

LITERACY LIFELINE - GCSE - Islam- Practices

TOP TIPS

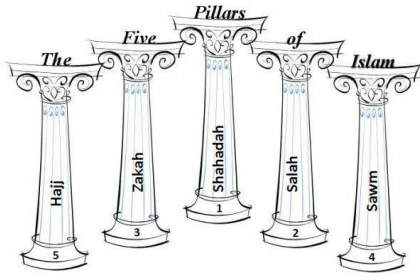
Use **capital letters** and **full stops** in your sentences.

Use **paragraphs** to organise longer pieces of writing.

Take care with all **spelling** and **punctuation**.

ALWAYS write God with a capital letter!

| Word/phrase | Meaning |
|-------------------------|--|
| Ablution (wudu) | Washing to purify the mind and body before Salah |
| Amr-bil-Marooof | Commanding what is good and just |
| Arafat | A place on the hajj that Muslims stand and pray until the sun sets in order to be forgiven |
| Ashura | A festival celebrated by Shi'a Muslims to remember the death of Hussein and by Sunni Muslims as a day of atonement |
| Du'a | Additional prayers that are personal and follow no set form. |
| Hajj | The pilgrimage to Makkah |
| Id-ul-Adha | A festival that remembers and celebrates the obedience of Ibrahim when he was willing to sacrifice his son for God |
| Id-ul-Fitr | A festival that celebrates the Night of power and the end of Ramadan |
| Ihram | A clear state of mind that pilgrims get into when they put on their white robes before hajj begins |
| Jihad | The greater or lesser striving or struggle to the way Allah wants |
| Jumma | The Friday prayers in the Mosque |
| Ka'aba | A black box-like building in Makkah important in the hajj |
| Khums | 20% tax paid by Shi'a Muslims |
| Makkah | The holy city in Saudi Arabia |
| Mina | A place in the jahh that has three stone pillars to throw rocks at |
| Mosque | The place of worship for Muslims |
| Muzdalifah | An important place on the hajj where Muslims rest |
| Nahi Anil Munkar | Discouraging people from doing what is bad or wrong |
| Night of power | The night Muhammad received the first revelations of the Qur'an |
| Prostrate | When a Muslim shows obedience to God by putting their forearms, knees, hands, feet and forehead against the floor when they pray |
| Rak'ah | A sequence of prayer containing actions and recitations |
| Ramadan | The holy month of fasting for 29/30 days |
| Recitations | Statements repeated aloud during prayer |
| Salah | Prayer |
| Sawm | Fasting |
| Shahadah | A declaration of faith "There is only one God who is Allah and Muhammad is his prophet." Shi'a may add "and Ali is his prophet" |
| Shari'ah Law | A legal system which comes from the religious laws of Islam |
| Tabarra | Expressing hatred towards evil |
| Tawalla | Expressing love towards good |
| The Five Pillars | The five most important duties for all Muslims |
| The Ten Obligatory Acts | Ten important duties for Shi'a Muslims that include the five pillars |
| Zakah | Almsgiving to the poor which benefits the Muslim community |



The 5 Pillars

These are the five beliefs/ practices that hold up the religion of Islam, like pillars hold up a building: Following these keeps Islam strong.

Shahada - It is no accident that Shahada is the first of the 5 pillars! Shahada is a declaration of faith, a statement that means "There is only one God who is Allah and Muhammad is his prophet." This is the first pillar because it is the core belief of Islam, the belief that makes you a Muslim. It is therefore so important.

Shi'a

Shi'a Muslims sometimes add an extra sentence to the shahada. They say "there is only one God who is Allah, Muhammad is his prophet and **Ali is a friend of God.**"



In practice Shahada is used in many ways. It is the first statement whispered to a new born baby when it is born and if possible it is the last thing said when a person is dying. If you wish to become a Muslim all you need to do is recite this statement in front of Muslim witnesses. It is also included in the daily prayers and recited many times in a Muslims life time.

The 10 Obligatory acts.

