

OCR GSCE Islam Beliefs and Teachings

1. Core Beliefs

There are two main branches of Islam, **Sunni** and **Shi'a**. The core beliefs of Sunni Islam are called the "Six Articles of Faith" and are as follows:

1. **Tawhid** – oneness of Allah (God). This includes beliefs about Allah's supremacy (how much greater Allah is than humans) and how there is only one God – Allah.
2. **Malaikah** – angels. This includes beliefs about the roles that angels have.
3. **Kutub** – scripture. This includes beliefs about the Qur'an and other recordings of the Prophets' actions and teachings.
4. **Risalah** – messengers of Allah. This includes beliefs about prophets in Islam that have spread the word of Allah.
5. **Akhirah** – afterlife/day of judgement. This includes beliefs about what happens when we die.
6. **Al-Qad'd** – predestination. This includes the Sunni belief about Allah's foreknowledge and our free will and how we are destined to do what Allah knows we will do.

TASK: Make flash cards for each one adding a symbol for each to help you remember.

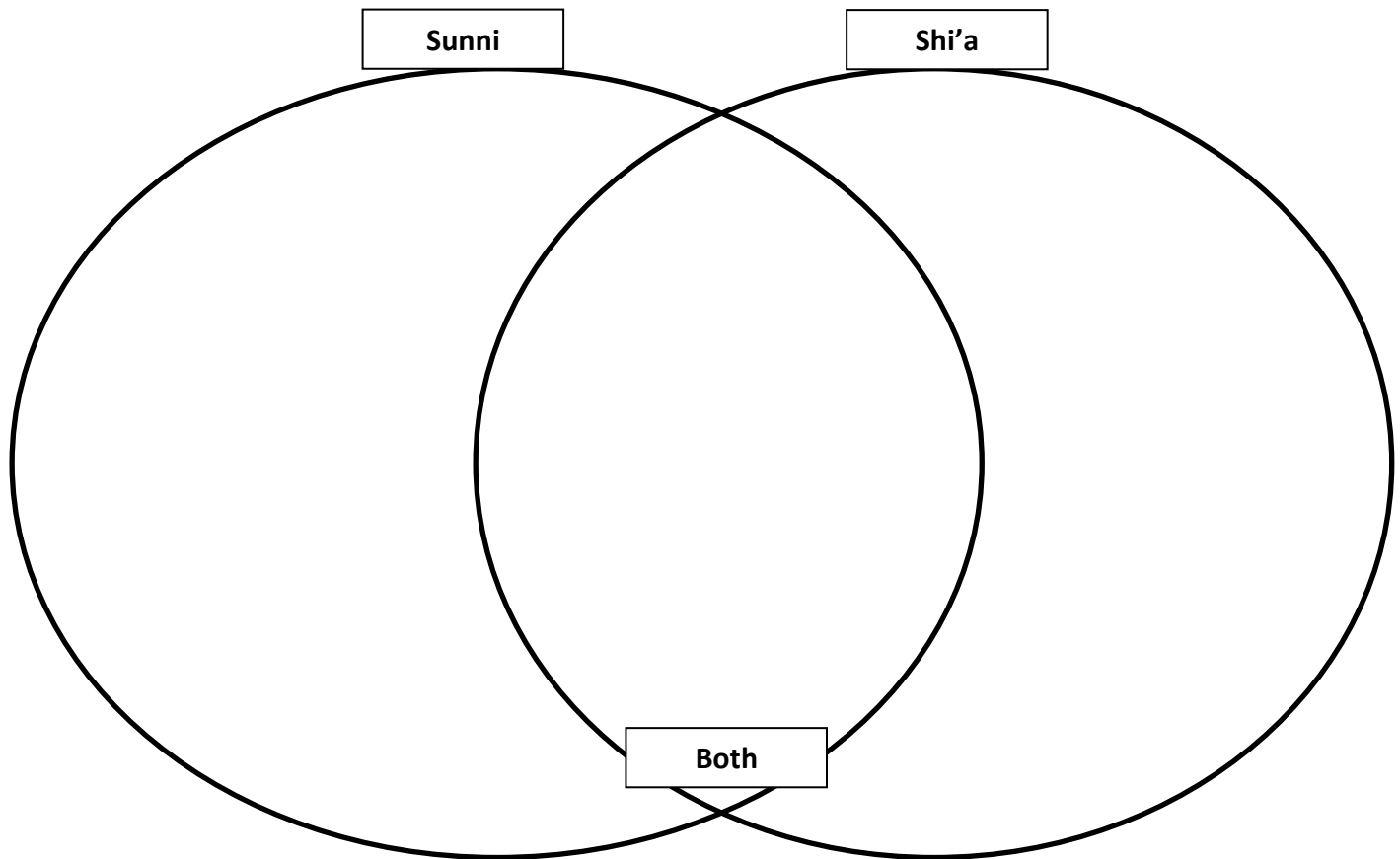
Shi'a core beliefs are referred to as the five roots of Usul Ad-Din (meaning principles of faith).

