

RE Knowledge Organiser: Muslim Beliefs

1. Sunni Islam – Principle beliefs

- ✓ Sunni Muslims believe that after Muhammad's death, his successor was chosen by the community who followed him – they chose Abu Bakr, a loyal follower of Muhammad and his closest friend.
- ✓ Abu Bakr and the three successors who came after him are known as The Four Rightly Guided Caliph. Unlike Shi'a Islam, these Caliph did not have to be direct blood relations to the Prophet.
- ✓ The Rightly Guided Caliph are believed to be the continuation of the revelations passed to Muhammad – did not add to them
- ✓ Sunni Muslims believe that before Prophet Muhammad died he DID NOT assign a successor
- ✓ Sunni Muslims believe any good Muslim can be a leader.
- ✓ Leaders come from an almost democratic way – through a vote by the community.
- ✓ Sunni Muslims believe, Ali (the 4th Caliph) was not a 'divinely chosen' successor (unlike Shia Muslims)

2. Shi'a Islam – Principle beliefs

- ✓ Shi'a Muslims believe that Muhammad's teachings and guidance comes through his family (The Ahl al- Bayt)
- ✓ Bloodline and successors of Muhammad through his daughter Fatima and his Son in Law Ali
- ✓ Believe that the progeny (descendants) of Ali are the natural successors (Imams)
- ✓ The rulings of the First 3 Caliph are considered historical fact, but are not connected to the Shi'a faith
- ✓ Muhammad directed Ali to be his successor as guided/chosen by Allah (Ali was divinely appointed) – he is the rightful leader of Muslim faith after Muhammad
- ✓ Ali and his progeny had the power to add to Hadith and continue newly found beliefs in Islam
- ✓ There are branches of Shi'a Islam – Twelvers, Seveners and Fivers. These depend on how many Imams they believe came after Ali.

Keywords:

Prophet:

A God-chosen human being who has the word of God revealed to them.

Imam(ah):

God-chosen human being whose responsibility is to guide humankind on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad

Rightly Guided Caliph:

Chosen successors of the Prophet Muhammad according to Sunni belief

Ahl al Bayt:

The house of Muhammad – the family and blood line of the Prophet Muhammad

revelations:

Teachings of God which have been made available to his Prophet(s)

democratic:

A political way in which the members of the community or society vote in a chosen leader

progeny:

The descendants/children of someone

Hadith:

The sayings, teachings and actions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

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3. Sunni and Shi'a teachings on Prophets and Imams/Imamates

Sunni	Shi'a
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God chooses certain human beings and purifies them to be able to receive His word.• These God chosen people are the Prophets – their co workers are the Imams (not divinely chosen)• The Prophets' purification means they are without sin and free from doing any wrong• Therefore they are without doubt or weakness and empowered by God to become guides for the rest of humankind	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• God showed through the Qur'an and Muhammad's own words that his (Muhammad's) successors should come from the Ahl al-Bayt (Muhammad's family)• God chose and blessed the Ahl al-Bayt for spiritual leadership of the Muslim community – the Imams• Ali was appointed by God to be the first Imamate• According to the majority of beliefs there are twelve Imams• They were to guide humankind after Muhammad through the light they possessed• It would be unfair of God to leave humans without a guide.

Keywords:

purifies:

To make spiritually clean

Prophet:

A God-chosen human being who has the word of God revealed to them.

Imam:

God-chosen human being whose responsibility is to guide humankind on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad

Qur'an:

The Holy book for Muslims; the direct, unchanged words of Allah







Ahl al-Bayt:

"The house of Muhammad" – the family and blood line of the Prophet Muhammad

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4. The Six Articles of Faith/Six Beliefs (Sunni Islam) –

These form the foundation of the Sunni faith. It is compulsory to believe in each of the principles. By following these beliefs, Sunni Muslims believe they are on the right path and will earn the praise of Allah

Tawhid 	Belief in the oneness Allah – most important belief. Allah is the Supreme being, creator of the universe
Malaikah 	Belief in the angels of Allah – angels are heavenly beings created by Allah to perform tasks such as delivering His message to the Prophets
Risalah  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belief in the books of Allah – Allah’s messages are contained in holy texts known as kutub – ‘books of Allah • Belief in the messengers of Allah – a messenger/Prophet is a person chosen by God to teach and guide people to the right path . • Muslims believe 124,000 prophets have appeared in the world
Akhirah 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belief in the Day of Judgement – eventually the entire world will end, according to the Qur’an. • The dead will be resurrected and Allah will judge whether they go to Jannah (paradise) or Jahannam (hell)
Al Qadr 	Belief in the decree of Allah – belief in Al Qadr (fate/predestination) Belief that Allah has supreme power.

