

CHRISTIAN BELIEFS: Old Testament

The Bible is not just one book, but an entire library, with stories, songs, poetry, letters and history, as well as literature that might more obviously qualify as 'religious'.

The Christian Bible has two sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the original Hebrew Bible, the sacred scriptures of the Jewish faith, written at different times between about 1200 and 165 BC. The New Testament books were written by Christians in the first century AD.

The Old Testament - The Law

The Hebrew Bible has 39 books, written over a long period of time, and is the literary archive of the ancient nation of Israel. It was traditionally arranged in three sections. The first five books, Genesis to Deuteronomy. They are not 'law' in a modern Western sense: Genesis is a book of stories, with nothing remotely like rules and regulations, and though the other four do contain community laws they also have many narratives. The Hebrew word for Law ('Torah') means 'guidance' or 'instruction', and that could include stories offering everyday examples of how people were meant to live as well as legal requirements.

These books were later called the 'Pentateuch', and tradition attributed them to Moses. Some parts undoubtedly date from that period, but as things changed old laws were updated and new ones produced, and this was the work of later editors over several centuries.

The Old Testament - The Prophets

The Prophets is the largest section of the Hebrew Bible, and has two parts ('former prophets' and 'latter prophets').

The books of 'latter prophets' preserve sayings and stories of religious and political activists ('prophets') who served as the spiritual conscience of the nation throughout its history, reminding people of the social values that would reflect the character of God. Some books are substantial (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel), others are much shorter (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi). Sometimes, the prophets could be mime artists and dramatists, accompanying their actions by short spoken messages, often delivered in poetic form. These were the sound bites of their day, which made it easy for others to remember them and then write them down.

The 'former prophets' consist of Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings. They are history books, but what makes them also 'prophets' is that they not only record information, they interpret it, explaining its significance in relation to other events in the history of Israel, and of the wider world of their day.

The Old Testament - The Writings

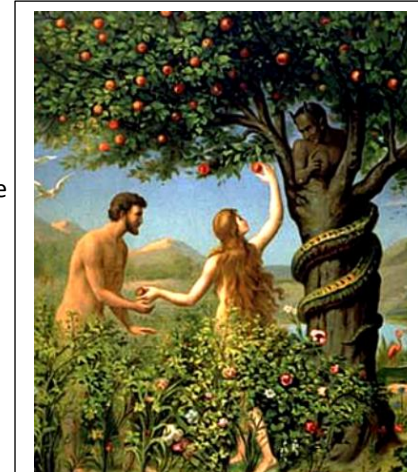
These include Psalms (songs, prayers and liturgies for worship), Proverbs (sayings of homespun wisdom), Job (a drama that explores the nature of suffering), plus the 'five scrolls' ('Megiloth') which were grouped together because each had associations with a particular religious festival: Ruth (the Jewish Feast of Weeks, also called Shavuot), Song of Solomon (Passover), Ecclesiastes (Tabernacles), Lamentations (Destruction of Jerusalem), and Esther (Purim). This section also includes the last books of the Hebrew Bible to be written: Ezra, Nehemiah, and 1-2 Chronicles (all history books), and Daniel (visions of a better world).

1. How is the Bible separated?
2. How many books does the Hebrew Bible have?
3. How was it originally arranged?
4. What were the first five books later called?
5. What stories do the books of 'latter prophets' tell?
6. What stories do the books of 'former prophets' tell?
7. What are Psalms?
8. What are Proverbs?
9. Name three of the stories told in the Writings
10. What do the writings also include?

Stretch: Read the story of Adam and Eve below. Why do you think God was so frustrated with them?

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, **3** but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'⁴ "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. **5** "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. **7** Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.



New Testament

The New Testament

The New Testament has 27 books, written between about 50 and 100 AD, and falling naturally into two sections: the Gospels, which tell the story of Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John); and the Letters (or epistles) - written by various Christian leaders to provide guidance for the earliest church communities.