1. **Tawhid** – oneness of Allah (God). This includes beliefs about Allah's supremacy (how much greater Allah is than humans) and how there is only one God – Allah.
 2. **Al-Adl** – divine justice. This is the Shi'a belief about what it means for Allah to be just or fair.
 3. **Nubuwwah** – Prophethood. This includes beliefs about the importance of the prophets.
 4. **Imamah** – importance of imams. This refers to how important the role of imams are within Islam.
 5. **Ma'ad** – resurrection/day of judgement. This is the belief about what happens when we die.
- Both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims believe in the Day of Judgement where all will be resurrected.

TASK: Give the tree below 5 roots and on each root, write one of the 5 roots of usul ad-Din:



TASK: Fill in the Venn diagram showing which beliefs are shared between Sunni and Shi'a and which are different.



2. Al - Imamah – Shi'a Islam

The historical divide between Sunni and Shi'a traditions of Islam was based on disagreements about who should have succeeded Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) as leader of the Muslim community.

After Muhammad's death the majority of Muslims at the time declared Abu Bakr his successor, and he was known as the first Caliph. Abu Bakr was from the Quraysh tribe, the same as Muhammad (PBUH) and Muhammad had married his daughter.

After Abu Bakr's death, other caliphs were appointed and Ali, who was Muhammad's (PBUH) uncle's son, became the fourth caliph appointed. Ali was also the second person after Muhammad's (PBUH) wife Khadijah, to believe in his prophecy.

However, for Shi'a Muslims, Ali is the true successor of Muhammad (PBUH). They refuse to acknowledge the three caliphs before him because they believe Muhammad (PBUH) identified Ali as his successor.



Caliph – a successor of Muhammad (PBUH) as the spiritual leader of Islam.

In Shi'a

The first eleven Imams were martyred (a person who willingly suffers death rather than renounce his or her religion) and the twelfth according to Shi'a tradition, is in hiding. They believe he is a living breathing human but will only come out of hiding and be sent by Allah to bring peace and justice as the end of the world. There are signs that are believed to signal the coming of the twelfth Imam, the Second Coming of Jesus.

For this question which would normally be a 6 marker question in an exam paper, you need to explain the differences between Sunni beliefs about imams and Shi'a beliefs about Imams.

[illegible]

For Shi'a Muslims, they believe the following. In the right hand column, add in your own thoughts – does this make sense? Do you think this is the case?

Shi'a belief	My thoughts
There is an objective framework of right and wrong. Things are right or wrong no matter the circumstance or who does the action.	
Allah is perfect and always acts in a way that is morally right.	
Humans are able to use their reason to work out what is right and wrong and using their free will, they should act in the right way.	
At the Day of Judgement Allah will judge people according to this moral framework and send the righteous to heaven and the wicked to hell.	
There is therefore no such thing as predestination (where Allah determines everything that happens) as humans have free will, which is why Allah can judge them. Shi'a Muslims believe it would be unfair for Allah to judge Muslims for action he determined they would do.	

4. Tawhid - Nature of Allah

Tawhid is a shared belief between both Shi'a and Sunni Muslims. They believe that Allah alone created the earth and sustains it. It encompasses all beliefs about Allah which include:

- Allah is infinite – He has no beginning or end. He is not created nor can he be destroyed.
- Allah is omnipotent – all powerful
- Allah is omniscient – all knowing.
- Allah is merciful – He is forgiving
- Allah is benevolent – He is loving and helps humans to live according to His will through sending messenger (prophets) to guide.
- Allah is transcendent – He is greater than any human and beyond our understanding
- Allah is immanent – He is closer to all humans and involved in their lives.
- Allah is just and fair – Only Allah can have perfect judgement on all humans.