- | |
|--|
| 1. Salah- Prayer |
| 2. Sawm- fasting during the month of Ramadan |
| 3. Zakah- Almsgiving (giving money to be distributed to the poor) |
| 4. Khums- a 20% tax on income once all expenses are deducted |
| 5. Hajj- pilgrimage to Makkah |
| 6. Jihad- The struggle to defend the faith of Islam and be a good Muslim even when it is hard. |
| 7. Amr-bil-Maruf- encouraging people to do what is good |
| 8. Nahi Anil Munkar- discouraging people from doing what is wrong |
| 9. Tawallah- To be loving toward the friends of God including Muhammad and the Imams |
| 10. Tabarra- Disassociating from the enemies of God |

These 10 duties are followed by Muslims of the Twelver Shi'a Islam group.

Salah Prayer



Prayer is very important to all Muslims. It is in the 5 pillars and 10 obligatory acts. Prayer is a regular reminder of God that helps Muslims do God's will. Not only this, but God commanded Muslims to pray.

Other reasons salah is important include: It creates a sense of community (ummah) that unites Muslims, a Muslim can go into any mosque in the world and join in with prayer because it is always done in the same way.

Muslims recite the Qur'an when they pray which reminds them of its importance and when they prostrate themselves (bowing down) it makes them humble and reminds them of how supreme God is.

TIMES OF PRAYER.

| | |
|---------|---------------------|
| Fajr | Just before sunrise |
| Zuhr | Just after midday |
| Asr | Afternoon |
| Maghrib | Just after sunset |
| Isha | Night |

This is when Sunni Muslims pray. Muslims all over the world will have to be careful to know what time sunrise and sunset is in their country so they know when to pray.

Shi'a

Shi'a Muslims combine the midday and afternoon prayers and also the sunset and night prayers. This means they still do the **same amount of prayers** but they pray at **three set times a day instead of five.**

The Rak'ah



First Rak'ah

Second Rak'ah

Rak'ah are a set sequence of actions that Muslims will perform to make up a prayer.

For example the morning prayer is made up of two rak'ah and the night prayer is made up of four.

Rak'ah are not just actions however, they are also recitations which must be done in Arabic. The rak'ah changes slightly depending on which prayer it is used in and which part of the prayer it is. But it contains the following basic actions.

While standing Muslims recite the first chapter of the Qur'an

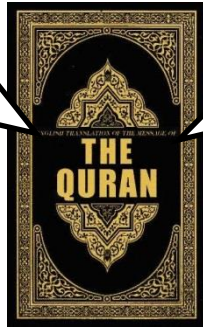
While bowing Muslims say 'Glory be to my lord who is the very greatest' the bowing shows they believe God to be supreme

Returning to an upright position they make a recitation praising God

They then prostrate themselves to show their obedience to God (kneeling with forehead, nose, hands, knees and toes touching the floor) They say 'How perfect is my Lord the most high.'

