the Sunnah?	This sets of Muhammad's way of life, as recorded by the hadith. Following the Sunnah is following the role model of the prophet.
28	What is the purpose of the Hadith and Sunnah?	Gives valuable advice in addition to the Qur'an esp on issues concerning daily life. Some Muslims believe it better to use the Qur'an because the hadith might not be reliable.
29	What do Shi'a Muslims follow?	They follow the hadith (sayings) of the imams, especially those of Ali.
30	What is the purpose of angels?	To follow Allah's orders and communicate with humans, often via the prophets. In heaven, they praise and guard his throne. They welcome humans into paradise.
31	What are angels like? (6 points)	Genderless. Made of light. Have wings. Immortal. Don't have free will. Not capable of sin. (infallible)
32	What do angels do?	Record good and bad deeds for judgement day. Protect people from danger and evil.
33	Name an important angel.	Jibril. He revealed Allah's words (Qur'an) to Muhammed. He also revealed messages to other prophets. He is known as the angel of revelation.
34	Name other angels and their responsibilities.	Mika'il - asks Allah to forgive people's sins. Izrail - angel of death who takes souls from people's bodies when they die. Israfil - will blow the trumpet on the Day of Judgement

Life after death, day of judgement and

afterlife

35	Do Muslims believe in judgement?	Yes - believe Allah will judge their behaviour. This is evidence of Allah being Just.
36	What do Sunnis believe about judgement?	Allah knows all that is going to happen before it happens. Humans chose actions but Allah made it impossible for them to pick what they should not be doing. Some think once someone's chosen to act, the act becomes theirs so they can be judged for it.
37	What do Shi'as believe about judgement?	They focus more on free will. They often believe Allah has ultimate control & power to change things if he wants but people determine their own lives.
38	What is Yawm ad-Din?	This is the day of Judgement. Allah decides how people will spend the afterlife based on their behaviour during their lives.
39	What happened on Yawm ad-Din?	Allah will judge all (not just Muslims) - dead will be resurrected and all given a record of their good & bad deeds.
40	Is judgement important to Muslims?	Yes! Encourages them to live lives in a good way. For Muslims intentions are also important - if you intend to do something good it counts. If you intend to do something bad and don't do it - it doesn't count.
41	What is Al-Akhirah?	This means afterlife - a key part of Islam. Muslims go there after the Day of Judgement.
42	What is the reward for good people?	Entry into Jannah (paradise). The Qur'an refers to this as 'Garden of Pleasure' (Qur'an).
43	What is the punishment for bad people?	Jahannam - hell. The Qur'an describes this as a place of scorching fire and boiling water. Allah is merciful, so a Muslim may eventually leave here and go to paradise.

Islam

Practices

Worship and duties

1.	What key actions do Sunni Muslims have to follow?	<p>These are the Five Pillars of Islam</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shahadah (declaration of faith) - no god but Allah and Muhammed is messenger. Muslims should say this several times a day. 2. Salah (prayer five times a day) - second most imp duty in Islam, Pray at sunrise, around noon, late afternoon, after sunset and late evening. 3. Zakah (charitable giving) 4. Sawm (obligation to fast during Ramadan) 5. Hajj (pilgrimage to Makkah) - all Muslims should do hajj at least once.
2.	What key actions do Shi'a Muslims have to follow?	<p>These are the Ten Obligatory Acts</p> <p>Four of these - salah, sawm, zakah and hajj are the same as the five pillars. There are six others:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Khums (annual tax): tax on profit (extra money) at the rate of 20%. Goes towards supporting Islamic education and anyone descended from Muhammad who's in need. - Jihad (struggle): there are two types, the personal struggle to live a good life and the struggle to defend Islam against its critics - Tawalla and Tabarra: these come as a pair. Muslims should love Allah and only associate with those who love Allah. - Amr-bil-Marroof and Nahi Anil Munkar: these come as a pair and require Muslims to encourage good deeds and avoid bad ones.
3.	What is Salah?	Very important. Five daily prayers. Ideally should take place in the Mosque.
4.	What happens during Salah?	Each prayer cycle includes saying Allahu akbar (God is great) multiple times as well as reciting the first surah and other key verses from the Qur'an.
5.	Who is obliged to go to Friday prayers?	Most men are obliged to go on a Friday. This is led by an imam who also gives two sermons. Salah keeps Muslims in close contact with Allah and encourages moral and spiritual discipline.