The Letters

Letters were the natural way for itinerant church leaders to communicate with their converts, and the earliest ones were written before the Gospels. With some exceptions (Romans, Hebrews), they were not meant to be formal presentations of Christian belief, but offered advice to people who were working out how to express their commitment to Jesus in ways that would be relevant to the many different cultural contexts in which they found themselves throughout the Roman empire. Reading them can be like listening to one half of a conversation, as the writers give answers to questions sent to them either verbally or in writing. Paul was the most prolific writer of such letters, though he was not the only one.

The Gospels

The Gospels were written to present the life and teachings of Jesus in ways that would be appropriate to different readerships, and for that reason are not all the same. They were not intended to be biographies of Jesus, but selective accounts that would demonstrate his significance for different cultures.

The first three are effectively different editions of the same materials, and for that reason are known as the 'synoptic gospels'. The writer of Luke also wrote the Acts of the Apostles, which tells the story of how Christianity spread from being a small group of Jewish believers in the time of Jesus to becoming a worldwide faith in less than a generation.

The New Testament concludes with the book of Revelation, which begins with a series of letters to seven churches in the area of Asia Minor (modern Turkey), but then offers a visionary presentation of the meaning of all things, from creation to the end of the world.

1. How many books are in the New Testament?
2. When were they written?
3. What two sections are the Bible stories split into?
4. What was the main use of the Letters?
5. What is reading them said to be like?
6. Who was the most prolific writer?
7. Why were Gospels written?
8. What were they not intended to be?
9. What story does the book of Revelation tell?
10. Do you think that the New Testament does well to spread the message so quickly?

Stretch: Read the Parable of the Sheep and Goats and explain what you think its message is.

Parable of the Sheep and Goats

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' 41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

44 "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' 45 "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' 46 "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."



Christianity as a world faith

Christianity as a world faith

Around one in three of the world's population claim to be Christians. Some are more committed to their faith than others but there is no doubting the fact that Christianity is a major influence on the lives of many people. Christianity is over 2000 years old, with roots that go even further back in history. It has had a massive influence on the history of the world and still exercises a great influence in the present day, even on people who are not Christians.

Christianity is founded on a belief that 2000 years ago Jesus died and rose from the dead. Christianity initially grew as early followers spread the teachings of the resurrected Jesus, and the messages inspired by Jesus' disciples and the apostle Paul. In the fourth century, it became the official religion of the Roman Empire when the Emperor Constantine became a Christian.

In 1054 the faith split into Western Roman Christianity (now known as the Catholic Church), led by the Pope, and Eastern Orthodox Christianity. These two groups still exist today, although the Western Roman Church in England was split in the sixteenth century when King Henry VIII declared himself the head of the newly established Church of England. Also during this period Christians in Western Europe were breaking away from the Roman Church, and the Protestant branch of Christianity was forming. This is known as the Reformation. The Protestant Church has, since then, split further into groups (called denominations) such as the Baptist and Pentecostal Churches. The three main branches of Christianity (Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant) now exist side by side and all three are rightly called Christianity.

Beliefs about the Nature of God

Even though the three branches of Christianity have some differences in their beliefs, ways of worship and lifestyle, their belief in God is universal. Christianity is a monotheistic religion. This means all Christians believe there is only one God, who they believe creates and sustains all that exists. God is believed to work through history, guiding and inspiring people to do God's will for the good of all people. Christians claim to have a relationship with God and communicate with God through prayer. A key Christian statement of belief called the Nicene Creed begins: 'We believe in one God'. The first of the Ten Commandments that Christians should obey is:

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:2-3)

Although many Christians refer to God as 'he' and 'Father', they do not believe that God is male. God is thought to exist without the restrictions of gender, showing both traditional ideas of male characteristics, such as power and strength, together with traditional ideas of female characteristics, such as care, gentleness and love. Describing God is very difficult. God is sometimes pictured in the sky in a human form but Christians do not believe God has a physical human body. The Bible says that God is spirit (John 4:24) and, in Luke 24:39, it is written that a spirit does not have flesh and bones. However in Hebrews 1:3, it says that Jesus was God's son, and is the exact representation of God on earth. God has no restrictions caused by physicality but exists as a spiritual being that defies description. Christians consider God to be holy, which means something set apart from everything else for a special purpose, and worthy of worship.