TASK: Make a list of all the qualities that could conflict with each other and cause an issue:

TASK: in the left hand column, write qualities that the quotes link with. Some may have more than one quality that you could link it with:

Quotes	Qualities of Allah
"In the name of Allah, the Entirely merciful, the especially merciful."	
"God has not taken to Himself any son, nor is there any god with Him: For each god would have taken of that which he created and some of them would have tried to overcome others..."	
"Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah the eternal, absolute; He did not give birth nor was He born; and there is none like Him."	
"God is the Creator of everything. He is the guardian over everything. To Him belong the keys of Heaven and the earth."	
"He is God; there is no god but He, He is the Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the All-Merciful and the All-Compassionate. He is God, there is no god but He. He is the King, Holy, Peace, Giver of security, the All-Preserver, the All-Mighty, the All-Compeller, the Supreme.. He is God the creator, the inventor of all things, the Shaper of all forms.."	
"To every people [was sent] a Messenger: when their messenger comes, the matter will be judged between them with justice and the will not be wronged."	
And indeed We have created man and woman and we know what his soul whispers to him, and we are closer to him than his jugular vein."	

5. Risalah – Prophethood

Prophets, or messengers of Allah, are Allah's means for communicating with humans. Muslims believe that humans are imperfect and therefore they need Allah's guidance to lead them in how to live their life. Prophets pass on the teachings of Allah and also serve as examples of how to live life.

However, prophets are humans and therefore are limited in their knowledge and should not be worshipped.

Muslims believe in many prophets, some whom you may well remember from looking at the Bible. However, Muslims believe that final word of Allah was revealed in the Qur'an by Muhammad (PBUH) because that is the only scripture that hasn't been changed and remains in the original language it was written in.

TASK: For each prophet, draw a symbol to illustrate their story but do **not** draw the prophet themselves.

Adam

Adam was the first man created by Allah and was created in Allah's own image. Allah wanted Adam to act for Him on earth. In Islam, this is called a khalifa. The Angels questioned Allah when he decided to make Adam as they thought this would cause disorder to Allah's perfect creation.

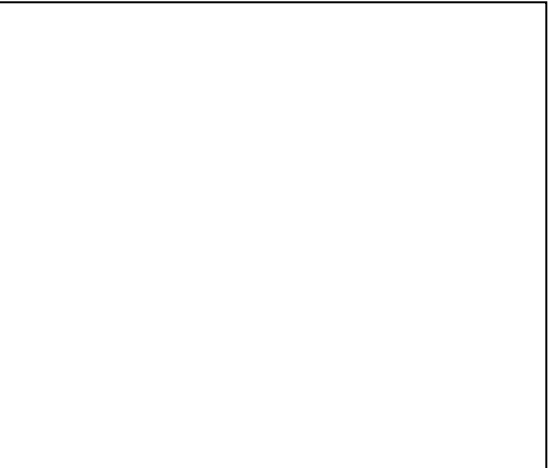
Allah made Adam anyway using clay made from dust and water and gave Adam the ability to reason and make decisions. Once he was created, he was tested and was able to answer all questions. The Angels all bowed to him, except Iblis (Satan) who considered himself to be better than Adam since he was made from fire, whereas Adam was made from dust. Allah kicked Iblis out and ever since, Iblis tries to misguide Adam and all of his descendants.

Hawwa (Eve) was then made for Adam to live with him in al-Jannah (Paradise). The only thing they were not allowed to do was the eat the fruit from one specific tree but they broke this rule as Iblis managed to tempt them and they were sent out of al-Jannah but because Allah is merciful, He helped guide them and their descendants and was kind to them.

Ibrahim

Ibrahim (Abraham) was born into a polytheistic society (a society that believes in more than one god) to a father who was an **idol** maker and yet he believe in only one God and that idols were not worth worshipping.

He began preached to people about the fact that there was only one God (Allah) but his message was rejected and he was kicked out of Babylon. He followed Allah's guidance which led him and his wife to Canaan (modern day Palestine). Ibrahim had his first son with his second wife Hajar and he was named Isma'il. He later had a second son, who was named Ishaq (Isaac), with his first wife Sarah. He became known as the father of the Arab people and both his sons became prophets of Islam.



Idol – an image or representation of a god used in object worship.

Ibrahim was tested by Allah and told to sacrifice his son Isma'il. Iblis tried to tempt him and told him three times not to do it. Despite this, Ibrahim listened to Allah and was rewarded by Allah who provided a ram for sacrifice instead of his son.