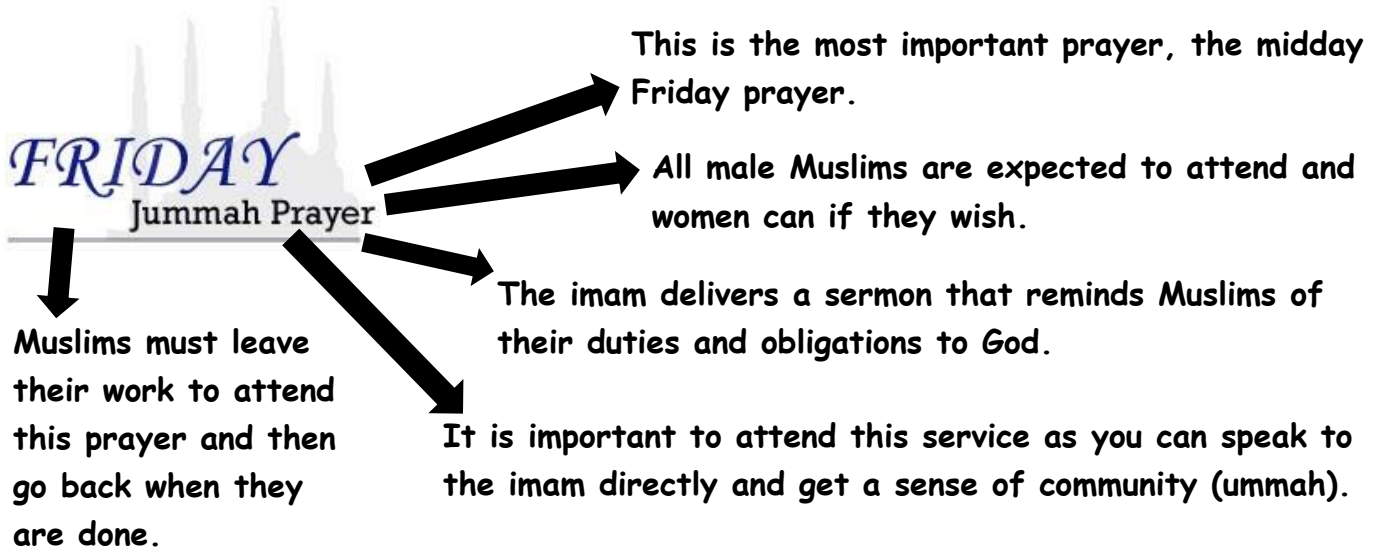
Muslims then sit whilst reciting 'God is the greatest' after a brief pause they prostrate themselves again saying 'God is the greatest'

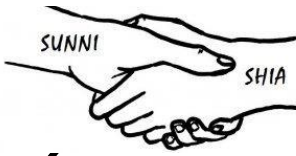
'Your Lord says, 'Call on me and I will answer you.'



'Believers! When the call to prayer is made on the day of congregation, hurry toward the reminder of God and leave off your trading.'

| Preparations for prayer | The prayer itself |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims must be spiritually clean for prayer. Ritual washing is known as ablution or wudu. It says in the Qur'an that they must wash their faces, hands up to their elbows, wipe their heads, wash their feet and possibly even wash their whole body if it is needed. • There are two special rooms for washing (The men's and the women's). Washing must be done under running water. If none is available Muslims can wash using sand, this shows that it is spiritual cleansing that is more important. • Muslims must face Makkah when they pray this focused them on a place associated with God, just as their lives should be focused on God. They can figure out where this is by using a compass or if they are in a mosque they can look for the mihrab (a niche built into the qiblah wall). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims must pray in a clean dry place. • Muslims will use a prayer mat when they pray. • During each prayer Muslims will perform a set number of rak'ah. Rak'ah are a sequence of actions and Muslims will perform a different amount of these depending on the prayer (e.g. the morning prayer is made up of two rak'ah) You can find out more about the rak'ah on the previous page. • Once the required amount of rak'ah are completed Muslims will turn their faces to the right and then the left and say 'Peace be upon you, and the mercy and blessings of God'. This is to recognise their community and the two angels that are believed to be sitting on their shoulders. • Muslims can add personal prayers called Du'a on the end of the official prayers. Du'a do not follow a set form, do not have to be in Arabic and can be about anything. |





CONTRASTS AND SIMILARITIES OF PRAYER.

How it is done- Whilst both groups do 5 prayers a day Shi'a Muslims **only pray 3 times a day** (combining some of the prayers). Whilst they still do the rak'ahs and recitations some of the **recitations are different** (including reference to Ali and the imams). Shi'a Muslims also do not cross their hands whilst doing the standing part of the rak'ah, they position their feet differently during the seated part of the rak'ah and when they prostrate themselves they **put their head against a block from Karbala** (a holy city for Shi'a Muslims) instead of against the floor.

Meaning- Wudu is even more important for Shi'a Muslims (although it is still of some importance to Sunni) this is because the eighth imam said "It does away with laziness and repels drowsiness and purifies the heart before standing before Allah". For Shi'a it is not just a ritual or preparation for prayer it is part of prayer- a way of getting closer to God. Prayer itself has a specific purpose for Shi'a Muslims as one imam said 'to cancel out all sins, to affirm the almighty Allah whilst also affirming the insignificance of humans and to restate a person's obedience to Allah in submission five times a day.' It is an important act of humility and discipline. For Shi'a Muslims you must be in the right mindset when you pray or the prayer is worthless.