1. How many people in the world claim to be Christian?
2. How old is Christianity?
3. What happened at the beginning of Christianity? Include information about the apostles.
4. When did Christianity become the official religion of the Roman Empire?
5. What happened in 1054?
6. What influence did Henry VIII have?
7. What do the Nicene Creed and Exodus 20:1-3 have in common?
8. Why is describing God very difficult?
9. How do John 4:24 and Luke 24:39 combine to explain the attributes of God?
10. How does Hebrews 1:3 contradict the position in question 9?

Stretch: Look at the picture below. Do you think this is a good depiction of the Christian God? What do you think is good about it? How would you change it?



The Bible as Word of God

What do we mean when we say 'word of God'?

To say that the Bible is the 'word of God' is literally to say that God has informed its writing. To say that God 'wrote' the Bible would be inaccurate, but Christians believe that God initiated the actions that caused the Bible to be written, mainly through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The book of Isaiah

Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335–395), a Greek bishop, believed that the Prophet Isaiah "knew more perfectly than all others the mystery of the religion of the Gospel". Gregory of Nyssa thought this because the story of Isaiah foretold the story of Jesus, despite Isaiah beginning to write 739 years before Jesus was born. The main reason that this is important is the Suffering Servant which Christians say are a direct prophetic revelation of the nature, purpose, and detail of the death of Jesus Christ.

The Book of Isaiah is quoted many times by New Testament writers. Ten of those references are about the Suffering Servant, how he will suffer and die to save many from their sins, be buried in a rich man's tomb, be a light to the Gentiles. The Gospel of John even says that Isaiah "saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him."

How God inspired the writers to record particular events and teachings which are now collected in the Bible.

Christians believe that God spoke directly to His prophets from time to time throughout the entire period of Israel's national existence commencing with Moses and ending with Malachi (Old Testament times). These holy prophets received direct revelations from God and recorded them at His command. Thus, we have here the actual spoken Word of God. Christians also believe that the Bible was also given by means of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. There are large sections of the Bible which contain history and poetry. Some Christians would argue "direct revelation" from God was not necessary when the prophets were recording actual historical facts, but to be authoritative history it had to be inspired by God. A similar system was used to allow New Testament writers to share the life of Jesus. The stories of Jesus' life are, according to Christians, sustained with genuine accuracy (with room given for interpretations, as different apostles shared stories about Jesus' life in slightly different ways). Christians believe that the message spread by the apostles is the true word of God, and this means that the stories in the Bible are accurate. This is made clear in 2 Peter 1:20-21, which says "No prophecy of scripture ever comes about by the prophet's own imagination, for no prophecy was ever borne of human impulse; rather, men carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God".

1. What do we mean when we say 'the word of God'?
2. What did Gregory of Nyssa mean when he spoke about the Prophet Isaiah?
3. Who do you think the 'suffering servant' named in Isaiah could be?
4. Why is the book of Isaiah quoted many times by New Testament writers?
5. Why would some Christians argue that direct revelation was not necessary?
6. What did the New Testament do that was similar in terms of revelation?
7. Who did God begin speaking to in the Old Testament and with whom did He end with?
8. What does 2 Peter 1:20-21 say about divine revelation?
9. Read the information about the Book of Amos – how do you know that this is the word of God?
10. Read the Ten Commandments, how do you know that this is the word of God?

Stretch: Explain Christian beliefs about God's influence in the writing of the Bible.

The Book of Amos

The central idea of the book of Amos is that God puts his people on the same level as the surrounding nations – God expects the same purity of them all. As it is with all nations that rise up against the kingdom of God, even Israel and Judah will not be exempt from the judgment of God because of their idolatry and unjust ways. The nation that represents YHWH must be made pure of anything or anyone that profanes the name of God. God's name must be exalted. Amos is the first prophet to use the term "the Day of the Lord. This phrase becomes important within future prophetic and apocalyptic literature. For the people of Israel "the day of the LORD" is the day when God will fight against his and their enemies, and it will be a day of victory for Israel. However, Amos and other prophets include Israel as an enemy of God, as Israel is guilty of injustice toward the innocent, poor, and young women. To Amos "the day of the Lord" will be a day of doom.