Ibrahim is considered one of the greatest examples for Muslims to follow because of his commitment and faith. He is known as the father of monotheism (belief in one God), a friend to Allah and when Muslims pray, they ask Allah to bless Ibrahim and his family.

Isma'il

Isma'il was born as a blessing from Allah. Ibrahim was told by Allah to leave Isma'il and his mother, Hajar, at the place where the Kaaba now stands in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Hajar kept asking Ibrahim why he was leaving them there where there was no life or even water, but Ibrahim trusted Allah and gave them some dates and a flask of water and left. When their flask of water was almost finished, Hajar ran between two hills seven times in search of water. When she was about to leave for the eighth time, Isma'il kicked the ground and water sprang up from it. They then settled there.

After Hajar's death, Ibrahim visited Isma'il and rebuilt the Kaaba with him which is today, the holiest site in Islam. Every year, millions of pilgrims go to Mecca for Hajj (their pilgrimage) and Muslims pray in the direction of the Kaaba from wherever they are in the world.

Musa

Musa (Moses) lived at a time when Israelites were being enslaved in Egypt and the Pharaoh of Egypt ordered all the baby Israelite boys to be killed so that they would not grow into an army that could defeat him. Musa's mother followed Allah's guidance and put Musa in a basket and sent him down the river to escape. He was then picked up by the Pharaoh's wife and Musa was raised as part of Pharaoh's family. Pharaoh's wife, who adopted him, hired a nanny to take care of him who turned out to be Musa's own mother. For Muslims, this demonstrates Allah's care for humans and power to protect.

Musa witnessed an Egyptian beating an Israelite slave once he had grown up and, in an attempt to stop the beating, he accidentally killed the Egyptian. He fled Egypt as he did not want to get caught but Allah called him back. He then followed Allah's guidance to ask Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Pharaoh refused, despite many plagues that Allah sent including, rivers turning to blood, locusts eating all the crops and disease spreading.



The Kaaba in Mecca, Saudi Arabia

Eventually Pharaoh did let the Israelites go but changed his mind soon after they had left. The Egyptians chased after them but Allah, through Musa, opened the Red Sea to allow the Israelites to cross and came back together as the Egyptians tried to cross, drowning them. This demonstrates how Allah keeps a close eye on his servants and punishes those who oppose him.

Allah revealed the Tawrat (Torah) to Musa as Musa led the Israelites in the way of Allah. Musa is described as being a grateful servant of Allah's and even though the Israelites were not always obedient, Allah honours Musa.

Dawud

Dawud (David) was both a prophet and eventually became king of the Israelites. One of the famous heroic things that Dawud is known for is that he defeated the giant Philistine soldier, Goliath when the rest of the Israelites were too scared to fight him. This earned a reward from the King at the time, Talut (Saul) and he was made commander of the army. Talut became jealous of Dawud and eventually Talut was killed and Dawud was crowned as king. He is regarded as a good ruler who led the Israelites to have a fear and respect for Allah. He had the Zabur (Psalms) revealed to him which contains lessons and guidance for Muslims to follow today.



Isa

Isa (Jesus) was born to the Virgin Mary (Maryam) and had no father. He also spoke while in the cradle and performed many miracles such as healing people and raising people from the dead. He is believed to have predicted the coming of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

According to Islam, Isa did not die but was taken into Allah's presence. While Christians believe Jesus is the son of God, Muslims believe he is only a human, chosen by Allah, to deliver his word, like all other prophets.

Isa is considered a 'law-giver' and had the Injil (Gospels) revealed to him. Sunni Muslims believe he will return on the Day of Resurrection at the end of the world and make war until all other religions except Islam are defeated.



TASK: Explain the importance of Ibrahim for Muslims.

For this question, you must give examples of things Musa did as well as explaining how this makes him important for Muslims. An example if I were answering the same question about Musa would be: Musa followed Allah's command to return to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to leave. Although Musa was nervous, he was still willing to do this and Allah then freed the Israelites. This shows Musa is important as he is an example of how Muslims should always follow what Allah commands, no matter how worried they might be to do so.

6. The Life of Muhammad

Muhammad is regarded as the most important prophet because he was the final prophet (meaning there were no other prophets to come after him). The Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad and has never been changed so it is regarded as the literal word of Allah.