Is Salah the best way to understand God?

YES

- The rak'ahs and recitations remind Muslims of God's nature as supreme and the greatest. The most fundamental ideas of God.
- Muslims recite from the Qur'an during prayer which reminds them of Allah's will and his revelation. They will come to understand what God wants from them by this regular reminder (5 times a day)

NO

- The recitations do not give a detailed understanding only an understanding of the key ideas. Reading the Qur'an in full will give a more detailed and full understanding of what God wills and his nature.
- God is supreme, transcendent and immanent. He is beyond our understanding. Prayer will not help us to achieve an understanding because this is impossible. All we can do is understand God's will and we can do this by being good Muslims in our daily lives. Prayer is pointless if in between the daily prayers our lives are sinful.

Is Salah the most important practice of Islam?

YES

- Salah has so many benefits- it is a way of fulfilling Gods will, brings the Muslim community together, helps Muslims avoid sin, it brings them peace and spiritual cleanliness. No other practice has so many benefits.
- Muslims believe they are closest to Allah when praying. Allah commanded they do five prayers and if you do them you will go to paradise. Completing these daily prayers is a direct and straightforward way to bring you closer to God.

NO

- Other practices achieve the same benefits as prayer. E.g. Sawm. When fasting you are united to the community by your shared challenge, you read more of the Qur'an reminding you of God, his will and how to avoid sin. It makes you more aware of the suffering of the poor and helps you be an extra good Muslim which will bring you spiritual cleanliness.
- Reciting Shahada is so important it is done at birth and death. It is the fundamental idea of what it is to be a Muslim. It is the first pillar and the foundational belief that all the other pillars rest on. Without this practice of reciting shahada and believing in it in your soul prayer would be useless.

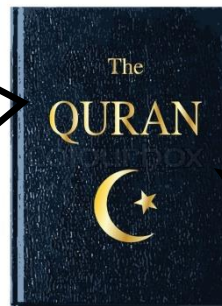
SAWM- Fasting.



Sawm happens in the ninth and most important month of the Islamic calendar, Ramadan. They believe that it was during Ramadan that Muhammad was first visited by the angel Jibril and received revelation (the teachings of the Qur'an) this is called the night of power. Many Muslims will remember this by reading the whole of the Qur'an over this month. All Muslims who are fasting will try and read more of the Qur'an.

Sawm means fasting. Muslims will not eat or drink during the hours of daylight for the whole month of Ramadan. This can be difficult because Muslims will have to be strong willed to avoid temptation, they may also get tired, lose concentration, be grumpy and be always hungry! It is not only food they give up but during daylight hours Muslims are also not allowed to smoke or have sex. Muslims are expected to focus on God, read the Qur'an and be better people. Many Muslims choose to give Zakah during Ramadan and will be thinking about the poor and the hungry whilst they fast.

"It was the month of Ramadan that the Qur'an was revealed as guidance for mankind...So any of you who is present that month should fast, and anyone who is ill or on a journey should make up for the lost days by fasting on other days later."



"What will explain to you what the Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months."

Who doesn't have to join in?

- Pregnant women
- The too old
- The too young
- Women who are menstruating
- Women who are breastfeeding
- Those who are ill
- People who are on a journey

Is Sawm the most important practice?

YES

- Makes you a better person by improving your will power, reading the Qur'an and thinking about others in poverty, this will benefit yourself and your society.
- It is obligatory and commanded in the Qur'an it is a way of fulfilling God's will and getting closer to him by improving as a Muslim and reading his teachings.

NO

- Not everyone can join in. Other practices like Salah are better because everyone can join in, even the sick, old or small children.
- Salah is more important because it happens every day not once a year. It was also commanded by God and results in all the same benefits, making you a better person.



Giving Alms.

