

Key beliefs about God

- There is only **ONE** God (**monotheism**). The 'oneness' of God is called **Tawhid** in Arabic
- Muslims call God **Allah**, which means 'the one true God'
- God cannot be divided and has never had a Son.
- In **the Qur'an** and **the Sunnah**, Allah has 99 'names'. E.g the Merciful, the Just, the Almighty...
- A Muslim's most important duty is to declare faith in one God. This is repeated daily in the **Shahadah**.
- **Allah** has **revealed** his will through his **prophets**
- Muslims share many of the beliefs that Jews and Christians have about God E.g. He is the creator, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, etc.
- **Allah** must never be pictured
- **Allah** is beyond understanding and nothing must ever be compared to **Allah**. Comparing things to **Allah** is a terrible sin
- All humans must 'submit' to the will of **Allah** (Islam means 'submission')
- Muslims often add the words 'God willing' (**inshallah**) after a promise to do something. This shows their belief that they are not in control of what happens.



Beliefs & Teachings: Islam

RISALAH: The Prophets

Prophethood

- **Allah** appoints particular people to spread his messages
- These people receive **revelation** from **Allah** through his **Angels**
- There are 25 key **prophets** of Allah identified in **the Qur'an**, including Musa (Moses) and Isa (Jesus)

Adam

- Created specially by **Allah**.
- Given **dominion** over the earth by **Allah**
- The first human to communicate with **Allah**
- The first Muslim

Ibrahim

- One of **Allah's** most faithful servants
- Opposed **idolatry**
- Risked his life to argue for **monotheism**
- A great role-model
- An ancestor of **Muhammad**

Muhammad

- **Allah's** final and greatest **prophet**
- Received the **revelation of the Qur'an**
- A great teacher
- A great role-model
- A military commander
- Set up the first Muslim community in **Makkah**
- Must be respected but not worshipped

Sunni and Shi'a Islam

Sunni Muslims (majority)

- See the elected **Caliphs** as the successors of **Muhammad**
- Follow the 6 'articles of faith': **Tawhid**, the **Day of Judgement**, the **Prophets**, **Angels**, the supremacy of **Allah's** will and the authority of **the Qur'an**.

Shia Muslims (minority)

- See the **Imams** (descendants of **Muhammad**) as **Muhammad's** successors
- Believe each **Imam** must choose his successor before he dies
- Follow the 5 'roots' of Usul ad-Din: **Tawhid**, **Prophethood**, **Allah's Justice (Adalat)**, **Resurrection** and the **Imamate**

HEAVEN AND HELL

- Described in different ways by different Muslims
- People go to heaven or hell for eternity after the **Day of Judgement**
- Heaven described in **the Qur'an** as a garden paradise
- Hell described in **the Qur'an** as a place of fire and pain
- Faithful and righteous Muslims will go to heaven
- Non-Muslims and unrighteous Muslims will go to hell

AKHIRAH: Life after death

ANGELS

- Bring **Allah's revelations** to his **prophets**
- Created by **Allah** from light
- Usually invisible but sometimes take human form
- Pure and sinless
- Do not have **free-will**
- Have various roles, such as recording in a 'book of deeds', which is presented to Allah on the day of judgement.
- Some are named E.g. Jibril, Mika'il, Israfil, Iblis

The Day of Judgment

- When all humans will be judged by **Allah** based on how they have lived
- Judgement will lead to punishment (hell) or reward (heaven)
- Preceded by a state of waiting in the grave called **barzakh**
- While in the grave, people are questioned by **Angels**
- People will be **resurrected** before their judgement

The Qur'an

- The word of **Allah** given to **Muhammad** through Jibril
- Originally dictated in Arabic
- The original words have never been altered
- Infallible: corrects all previous **revelation** from God
- Divided into **Surahs**
- Supplemented by **the Hadiths** and **the Sunnah**



Predestination

- **Allah** is in total control of all events and **knows** everything that will happen
- Because **Allah** is **transcendent** (beyond time and space), He is not limited by time or space

BUT

- **Allah** does not **decide** what will happen
- Humans have **free-will** and are responsible for their choices
- Humans will be judged by **Allah** based on their choices