Muhammad was born around 570CE in Mecca. Both his parents died and he was sent to live with his uncle at the age of eight. On a trip to Syria, a Christian Monk, Bahira, identified Muhammad (PBUH) as a prophet. He gained a reputation of trust and honesty and married a wealthy business woman called Khadija who was 20 years older than him. The building the Kaaba, which was originally built to worship the one God Allah, had been filled with idols. Muhammad (PBUH) helped to rebuild it after a flood. The final part of the rebuild included the setting of the black stone into the corner of the Kaaba. Muhammad (PBUH) was the first to arrive to do this but he arranged for everyone to have the honour of placing the black stone together.

Muhammad then rejected all idols and became a monotheist (only worshipping one god). An Angel then appeared to Muhammad (PBUH) in a cave outside Mecca and commanded him to read three times. Muhammad (PBUH) told the Angel that he could not read but the Angel commanded him over and over. He then recited the verses as if he knew them by heart. Qur'an actually means "recitation" and is meant to be recited out loud. Khadija became Muhammad's first follower and the first to follow Islam.

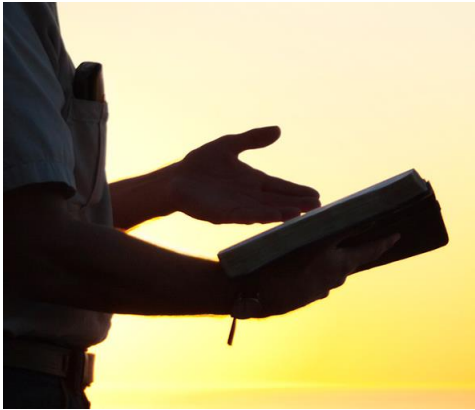
The Night of Power was believed to have taken place during the last ten nights of Ramadan (the month Muslims fast in) and is celebrated still by Muslims today. It is when Muhammad (PBUH) is believed to have received the first verses of the Qur'an. Muhammad began to preach publicly which gained him many followers. Muhammad (PBUH) then left the city of Mecca to go to Yathrib, which is known as the Hijrah or immigration.

The community of Yathrib were the first to adopt the principles of Islam. It then became known as Medinah meaning city of the Prophet. This is where instructions were given on how to pray, when to fast, giving to charity and on pilgrimage.

There were then a series of battles between Mecca and Medinah and the idols of Mecca were destroyed and the city was reclaimed as a Muslim city. In 632CE Muhammad (PBUH) gave his farewell speech and died.

TASK: Cut out the cards and stick them in the correct order. You can use the pictures below to add to the timeline.

Series of battles between 624CE and 630CE between people of Makkah and Muslims of Medinah. 630CE idols of Makkah destroyed and city reclaimed as a Muslim city.	Married Khadijah, a wealthy business woman	Qur'an means 'recitation'. Khadijah was the first to accept Muhammad (PBUH) as a prophet and to commit to following Islam.
On a trip to Syria, a Christian monk, Bahira, identified Muhammad (PBUH) as a Prophet	Muhammad (PBUH) becomes monotheist. Rejected idols. Worshipped only Allah. Tawhid.	The Night of Power – Laylat al-Qad'r Believed to have taken place during the last ten nights of Ramadan. Muslims will often remember this during Ramadan with devotion to prayer and reading Qur'an.
Reputation for justice and honesty. Gained titles Al-Amin (the Trustworthy) and As-Sadiq (the Truthful)	Makkah – a holy city. In this was a cube-shaped building containing 360 idols. Muhammad (PBUH) helped in its rebuilding after floods.	Community at Yathrib were the first to live by the Islamic principles. Marks start of Islamic calendar (AH) – 'in the year of Hijrah'.
Angel appeared to Muhammad (PBUH) in a cave outside Makkah, commanding him to read 3 times.	Muhammad (PBUH) was first to arrive to place the stone. He arranged for everyone to take part in placing the stone using a sheet.	Public preaching gained many followers but also opposition. 622 CE Muhammad (PBUH) left Makkah and went to city of Yathrib. Hijrah (emigration).
Final part of the rebuild was to place the Hajar al-Aswad (sacred black stone from Jannah) on the East wall of the Kabba. Arguments arose.	Muhammad (PBUH) recited the verses as if they had been written on his heart. Angel Jibril declared him a messenger of Allah.	Yathrib became known as Madinah (City of the Prophet). Instructions given on prayer, fasting, charity and pilgrimage.
	Farewell speech in last pilgrimage to Makkah (632CE) Muhammad (PBUH) died.	Born in Makkah, Arabia (570 CE)



The Seal of the Prophets

Muhammad (PBUH) is known as the seal of the prophets because he gave the final revelation from Allah. Muslims believe all prophets are messengers of Allah but that their message has been distorted as texts like the Bible have been translated and therefore adjusted. The Qur'an on the other hand has remained in the same language it was originally written in and even if a Muslim does not speak Arabic as their first language, they will learn it to recite the Qur'an.