Giving alms, or almsgiving means to give something away (usually money) to someone who needs it (usually the poor).

| Zakah | Khums |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given by all Muslims• Compulsory to those who meet the criteria• Originates from the Qur'an which says "They ask you[prophet] what they should give. Say, 'Whatever you give should be for parents, close relatives, orphans, the needy, and travellers. God is well aware of whatever good you do.'"• Based on savings not income. Muslims must give 2.5% of anything they have saved up over a certain amount.• Can be donated directly to charity such as Islamic relief or can be put in a collection box in the mosque• There will often be a board up in the mosque with family names on. The names will be crossed out when Zakah is given which gives a certain pressure on the families to ensure they have paid! | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given by Shi'a Muslims• Given in addition to (not instead of) Zakah• Originated when some Muslims thought the way Zakah was calculated (based only on certain goods like cattle and wheat) was outdated and wanted another way to give to society• It is a 20% tax on excess income or earnings• It is given to religious leaders and they divide it out for the poor and things that would benefit religious matters (God) |

FACT

All Muslims are encouraged to voluntarily give their money and time to charity at any point in the year. This is called **Sadaqah**.

Why?

It is important because:

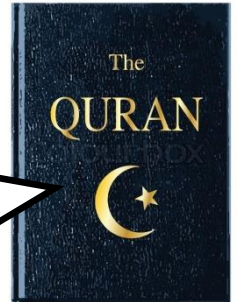
- Fulfilling a duty imposed by God.
- The Qur'an says giving Zakah is a sign of a true Muslim.
- Gives Muslims a good attitude toward money, they learn to share it and not be greedy.
- Strengthens communities making the rich help the poor.
- Links well with Salah. Prayer makes you feel concern for others and almsgiving puts this concern into action.



A pilgrimage is a journey made for a religious reason. Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam and is a **pilgrimage to Makkah**. All Muslims are expected to make this journey **at least once** in their life time as long as they are healthy and wealthy enough to do so. Some communities offer financial support to Muslims who cannot afford to go.

ORIGINS

"Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to undertake it."



Muslims believe that around 4000 years ago, the prophet Ibrahim was told by God to take his wife Hajira and son Ishmael to Arabia. God told Ibrahim to leave his wife and son alone with some food and water, which he did but very soon the supplies ran out.

Desperate for help Hajira ran back and forth between two hills called Safa and Marwah before praying desperately to God for help. Just then Ishmael struck his foot on the ground and water burst forth from the Earth. When Ibrahim returned he was told to **build a shrine dedicated to God**, this became the **Ka'aba**. Ibrahim was told to make the Ka'aba a pure place of worship and to tell others to perform hajj there.

However, this is not the only special thing that happened here. Many years later the city of Makkah was built nearby using the water from **the well of Zamzam** (the well that was created by Ishmael striking the ground with his foot). It is here that **Muhammad began the religion of Islam** when he journeyed from Madinah to Makkah to stop the people of the city worshipping false idols and make them worship one God. **This is seen by many as the first every pilgrimage to Makkah.**



Once someone has completed Hajj they can be referred to as Hajji.

Why?

Hajj is important because:

- It is a requirement.
- It can bring about a deep spiritual transformation making the person more aware of God's presence and a better person as a result.
- It teaches you to be sincere and humble
- It produces inner peace and promotes values of honesty, justice, kindness and respect
- Shows self-discipline
- Promotes unity and equality and strengthens the ummah (world wide community of Muslims)
- It can lead to forgiveness
- It reminds Muslims of the examples set by Ibrahim, Hajira and Ishmael