Worship and Duties

1.	What is Salah?	Prayer. Wudu (washing before prayer) is important. A prayer mat is often used when not praying in a mosque to ensure cleanliness. Muslims should face Makkah in Saudi when praying. The rak'ah is a set prayer ritual. It may be repeated several times during the session.
2.	What is Zakah?	This involves redistributing wealth. Muslims think wealth is given by Allah so should be used to serve him. The amount is usually 2.5% of a person's wealth per year. Some Shi'as pay khums in addition to zakah.
3.	What is Sawm?	Muslims fast between sunrise and sunset during the month of Ramadan. The Muslim calendar is lunar (determined by the moon) so Ramadan is not always at the same time each year. Muslims eat just before sunrise and just after sunset. The fast is often broken slowly with some dates, before a bigger meal later. This meal is often with family / friends and sometimes at the Mosque.
4.	What is Hajj?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Muslims must make the pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime as long as they can afford it and are healthy enough to do it. It has to happen in the Muslim month of Dhu'l-Hijja to count. 2. A number of prophets including Muhammad are associated with Makkah so it is a holy place. 3. All pilgrims wear simple white clothing (ihram) so they're equal before Allah.

		<p>4. The Ka'aba is in Makkah - it's a giant stone cube covered with black cloth. Some Muslims think Ibrahim and Isma'il built it as a place of worship (Qur'an 2:127 suggests this). Others think Adam built it. It is the holiest place in Islam.</p> <p>5. Muslims do seven circuits anticlockwise of the Ka'aba, touching the stone if possible - this ritual is called the tawaf.</p> <p>6. Next, a pilgrim must make several journeys between the hills of Safa and Marwa (where Hajar, Ibrahim's wife and servant, searched for water for their son Isma'il). This part of the pilgrimage is called the sa'y.</p> <p>7. Pilgrims then draw water from the Zamzan Well, which Allah made for Hajar.</p> <p>8. Then pilgrims go to Mount Arafat to stand and pray for Allah's forgiveness. This is where Muslims believe Adam was forgiven after being thrown out of Eden and also where the Day of Judgement will take place. The pilgrims spend the night at Muzdalifa, a valley between Arafat and Mina, where they collect pebbles.</p> <p>9. The pebbles are then thrown at three pillars in Mina, to symbolise driving the devil away - Ibrahim is believed to have once thrown stones at Shaytan (the devil).</p> <p>10. The title hajji is given to those who complete the hajj. Many find the hajj helps their faith and increases unity between Muslims. Some hadith say it cleanses the hajji of all sins.</p>
5.	What is Jihad?	Jihad means striving or struggle. It is often misunderstood by non-Muslims. It is one of the Ten Obligatory Acts for Shi'as but part of Sunni Islam too. There are two kinds:
6.	What is the greater Jihad?	This is every Muslim's struggle to obey Allah, follow his teachings and become a better Muslim. It's the greater struggle because it is individual and personal.
7.	What is the lesser Jihad?	This is the struggle to make the world a better place. Part of this means struggles against wrongs such as poverty and injustice. Part of it is to defend Islam against threats. This can be in peaceful ways such as helping others be good Muslims.
Festivals		
1.	What is Id ul-Fitr and what does it focus on?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marks the end of Ramadan. It is a day of thanksgiving to Allah for giving Muslims the strength to fast for a month. It is a joyful festival. - Muslims pay a special zakah - usually around £5. It helps Muslims who are less well-off celebrate this festival as well. - The festival involves a service with prayers, a sermon, a meal to break the fast... Muslims spend time with family, friends and exchange presents.
2.	What is Ashura and what does it focus on?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mostly a Shi'a festival. - It commemorates the death of Husayn. - Used to be a compulsory day of fasting. - Sunnis tend to think of it as a day of atonement. Many fast, but it is not compulsory. - Ashura is important for Shi'as because it was the day that Husayn (ali's son and Muhammad's grandson) was killed in a battle. The ten days leading up to and including Ashura are a period of mourning for Shi'as. Mosques often provide free meals for people during the ten day period. - On Ashura, Shi'as wear black as a sign of mourning. There are often public processions and 'passion plays' where this story is re-told. - Some Shi'as hurt themselves to commemorate Husayn's suffering. This is banned in some countries- even Iran. (self-flagellation) - For Shi'as, Ashura is a reminder of the suffering the Shi'a community has experienced - Shi'as have been persecuted as a minority. The processions are sometimes used as protests against injustice.