Shi'a Muslims share the belief that Muhammad (PBUH) was the final prophet but they also believe in the twelve Imams and that Allah communicates new messages to them through inspiration.

TASK: Look at the quotes below. Next to each, explain what it says about the role of the prophets.

"Muhammad (PBUH) is no more than a Messenger. Indeed many messengers have passed away before him. So if he was to die or be killed, would you turn back on your heels (to unbelief)? And he who turns back on his heels will never harm Allah at all; but Allah will reward the grateful."	
"Cursed were those who disbelieved among the Children of Israel by the tongue of David and of Jesus, the son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed and habitually transgressed."	
"And we have already written in the Zabur (Psalms) after the (previous) mention that the land (of Paradise) shall be inherited by My righteous servants."	
"Say 'I am not something new among the messengers, nor do I know what will be done with me or with you. I only follow that which is revealed to me, and I am not but a clear warner.'"	

TASK: Describe why Muhammad (PBUH) is unique amongst all the other prophets in Islam.

7. Kutub - Books

Muslims believe that Allah's word was recorded in written word in the form of several bits of scripture.

The Word of Allah as given to certain prophets was recorded in written form:

- The Tawrat (Torah) of Musa
- The Zabur (Psalms) of Dawud
- The Injil (Gospels) of Isa
- Suhuf Ibrahim (Scrolls of Abraham)

All of these scriptures became distorted so over time and therefore were not completely accurate. Allah therefore gave his final revelation to Muhammad (PBUH). Muhammad (PBUH) recited the words given to him by Allah exactly as they were given to him and these became the Qur'an. It is only the true word of Allah when it is in its original form in Arabic.

As the Qur'an is regarded as the literal exact Word of Allah, it is treated with the utmost respect and it kept at the highest point in the room, above all other books. Sunni Muslims believe the Qur'an is eternal and has always existed, just not in its written form. Shi'a Muslims however, do not believe this but do believe it is the essence of Allah and that it can be added to the Imams who are also able to interpret the message perfectly.

Other sources of authority

The Qur'an forms the basis of Islamic law known as **Shari'ah** law. This governs the way Muslims behave and in the UK there are Shari'ah law courts that Muslims can go to in order to settle disputes between themselves. However, Shari'ah law does not supersede British law. When Muslims get married for example, they may do so in Shari'ah law courts to have it recognised under Islamic law but they may also do so with a marriage license that is recognised under British law.

The Qur'an can sometimes be difficult to interpret and there are issues that arise in modern society that are not addressed in the Qur'an. Therefore, Muslim scholars also look to examples of what the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said and did.

The Sunna contains records of what Muhammad (PBUH) did

The Hadith contains records of what Muhammad (PBUH) said.

These are of varying reliability however as they can be second, third, fourth (and so on) hand accounts of what happened. Using these texts along with the Qur'an help to inform Muslim scholars on what Shari'ah law should be.

Shi'a Muslims also refer to the Hadith of Ali (whom they believe was the rightful successor of Muhammad) to help them make decisions.

TASK: Answer the following:

- a) Do you think holy books should be translated to make them more accessible? Try to think of why someone would disagree with you.

- b) What does retaining the original language of the Qur'an suggest about the value that Muslims place upon it?

- c) How does commitment to learning Arabic demonstrate a Muslim's love for Allah?

8. Malaikah - Angels

The first thing Allah created were angels. They were created from **Nur** (divine light). They do not have free will and therefore can only enact Allah's will and are therefore free from sin. They are immortal and do not have physical needs like humans do. They are believed to be there to help guide humans and they are the means through which Allah communicates with humans and they may do so by taking on human form. They also record the deeds of all humans ready for Judgement Day when they will welcome humans that Allah has judged as worthy into heaven and will throw those who haven't been judged as worthy into hell. Muhammad (PBUH) makes it clear that it is the intention of the action that counts, so something that was intended to be a good deed will be recorded as such even if the action did not lead to a good consequence. If someone thinks about doing something bad but does not act on it, it will be recorded as a bad deed, only if it is acted upon will it be recorded as a bad deed.

TASK: For each angel, draw a symbol to show their role. Do **not** draw the angels themselves!