The Ten Commandments

1. You shall have no other God before me.
2. You shall not make any graven images.
3. You shall not use the Lord's Name in vain.
4. Remember to keep Sabbath day holy.
5. Honour your father and mother.
6. You shall not commit murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
10. You shall not covet

The Nature of God in Christianity

<p>God as omnipotent</p>	<p>Omnipotence means “all-powerful”. This is sometimes misunderstood as meaning that God can do absolutely anything, such as making a square circle or doing something that is morally wrong. However, by omnipotence most Christians mean that God can do anything that it makes sense for God to do. The idea of an all loving God doing something morally wrong would make any sense. Christians do mean that God has immense power.</p> <p>For Christians, God’s power can be seen in many ways, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The creation of the universe itself • The wonders of the universe, which owes its existence to His creative and sustaining power • The miracles performed by Jesus. <p>Above all, Christians believe that however bad things may seem, nothing can ultimately defeat God’s power.</p>
<p>What the Bible says about God’s omnipotence</p>	<p>There are many stories about God’s omnipotence. The Creation, the Flood and the Ten Plagues are just three of them.</p> <p>In St Mark’s Gospel there is a story of Jesus and his disciples on Lake Galilee in a boat. Sudden storms are common on this lake and can be very dangerous, though they end as suddenly as they begin. On this occasion, while Jesus was sleeping, a violent storm blew up and the disciples feared the boat would sink. They woke Jesus, saying ‘Teacher, do you not care if we drown?’ Jesus got up and spoke to the wind and waves. ‘Quiet! Be still!’ Immediately the storm ended and the disciples were amazed by his power. Some Christians think:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The story happened exactly as Mark told it, or; • The story can be explained as coincidence, or; • Jesus was speaking to the disciples and it was their panic, not the storm which was causing the problem, or; • It was a story created by the Church to show Jesus’ divine power.
<p>God as loving</p>	<p>Christians believe that God is all loving. When referring to God’s love, the New Testament writers used the word agape, which refers to a self-giving, self-sacrificial love. Christians see Jesus’ death on the cross as the supreme example of that love: ‘for God so loved the world that He gave His only Son’ (John 3:16). They believe this showed love because the sacrifice of Jesus then allowed human beings the chance to enter heaven in the afterlife. Many people find it hard to believe that there is an all-loving God when they see so much suffering in the world. When they experience it themselves, some lose any belief in God, as the God they believed in would have helped them.</p>
<p>How God’s all loving nature is shown in the Bible</p>	<p>Much of Jesus’ teaching is about the love of God, which is universal and unconditional. Universal means for everyone everywhere, and without conditions. This is why Christians believe that even those who do the most evil things are still loved by God and can still come back to God and be forgiven. Jesus told the Parable of the Prodigal Son, illustrating this love. A man has two sons, one claims his inheritance and leaves to waste it all. He returns to ask for a job from his father and is welcomed home. His father has forgiven him. Everything now belongs to his older brother and this does not mean he gets another inheritance.</p>

1. What does omnipotent mean?
2. How is the term omnipotent sometimes misunderstood?
3. Which story shows God’s omnipotence through Jesus?
4. Which explanation for this do you agree with most and why?
5. What does agape mean?
6. How does Jesus’ death on the cross show agape love?
7. What does John 3:16 mean?
8. Why do some people lose faith in God?
9. What is universal love?
10. What does the Parable of the Prodigal son teach?

Stretch: Explain why God doing evil doesn’t make any logical sense. Explain whether you think God could do evil AND be all loving and explain why.



The Oneness of God and the Trinity

God is not a physical being, although one 'person' of the Trinity – Jesus (the Son) - did have a physical presence in history. It may be best to think of these three 'persons' as non-physical elements or realities. They are all God and so, within the Trinity, the idea of the Oneness of God should not be forgotten. God can be seen as one in three and three in one, all at the same time. This may seem like a contradictory idea, and difficult for the human mind to fully understand.