✓ Muslims believe these beliefs should be reflected in their actions and behaviour.

✓ For example by recognising Allah as the creator, Muslims are thankful for the life they have been given and will express their gratitude through prayer.

✓ Another example is that Muslims are taught about and are often named after the different prophets so that they can learn from their example.

Keywords:

foundations:

The core, principle beliefs which hold everything else together

Supreme:

The highest form of authority

Prophet:

A God-chosen human being who has the word of God revealed to them.

Day of Judgement:

The day where God will judge the living and the dead to enter heaven

resurrection:

To rise from the dead

decree:

An official order, that is the law


Fate/Predestination:




The belief that life is pre-planned/designed by God

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5. The Five Roots of Usul ad-Din

They are based on the teachings of the Qur'an, Hadith, and the agreement of early Shi'a leaders/scholars

Tawhid 1	Belief in the oneness Allah – most important belief. Allah is the Supreme being, creator of the universe
Nubuwwah 	the belief in Prophethood and the chain of messengers from Adam to Muhammad

Adalat 	the belief that Allah is just and fair and will bring about Divine Justice
Imamah 	Term given to 'God given leadership'. Shi'a Muslims believe authority was given to a particular group of people – the progeny of Ali, who was the cousin of Muhammad and the first Imam
Mi'ad 	the belief in life after death – that there will be Judgement Day and the Resurrection of humankind

Keywords:

supreme:

The highest form of authority

Prophethood:

The belief in all the Prophets from Adam to Muhammad

Divine Justice:

Justice given by God

resurrection:

To rise from the dead

Qur'an:

The Holy book for Muslims; the direct, unchanged words of Allah

Hadith:

The sayings, teachings and acts of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)

scholar:

Someone who is highly educated in a particular subject

creed:

A formal statement on belief

6. The Nature of Allah

- ✓ There is no plural for Allah which highlights that Muslims believe in Allah's oneness (Tawhid).
- ✓ Muslims believe the characteristics of Allah are found in the Qur'an (the direct word of Allah).
- ✓ The Qur'an includes 99 names for Allah

Character istic	Description/Source of Authority	Why it's important for Muslims
Oneness (Tawhid)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basis of Islam, as the first part of the Muslim creed (shahadah, the first pillar) states, <i>"I bear witness that there is no god, but God/Allah."</i> • Allah is believed to be the creator of everything since he is the only God. 	If God created everything Muslims must try to preserve the oneness of the world he has created. Muslims must only worship Allah.

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6. The Nature of Allah CONTINUED

Character istic	Description/Source of Authority	Why it's important for Muslims
Omni-potence	Fundamental belief that Allah has complete power (<i>Omni – all Potence – Power</i>). Islam means submission to God's will and Muslims are those who have submitted to Allah because he is so great and powerful.	Allah is in complete control, a plan for the world and the power to make sure that plan happens.
Beneficence and Mercy	Every Surah except Surah 9 begins with the bismillah: " <i>In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful,</i> " This shows that Allah is good, kind and loving to his creation. The Qur'an teaches that humans are not perfect and will be forgiven by Allah when they make mistakes by showing their repentance.	If God is compassionate and forgiving then Muslims should act in the same way and forgive others.
Justice	Described in the Qur'an as 'the All-just', meaning fairness and the maintenance of what is right. Muslims believe that Allah created the world in a just way. They believe that the universe works according to laws established by Allah and the way it operates is fair and just.	Muslims believe that at the end of the world Allah will judge everyone justly. If Muslims want to be treated justly by Allah they must treat others fairly too.
Transcendence	Allah is totally beyond human experience/understanding as is shown in the names 'the Greatest', 'the Highest', 'the Glorious', 'the Supreme One', and 'the Magnificent'.	Allah is greater than anything else and that Allah is not restricted by anything.
Immanence	Allah is also immanent – he is close to humans and can be contacted. " <i>We are nearer to man than his jugular vein.</i> " (Surah 50:16).	This shows that Allah is within the universe he has created. Allah can be contacted by humans. Allah is present for religious activities such as prayer (salah).