Jibril

Jibril is the chief of the angels and brought Allah's message to Muhammad (PBUH) and the other prophets. He often takes the form of a human to communicate with prophets but Muhammad (PBUH) is believed to be the one of the only



people to have seen his actual form and he was described as having 600 wings that covered the sky.

Izra'il

Known as the angel of death, he is responsible for ending each person's life by taking their final breath. Izra'il separates the person's soul from their body and Muslims believe that for those who are believers is a welcomed sight as they know they will be taken to Paradise with Allah whereas those who are unbelievers dread the sight of Izra'il as they know this will mean they will be punished for their lack of belief.

Mika'il

Believed to be the guard of heaven and also sends rain, thunder and lightning to earth as Allah commands it.

Israfil

Israfil is the angel of Last Judgement and blows the trumpet to warn of the Day of Resurrection (or Day of Judgement). He is always prepared to blow the trumpet and is waiting for Allah's command. The first blast of the trumpet will destroy everything on earth and the second will bring all humans back to life.

TASK: Answer:

- a) What are angels made from?

- b) What ways are angels different to humans

- c) "It is right that our deeds in this life should affect our next life." Include possible Islamic responses.

TASK: Explain what each quote shows about Islamic beliefs about angels:

“[All] praise is [due] to Allah, Creator of the heavens and the earth, [who] made the angels messengers having wings, two or three or four. He increases in creation what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.” **Surah 35:1**

“And We have not made the keepers of the Fire except angels. And We have not made their number except as a trial for those who disbelieve - that those who were given the Scripture will be convinced and those who have believed will increase in faith and those who were given the Scripture and the believers will not doubt and that those in whose hearts is hypocrisy and the disbelievers will say, "What does Allah intend by this as an example?" Thus does Allah leave astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills. And none knows the soldiers of your Lord except Him. And mention of the Fire is not but a reminder to humanity.” **Surah 74:31**

“All living creatures and all angels in the heavens and on the earth are in prostration before Allah; and never do they behave in arrogant defiance.” **Surah 16:49**

9. Al-Qadr - Predestination

Muslims believe that everything that happens is planned by Allah and is believed to have foreknowledge of all things including things that haven't happened yet. Muslims believe that this was written before the creation of anything and it cannot be changed except through Allah's will. Muslims therefore believe that everything should be considered to be the will of Allah and therefore, they should not be disheartened when things go wrong, nor should they feel boastful when things go well for them.

TASK: What issues can arise from Allah's foreknowledge, human free will and judgement?

Mu'tazilah Muslims do not believe in predestination as they believe humans have complete free will and therefore, control the world around them. They are therefore able to be judged for their free actions on the Day of Judgement. Once Allah's judgement has been made, there is no turning back, His judgement is absolute and eternal.

Ash'ari Muslims tried to find a middle ground and believe that Allah created everything, including human action, but humans can acquire the act and make a choice between the right and wrong action. Allah can also use **Divine Intercession** to show mercy and remove sins from sinners. Allah requires people to use their freewill to make decisions even if they choose the evil actions but Allah already knows what action they will take. They will then be judged for their choices but Allah already knows what this judgement will be.

TASK: Explain different Muslim views on predestination. Choose two or three to explain and explain the differences between them.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper appears to be a standard notebook page or a sheet of stationery.

TASK: Which view makes the most sense to you and why?

10. Akhirah – Afterlife

In Islam, humans are viewed as stewards whose role it is to make Allah's creation be the way Allah intended it. Guidance on how to do this is in the Qur'an, Hadith and Sunna. Muslims believe that when Allah chooses to end the world, the Day of Judgement will come and at this time will be when all the dead are resurrected and judged. This is very similar to Christian beliefs about the Day of Judgement.

There are several elements to what Muslims believe will happen when we die and when we are judged.



TASK: For each, draw a representation of what is being described:

Barzakh: This is a period of waiting where Muslims who die before the Day of Judgement go to wait the Final Judgement. Some Muslims believe that the experience a person has in Barzakh will be dependent upon how they have acted in their life – it may be a difficult experience if they have behaved badly or an enjoyable one if they have acted well. Others believe that people are given temporary bodies which are either light or dark depending on their actions, so a person is aware what their final judgement will be when it comes.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a representation of the concept of Barzakh.

Day of Judgement: There will be signs that the world is ending. Sunni Muslims believe that Isa will reappear. Some Muslims believe he will bring together true Muslims; others believe he will lead a battle until Islam is the only religion left. Shi'a Muslims believe the Twelfth Imam will reappear out of hiding.