Key vocabulary

- **Adalat/justice** = Part of the nature of God in Shi'a Islam; the belief that God is fair
- **Akhirah** = Belief in a new stage of life after death
- **Angels** = They are spiritual beings created from elements of light. They gave God's messages to the prophets and watch over humans
- **Authority** = Having power and status. The Qur'an has supreme authority as the word of Allah, this means it must be believed and obeyed.
- **Beneficence** = 'Doing good'. One of the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah and belief about his nature, the generosity that Allah shows to humans
- **Day of judgement** = The day when Allah will decide about individual deeds and on reward or punishment
- **Fairness** = Belief about the nature of God; refers to Allah's justice. He treats all humans equally and as they deserve
- **Five roots of Usul ad-Din** = The foundations of the faith in Shi'a Islam; five key beliefs: Tawhid (the Oneness of God), Adalat (justice), prophethood, imamate, resurrection.
- **Heaven** = Referred to as Paradise; Allah's reward after death to those who have been faithful to him and who have repented of their sins.
- **Hell** = It is a place of great suffering after death for those who have rejected the Qur'an's teachings and have led a wicked life. For some it will last forever
- **Human accountability** = The belief that everyone must take responsibility for their actions and will be questioned about them on the Day of Judgement
- **Human freedom** = Humans have control over their thoughts, feelings and actions.
- **Human responsibility** = Humans are responsible for most of what they do because they have free will and so will be accountable on the Day of Judgement
- **Immanence** = The belief that God is close to humanity and involved in the world

Beliefs & Teachings: Islam

"Say, 'He is God the One, God the eternal. He begot no one nor was he begotten. No one is comparable to Him'" ~ Qur'an 112:1-4

"You who believe, obey God and the Messenger"
~ Qur'an 4:59

"The Most Excellent Names belong to God: use them to call on Him" ~ Qur'an 7:180

"This 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, All Aware" ~ Qur'an 6:102-103

"Each person has angels before him and behind, watching over him by God's commands" ~ Qur'an 13:11

"Only what God has decreed will happen to us. He is our Master: let the believers put their trust in God" ~ Qur'an 9:51

"Every community is sent a messenger. And when their messenger comes, they will be judged justly; they will not be wronged" ~ Qur'an 10:47

"Muhammad is not the father of any one of you men; he is God's messenger and the seal of the prophets: God knows everything" ~ Qur'an 33:40

Key vocabulary

- **Makkah/Mecca** = the spiritual centre of Islam
- **Mercy** = Belief about the nature of God and one of Allah's 99 Beautiful Names; God's willingness to forgive the sins of those who repent.
- **Mosque** = Muslim place of worship
- **Muhammad** = The last and greatest of the prophets. He received the Qur'an and his Sunnah and Hadiths are also important sources of authority.
- **The Night of Power** = The night on which Muhammad received the first revelations of the Qur'an.
- **Omnipotence** = All-powerful; belief about the nature of God and one of the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah.
- **Predestination** = One of the Six Articles of Faith in Sunni Islam; the belief that everything that happens has been decided already by Allah.
- **The Qur'an** = Holy Book and most important source of authority in Islam. It was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and is the final revelation of God to humankind.
- **Resurrection** = One of the Six Articles of Faith and Five Roots of Usul ad-Din; belief that after death, all people will be raised from the dead to face judgement
- **Revelation** = When God is revealed to humans; belief that Allah shows his nature and will through the words of the Qur'an
- **Risalah** (prophethood) = One of the Six Articles of Faith and Five Roots of Usul ad-Din; belief in the prophets as messengers sent by God to communicate to people
- **Shi'a Islam** = Muslims who believe in the Imamate, successorship of Ali.
- **Six articles of faith** = The foundations of the faith in Sunni Islam; six key beliefs: Tawhid (the Oneness of God), Angels, Holy Books, Prophethood, Akhirah, Predestination
- **Sunni Islam** = Muslims who believe in the successorship of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali
- **Tawhid** (oneness of God) = One of the Six Articles of Faith and Five Roots of Usul ad-Din; the oneness and unity of Allah