Keywords:

submission:

Accepting the superior force of another

repentance:

Seeking forgiveness

justly:

Morally right and fair

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7. Risalah (Prophets)

- Muslims believe that Allah created humans to look after the earth (Allah's Khalifahs or vicegerents) and humans need prophets to know how to do this.
- Muslims do not believe Muhammad was the first Prophet, there is a recognition of many before him. With the first being Adam, at the beginning of creation and Muhammad (known as the 'Seal of the Prophets') being the last in the founding of the religion of Islam.
- In Islam, prophets are ordinary people (not divine) that were chosen to receive Allah's messages. Most Muslims believe that the prophets were sinless after they had been called by Allah to be his messenger,
- The Qur'an says that each prophet was given Allah's word for their generation, so each prophet brought Islam to its perfect form. However, this message became distorted so Allah had to keep sending new prophets until Muhammad (pbuh).



Prophet	Muslim belief
Adam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First man, created to be Allah's vicegerent – to look after the earth • Adam asked for forgiveness and to show his gratitude for Allah's forgiveness, built the Ka'aba
Ibrahim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born into a Polytheistic (Belief in many gods) family • Through the messages from God taught and believed in Monotheism (belief in one God) • Ibrahim is important because of his loyalty and obedience to God, including his willingness to sacrifice his son Isma'il (who later also became a Prophet) • Ibrahim is seen as a role model for Muslims • Received the holy book; 'Sahfia - scrolls of Ibrahim'
Musa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received the holy book; Tawrat – known as the Torah and the main holy book for Judaism
Dawud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received the holy book of Zabur (Psalms in the Old Testament of the Bible)
Isa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known as Jesus – to Muslims was NOT the Son of God - he was taken to heaven from the cross and never died • Final prophet BEFORE Muhammad • Recorded in the Qur'an as performing many miracles • Was given the holy book; Injil (Gospels)
Muhammad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chosen to bring the FINAL message of Allah • All other messages from previous Prophets had been changed or distorted, Muhammad's message from Allah was unchanged and the Qur'an is the undistorted messages of Allah • The perfect example of how to be a good Muslim – this is known as Sunnah

Keywords:

Khalifah:

A religious leader, representing Allah or a prophet

Vicegerent:

Someone who has power, given to them by a superior leader

divine:

God like

Distorted:

Changed from the original

Polytheistic:

Belief in many gods/goddesses

Monotheistic:

Belief in one God

obedience:

To obey, follow instructions

sacrifice:

To give up something in your life for another

Judaism:

One of the Six World Religions. An 'Abrahamic faith'

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8. Kutub (Muslim Holy Books)

- Muslims believe that God sent prophets with his message and the most important of these were given the message in the form of God's holy book. There is some dispute about the exact nature of the holy books:
- Most Muslims believe that God made one holy book, the Qur'an, which is his eternal word, and each holy book given to a prophet was simply a copy of that 'heavenly original'.
- Unfortunately over time these holy books became distorted by humans.
- Most Muslims believe God sent a prophet to correct these distortions, but on four occasions he sent a new copy of the holy book until finally he sent the Qur'an to Muhammad (pbuh) in a form that could never be distorted.
- Muhammad (pbuh) was given God's full eternal word in the undistorted Qur'an.
- The purpose of holy books is so that Muslims know what to believe and how to live.



Prophet	Holy Book
Ibrahim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrolls of Saifah ('Scrolls of Ibrahim') – as messages given to Adam had been distorted
Musa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the book of Tawrat (Torah) As Ibrahim's message of Monotheism had been lost • Contains many good laws and teachings, including a prophecy of the Prophet Muhammad
Dawud	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the book of Zabur – some believe elements of this remain undistorted in the Old Testament book of Psalms (Bible) which are made of songs and poems which were inspired by Allah
Isa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the Inji(l Gospels) • Not the same as the Four Gospels of the New Testament • It is believed to be the teachings of God which Isa (Jesus) preached to the Jews – based on love, compassion and forgiveness
Muhammad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the final undistorted message of Allah in the book of the Qur'an • Categorized into 114 Surahs (Chapters) • Believed to be the exact words of Allah; 'free from distortion' and a 'blessed scripture' • Muslims must do everything in the Qur'an if they want to please God • Nothing in the Qur'an can be altered because it is the word of God. • The Qur'an tells Muslims to believe in one God who is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. It also teaches Muslims to believe in angels, messengers, holy books, the Last Day and life after death. • The Qur'an teaches Muslims to pray, visit the Mosque on a Friday, fast during Ramadan, celebrate festivals, pay religious tax to help the poor, go on pilgrimage to Makkah, not eat pork, not drink alcohol, not take drugs, not gamble or make money from interest (financial).