The Trinity describes all three of the following at once:

- There is only one God
- Each person of the Trinity is fully God
- The persons of the Trinity are not the same.

God the Father Christians believe that the first person of the Trinity is God the Father. The Lord's Prayer, a prayer Jesus taught his disciples and which is commonly used in worship, begins with the words: 'Our Father in heaven'. God the Father is believed to be the creator of the earth and all living things on it. As creator of life, he acts as a good father would towards his children. He is believed to be all powerful (omnipotent), all loving (omnibenevolent), all knowing (omniscient) and present everywhere (omnipresent).

God the Son The second person of the Trinity is often referred to as the Son of God and became incarnate on earth and in history through Jesus. Christians believe Jesus was both fully human whilst on earth and also fully God at all times.

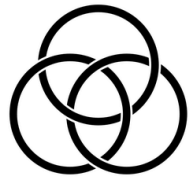
God the Holy Spirit Christians believe that once Jesus had left the earth, God sent the Holy Spirit to influence, guide and sustain the earth and all life on it. The Holy Spirit is believed to be the unseen power of God at work in the world in the past, present and future.

Symbols of the Trinity



The Shamrock:

One of the most famous is the shamrock, which St Patrick is said to have used when teaching about the Christian faith in Ireland.



The Borromean Rings

Another symbol, taken from mathematics is that of the Borromean rings. Taken together until they are inseparable, but if one is removed the other two fall apart. They are seen as a symbol of strength and unity. The circle is a symbol of the unending and eternal nature of God.



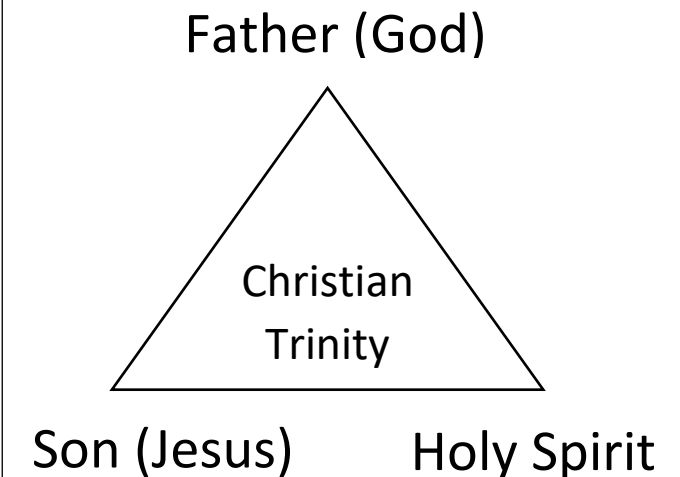
The triskelion

The ancient Celtic spiral triskelion shape is also used by Christians to signify the Trinity.

1. What is the Trinity split into?
2. What does the Trinity describe?
3. How is God the Father explained?
4. What does 'omnipotent' mean?
5. What does 'omnibenevolent' mean?
6. How is Jesus the Son Explained?
7. How is the Holy Spirit explained?
8. Draw a shamrock and explain its significance
9. Draw the Borromean rings and explain their significance
10. Draw the triskelion and explain its significance.

Stretch: How is it possible for God to be three things and one thing at a time? Explain.

The Trinity



The incarnation of Jesus

The Incarnation

Many people in the world today know the Christmas story, the account of what happened when Jesus was born. Even though some of the details of the story we traditionally hear at Christmas may not be historically accurate, it does express basic Christian truths. We don't know whether people who lived at the time of Jesus, even many of those who followed him and believed that he was teaching the truth, knew anything about the circumstances of his birth. He is often referred to as Jesus from Nazareth (the town in which he grew up) but there is little mention of Bethlehem, where he was born, apart from in stories about his birth. For Christians, the belief that Jesus was God in human form is more important than the details of his birth.