Important Information part of hajj

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Entering a state of Ihram | Ihram is a sacred state that Muslims must get in before beginning hajj. They do this by performing wudu (ritual washing), praying and putting on Ihram clothing. For men this is clothes of white cloth (symbolising purity and equality) and for women it is clothes of one single colour that cover their whole bodies except their face. |
| Circling the Ka'aba | Hajj begins here. Muslims circle the Ka'aba seven times in an anti-clockwise direction. If possible they will touch the black stone. If not then they raise their hand to acknowledge it. As they circle the Ka'aba they recite the words 'Here I am. Oh Lord, at your service. Praise and blessings to you.' |
| Travelling to Arafat | The crowd then walk back and forth (seven times) between the hills of Safa and Marwah (just as Hajirah did) after this they collect bottles of water from the Zamzam well. Muslims then have to walk or ride 13 miles in extreme heat to Arafat. Halfway there they stop for the night in Mina, where they pray and read the Qur'an. |
| Standing at Arafat | At dawn pilgrims walk from Mina to Arafat where Muhammad preached his last sermon. Here they spend the whole afternoon praying under the hot summer sun (the heat of the sun reminds them what judgement day will be like). Some Muslims sometimes spend the whole afternoon standing to show the strength of their faith. Islam teaches that God will forgive the sins of those who stand at Arafat but only if they know they have done wrong, are determined not to do it again and prepared to make up for what they did. |
| Throwing pebbles at Mina | At the end of the day Muslims walk to Muzdalifah where they spend the night, on the way there they collect 49 pebbles to be used the next day. At Mina there are three stone walls called the Jamarat. The walls represent the devil and temptation pilgrims throw the pebbles at the walls to show they reject evil. After this, pilgrims will then sacrifice an animal the leftover meat is given to the poor this is also done on this day around the world as part of the celebration Id-ul-Adha. Pilgrims then cut their hair. |
| Returning to Makkah | The next day pilgrims return to Makkah to circle the Ka'aba seven times once more. They then return to Mina and spend two more nights there remembering God and reflecting on his blessings before hajj ends. Once hajj is over many Muslims choose to travel to Madinah where they can visit Muhammad's tomb and the tombs of other important religious leaders. |



No one knows for sure where the Ka'aba comes from. Some believe it is the only surviving stone from the original Ka'aba that was built by Ibrahim, some believe it is a meteorite, others it was given by God to erase the sins of Adam, some think it came from paradise. All think it is important.

Jihad

'The person who struggles so that Allah's word is supreme is the one serving Allah's cause.' - Muhammad (pbuh)

Jihad means 'struggle' and refers to the struggle to follow Allah's teachings in the world. It is important to all Muslims but is also one of the 10 obligatory acts of Shi'a Islam.

Different (contrasting) opinions on Jihad.



Most Muslims believe that the internal struggle to be a good Muslim is greater jihad based on what the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said but some disagree and say that holy war is a more reliable interpretation they believe this because they think the Hadith is unreliable.

Some believe there is only one type of jihad (to be a good Muslim) and don't think war or violence are part of jihad at all.

| Greater jihad | Lesser jihad |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many Muslims do not accept this term at all, those that do believe it applies to the everyday life of a Muslim.• Examples of greater jihad include:• Following the Pillars properly• Making the effort to learn the Qur'an• Forgiving someone who has insulted you• Giving up things for the poor or working for social justice | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some teachings say: "The best jihad is the word of justice in front and oppressive ruler" and "The best jihad is the one in which your horse is slain and your blood spilled." These teachings lead some Muslims to believe that jihad can involve violence and fighting to defend Islam in some way.• Fighting for your faith doesn't mean forcing others to be Muslims but rather fighting to defend a society in which you are free to practice Islam for yourselves.• Some interpret lesser jihad to mean holy war these are the condition of a holy war:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Right reasons- to defend Allah not for power or land- Aim must be peace and freedom from a bad leader- Don't continue fighting after the enemy surrenders- Don't damage crops, mosques or water supplies and don't harm women or children- Treat prisoners of war nicely and with mercy. |



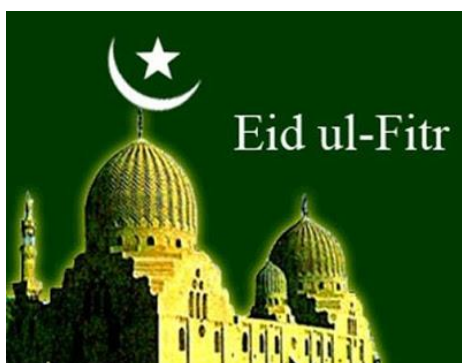
A very small group of Muslims have used jihad to justify their terrorist actions. However, if you look at the rules of holy war and what jihad actually means it is clear that this is a wrong interpretation and terrorist actions would never be justified. For example, in holy war it is forbidden to target civilians, which terrorists do. This is why Muslims refer to terrorist groups such as 'Islamic state' as 'So called Islamic state' to indicate that they don't see them as true Muslims at all.