Keywords:

Qur'an:

The Holy book for Muslims; the direct, unchanged words of Allah

Monotheism:

Belief in one God

prophecy:

A predication of what will happen in the future

Surah:

The name for a chapter in the Qur'an

Omnipotent:

God is all powerful

Omniscient:

God is all knowing

Omnipresent:

God is all present

Mosque:

Muslim place of worship

Ramadan:

The month in which the Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad (pbuh) and one of the 5 Pillars

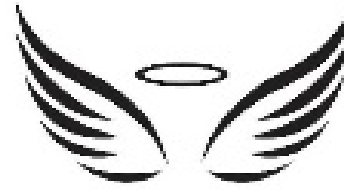
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A religious journey

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9. Malaikah (angels)

- ✓ Allah is so great that he does not communicate directly with humans.
- ✓ Angels act as go between between Allah and humans.
- ✓ Allah created them as immortal sinless creatures without freewill.
- ✓ It is because angels are sinless that they can communicate directly with Allah.



Muslims believe that angels have many roles and are important because...

- ✓ They are the messengers of Allah – without them, there would be no way to know how best to live
- ✓ They praise Allah in heaven.
- ✓ They are guardians of the gates of hell.
- ✓ They record good and bad deeds of humans to present to Allah on the Last Day; they are referred to a 'noble scribes' in the Qur'an.
- ✓ According to Islam, God has created many angels, there are a few, however, who are higher ranked, known as **archangels:**

Jibril (Gabriel)

- Jibril is the chief of the angels whose job is to deliver Allah's message to the prophets.
- Muslims believe that Jibril told the prophet Ibrahim about the birth of his sons and Mary about the birth of Isa (Jesus).
- Jibril's most important role was to reveal the Qur'an to Muhammad (pbuh).

Mika'il (Michael)

- Mika'il is the second most important angel who is believed to be the guardian of heaven, protecting it from evil and the Devil.
- He also ensures that humans are nourished by sending rain to the earth.

Izra'il

- Izra'il is the angel of death. The Qur'an says that the angel of death takes the souls of people at death and returns it to Allah
- However, Izra'il only acts at Allah's command, as Izra'il does not have free will because it is Allah alone who decides when a person will die

Keywords:

Angels:

Heavenly beings created by God to be his messengers

Immortal:

Eternal – always existing

Free will:




Having the ability to choose your actions, beliefs etc

nourish:

To take care of by providing food, water etc in order to live

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10. Akhirah (life after death)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims believe they must bury the dead within 48 hours of the death • Muslims believe that after death the body stays in the grave until the Last Day. • According to the Qur'an the world will be brought to an end on a day of God's choosing (the Last Day).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The immortal soul will be taken by Izra'il to 'barzakh'; the stage between death and Judgement Day • Izra'il will sound the trumpet and many Muslims believe the physical body will be raised to face God
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone will stand before God on the Plain of Arafat (near Makkah) to be judged by God and sent to either heaven or hell

- Most Muslims believe that the judgement received on the Last Day will be based on a mixture of faith and action (noted by the 'noble scribes'/Angels). The Qur'an suggests that those who do evil deeds and those that reject faith will be sent to hell, leading many Muslims to believe that only good Muslims will pass the test of the final judgement.
- However, many Muslims believe that God will help Muslims who have committed sins because God is believed to be 'the Merciful' and 'the Compassionate'.
- If God is pleased, they will enter paradise; **Jannah**
- If God is not pleased, they may be put into hell; **Jahannam**

Keywords:

Immortal Soul:
The soul is eternal – will live on after death

Barzakh:
The stage between death and Judgement Day

Plain of Arafat:
Where Muhammad gave his final speech to his followers in Makkah, Saudi Arabia

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11. Paradise and Hell

Paradise



- All Muslims believe that heaven is paradise. The Qur'an describes heaven as **al'Jannah (the Garden)**: *"Gardens of perpetual bliss..."*
- The Qur'an also describes heaven as a place of delights: *"Allah has promised to Believers...beautiful mansions in gardens of everlasting bliss..."*

Hell



- Hell is **Jahannam** and is portrayed in the Qur'an as a place of fire and torture.
- Some believe that once in hell there is no release, while others believe that you only stay in their for a short time as a punishment.
- This belief is based on Surah 15 which says that there are seven classes of hell and Surah 6 which says that people only stay in hell for as long as God wills.
- Some Muslims believe that this means that good followers of other religions will only stay in hell for a short time.