On the Day of Judgement, Allah will bring His perfect judgement. This life is seen as a test and those who believe that there is "no god but Allah and Muhammad (PBUH) is His messenger" will go to Paradise, while unbelievers will go to hell. Some Muslims believe that those in hell might eventually

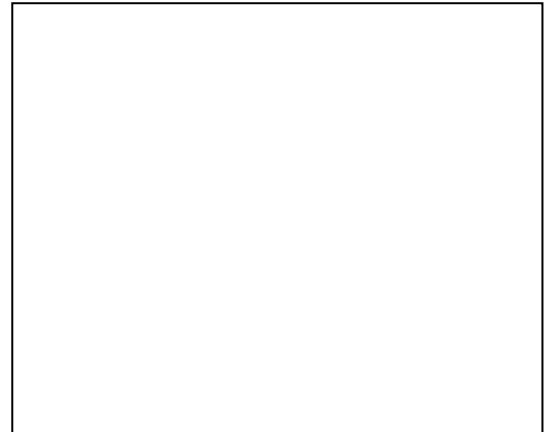
A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a student to draw a representation of the concept of the Day of Judgement.

be let into Paradise after an appropriate length of punishment but the sin of **shirk** (putting something above Allah, including worshipping other gods or multiple gods) will lead to someone permanently being in hell.

The resurrection will be involve people's physical bodies being re-created and is described as passing over hell on a narrow bridge with the weight of your bad deeds on your back. Those who fall into hell due to the weight of their bad deeds will remain there forever. There are two exceptions to this: those who die fighting in the cause of God (martyrs) will go immediately to Paradise and those who are enemies of Islam will go immediately to hell.

Al-Jannah - Heaven

Described as a physical place, Paradise, or Heaven, is a beautiful and eternal garden where people are young again and where they are happy and enjoy the garden. People will be welcomed by angels and there will be nothing negative and no sin and instead there will be beautiful mansions and everlasting bliss. There are eight gates to heaven including Baab As-Sadaqah (for those who give lots to charity), Baab Al-Hajj (for those who have completed the pilgrimage called Hajj) and Baab Al-Imam (for those who constantly work hard to obey Allah).



Jahannam - Hell

Also described as a physical place, it is a place of eternal pain and punishment. It is a place of fear and darkness and with a fire that is "almost bursting with fury". Those who have sinned but are believers will spend a certain length of time there which will purify them of their sins. Those who are not believers however, will be there for eternity.

Some Muslims believe these descriptions of heaven and hell are metaphorical and are described in physical terms so that we can understand them as humans, however most Muslims believe that since the Qur'an is Allah's direct Word, it is to be taken literally.



Martyrdom in Islam

Martyrs exist in every religion and refer to those who struggle for their faith and end up being killed for it. In Islam, it is believed that dying in this way will lead a person straight to al-Jannah. Some have misunderstood this teaching and as a result, have committed extremely violent atrocities against non-Muslims and justified suicide bombing using this teaching on martyrdom. It is important to remember that this is not what the Qur'an teaches and in fact that Qur'an says "*Let there be no compulsion in religion*" meaning no one should be forced to be a particular religion, people must choose freely.

This impact of teachings about life after death has effects the lives of Muslims as they believe that Allah will judge them based on their actions in this life. This might motivate them to always try and do the right thing. It may also give Muslims the sense that physical possessions are not so important as they won't last forever whereas the afterlife will continue on eternally. Muslims may also worry about those who do not believe in Islam as they believe they will be sent to hell for eternity and this may cause them to share their faith with as many people as possible.

TASK: Give three specific examples of things that a Muslim might do as a result of their beliefs about the afterlife.

TASK: Pick one of the following quotes and explain what it shows about the afterlife.

“Except for those who repent and correct themselves and make evident [what they concealed]. Those - I will accept their repentance, and I am the Accepting of repentance, the Merciful.” **Surah 2:160**

“And never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead. Rather, they are alive with their Lord, receiving provision,” **Surah 3:169**

“There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong.” **Surah 2:256**

TASK: “Aakhirah is the main belief that will affect the way a Muslim chooses to live.”

This is the standard way a 15 mark question will be presented in the exam. To answer, you should write a short essay which includes one paragraph on why some might agree with the statement, one paragraph on why some might disagree with the statement, and a clear conclusion with which you think it the stronger argument.

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