Which of the 10 Obligatory acts have we not looked at yet?

| Belief (from the 10 obligatory acts) | How it affects the lives of Muslims |
|---|---|
| <p>Amr bil-Ma'roof Ma'roof means anything that is approved by Shari'ah or that is generally recognised as a good action. These include halal (allowed practices)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Will do the right thing and encourage it in others as it is an important part of being a Muslim. -Muslims believe your private prayers (Du'a) will not be listened to if you do not promote good. -Muhammad told Muslims to be good role models |
| <p>Nahi 'Anil-Munkar Munkar means something that is not approved of in Shari'ah law these include haram (forbidden practices)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In the Hadith Muhammad said that if you are capable then you should use your power to stop wrong doing, saying it was a necessary (fard) action. Because it is Fard Muslims will feel they must do it. -Muhammad also said if you didn't have the power to make those changes then you should at least speak out against them and disapprove of them in your heart. - Muslims have a duty to protect society |
| <p>Tawallah 'Expressing love towards good-those in Allah's path'</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shi'a Muslims express this by visiting the shrines of the imams |
| <p>Tabarra 'Expressing hatred/disassociation with those who oppose Allah.'</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Some Shi'a Muslims believe the Caliphs are enemies of Allah as they believe that Ali was the rightful Caliph. |

Sunni Muslims reject the ideas of Tabarra and Tawallah because they believe it causes divisions in the community. They also think that it is **wrong and blasphemous** to 'worship' at the shrines of the Imams. This has caused a lot of conflict between Sunni and Shi'a groups in the past.

Festivals



| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Origins | When Muhammad arrived in Madinah the people there were already celebrating two festivals. Muhammad told them that God had given them two better festivals to celebrate: Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adha. |
| Important because | Celebrating the end of a month of fasting and thanking God for giving them the will power to maintain the fast. Also thanking God for his revelation (the Qur'an). |
| How it is celebrated | Can last from 1-3 days. They gather together for prayers and the imam tells them to forgive and forget and focus on the poor rather than holding grudges. They exchange cards and presents, wear their best clothes and eat special foods. |



| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Origins | Remembers and honours the prophet Ibrahim when he was willing to sacrifice his only son in order to obey God. |
| Important because | Brings community together, opportunity to help the poor and lonely, encourages them to be more like Ibrahim and obey God in all they do. |
| How it is celebrated | Is celebrated as part of hajj. An animal is sacrificed or in countries (like the UK) where this is not allowed money is donated instead or animals are bought from the slaughterhouse. Cards and presents are given and there are usually community celebrations. Lonely neighbours or people in hospital receive lots of visitors so that no one is left out. |



The Festival of Ashura

Ashura is well known as major **Shi'a** festival. However, **Sunni Muslims do celebrate it too** but for them it is very different. A Sunni Muslim celebrates Ashura as the **day of atonement** (a day of forgiving and being forgiven). Sunni Muslims believe this festival is based on when Muhammad went to Madinah and saw that the Jews were fasting, he fasted this day too and many Sunni Muslims also fast as their way of celebrating Ashura.

Shi'a

Shi'a Muslims remember the death of Hussein who was killed for standing up against a corrupt ruler. It reminds Muslims to stand up against oppression and fight for what is right for society.

How is it remembered?

In some places in the world Muslims will try and feel the pain that Hussein suffered by hurting themselves using whips, chains or cutting. However, some Muslims do not think this is right and choose to donate blood instead.

Other ways to remember this event is to re-enact it in plays. Also Shi'a Muslims will wear black, join processions through the streets, beat their chests and listen to prayer after which many Muslims will cry in mourning of Hussein.