Keywords:

Soul:

Spiritual aspect of a human being – seen as immortal

Barzakh:

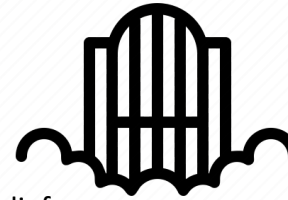
The stage between death and Judgement Day

Between death and the Last Day

- Some Muslims believe that the soul stays in the grave until the Last Day.
- Some Muslims believe that the afterlife is a spiritual place and that souls are judged immediately after death before going either to heaven or hell.
- There are also different beliefs about what happens between death and the body being raised. This time period is known as **Barzakh**.
- Some Muslims say that after death the soul is visited by the angel of death and questioned about faith, others believe that after death the soul hovers over the body until the Last Day. Others say that the soul simply sleeps until the Last Day.

12. Why life after death is important to Muslims

- The Qur'an teaches that there is life after death so these teachings should be believed.
- Muhammad (pbuh) taught that there was life after death. Muhammad (pbuh) is the perfect role model and his teachings should be believed.
- A belief in life after death is one of the 6 Beliefs of Sunni Islam.
- Muslims believe that life is a test from God. Judgement and reward follow on from this belief.
- A belief in life after death gives life a meaning and purpose.



Keywords:

6 Beliefs:

The fundamental (core) beliefs of Sunni Islam

5 Pillars:

The main actions all Muslims will be judged on in Akhirah

Halal:

'that which is allowed'

resurrection:

To rise from the dead

How Muslim beliefs about life after death affect the lives of Muslims

- Muslims try to live a good life to go to paradise and avoid hell.
- Living a good Muslim life will involve following the laws of Islam so Muslims will observe the 5 Pillars and the dress and food laws (Known as **Halal**), not drink, gamble or be involved in lending or receiving interest.
- Muslims believe that resurrection means that nothing should be removed from the body after death. This means that funerals often take place within 48 hours. Due to this Muslims may try to avoid autopsies and some may be against transplant surgery.

13. Muslim and Christian beliefs about life after death

Similarities	Similarities to Catholic and Conservative Protestants	Things Christians do not believe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Life after death ✓ Judgement ✓ Heaven a place of paradise with God ✓ Good people go to heaven ✓ Makes sense of this life ✓ Good is rewarded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dead raised on Last Day ✓ The world will end of the Last Day ✓ Judgement ✓ Belief in heaven and hell ✓ Bad people and people with wrong beliefs will go to hell ✓ However, Catholics believe in purgatory and Muslims and other Christians do not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> x Dead should be buried quickly x Bodies cannot be cremated x Some do not believe in the Last day and believe that judgement happens straight after death instead x Some don't believe in hell because they believe everyone goes to heaven eventually.

autopsy:

An examination of the body after death to determine the cause of death

Purgatory:

Catholic belief in a place the soul goes to purify before gaining entry to heaven

Cremated:

Funeral Rite where the body is burned to ashes.

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14. Al-Qadr (Fate)

- **Al-Qadr means fate or predestination** and is taken to mean that everything in the universe is following a divine plan. *“In all things the master-planning is God’s.”*
- Muslims believe that Allah has a plan for the universe he has created, he has the power (omnipotence) to make it happen and the knowledge of what will happen (omniscience) so that everything will work out as Allah wants – by his will.
- Many Muslims use the phrase ‘insh Allah’ which means ‘if Allah wills’.

Al-Qadr and the Day of Judgement

Muslims believe that on the Last Day everyone will be judged for their actions, however, surely people can only be judged for actions they did of their own freewill?

Can people have freewill if everything is predetermined?

- Many Shi’a Muslims follow views which say that Allah created humans with freewill and so humans are individually responsible if their actions lead to them disobeying God. Therefore, they can be judged on the Last Day.
- Most Sunni Muslims follow teachings which say that Allah knows what people will do before they do it, since he is all knowing, but they do it of their own freewill .

The implications of belief in al-Qadr for Muslims today

- God has a long term plan for everyone.
- Suffering is a part of Allah’s plan, it should be accepted and will have an eventual good outcome.
- Muslims have freewill so have to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Muslims need to work out what God wants them to do so they can be sure that their choices are what God wants them to do.

Keywords:

Fate/Predestination:
The belief that life is pre-planned/designed by God

Divine:
God like

Free Will:
Having the ability to choose your actions, beliefs etc