The gospels of Matthew and Luke explain quite clearly that Mary, Jesus' mother, did not conceive Jesus sexually. She was engaged to Joseph who took Jesus as his son, even though he knew he was not his natural father. An angel appears to Mary in Luke's Gospel (Luke 1: 26-38) and to Joseph in Matthew's Gospel (Matt 1: 20-21). In both cases the angel explains that the conception was no ordinary conception and that the child would be no ordinary child. Mark and John do not include any information about the birth of Jesus. Maybe they did not think the story important, but they are both clear that Jesus is the Son of God.

Although many people question the virgin conception because it is not a natural thing to happen and is unlikely to have happened since, for Christians it is very important. It gives evidence for the belief, shared by all Christians, that Jesus is incarnate - made flesh in human form, fully God yet fully human and thus God the Son as part of the Trinity. It is a fundamental Christian belief that through the incarnation, God showed himself as a human being for around 30 years.

Son of God

Instead of telling the story of Jesus' conception and birth in his gospel, John is more interested in the meaning of it: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." John 1:14 [NIV].

Prior to this, in verse 1, John seems to identify 'the Word' as God the Son - one of the three persons of the Trinity. For Christians this gives clear support to the belief that Jesus was God incarnate, in the flesh as a man. This gives his words, deeds and promises great authority because they are the word of God, delivered by a man who was fully God as well as fully human. The belief that Jesus was God incarnate makes it easier for Christians to explain and accept as truth some of his actions whilst on earth, including miracles and his resurrection (rising from death).

Christians refer to Jesus as the Christ. It comes from the Greek word, Christos, which means 'anointed one', which in turn is a translation of the Hebrew word mashiach (Messiah). The Jews developed an expectation well before Jesus was born that God would send a special leader, the Messiah, to save his people from tyranny and establish an age of global peace. Jews do not accept that Jesus is this Messiah. Christians believe that Jesus is the Messiah, but a spiritual one rather than a political one. When Jesus was baptised, a voice from Heaven said 'You are my Son' (Mark 1: 11). On one occasion, the disciple Peter referred to Jesus as the Christ. During this conversation at Caesarea Philippi (Mark 8:27-30). Jesus immediately warned the disciples that they should not use this term for him, possibly because his opponents would have arrested him for blasphemy (claiming to be God) The gospel writers do use it in their writings but it should be remembered that they were writing some years later. According to one of the gospel accounts, Jesus later accepted its use for himself at his trial when he was asked a direct question: "This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit."

1. What do we mean when we say the word "Incarnation"?
2. What do Matthew and Luke explain about Jesus' birth?
3. Who does not include the story of Jesus' birth?
4. What happens in Luke 1:26-38?
5. Which story is John more interested in telling?
6. How does John identify Jesus?
7. How do Christians refer to Jesus and where does this term come from?
8. What word does the word 'Messiah' come from?
9. Do Jews believe that Jesus is the Messiah?
10. Why does Mark 1:11 confirm that Jesus is who he says he is?

Stretch: Read Mark 14: 61b-62a and explain why Jesus might get in trouble for saying what he said?

When Jesus
was baptised,
a voice from
Heaven said
'You are my
Son'

Mark 1:11

"Again the high priest asked him, 'Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?' I am; said Jesus."

Mark 14: 61b-62a [NIV]



Easter Week

Palm Sunday	<p>Palm Sunday commemorates Christ's triumphant arrival in Jerusalem to the cheers of the crowd. The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna!" "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Blessed is the King of Israel!" John 12:12-13</p> <p>Later in that week many of the people in that cheering crowd would be among those shouting that Jesus should be executed.</p>
Shrove Tuesday	<p>Shrove Tuesday is the day before Lent starts: the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. It's a day of penitence, to clean the soul, and a day of celebration as the last chance to feast before Lent begins.</p> <p>Shrove Tuesday is sometimes called Pancake Day after the fried batter recipe traditionally eaten on this day.</p> <p>But there's more to Shrove Tuesday than pigging out on pancakes or taking part in a public pancake race. The pancakes themselves are part of an ancient custom with deeply religious roots.</p>
Ash Wednesday	<p>The service draws on the ancient Biblical traditions of covering one's head with ashes, wearing sackcloth, and fasting.</p>
Maundy Thursday	<p>Maundy Thursday is the Thursday before Easter. Christians remember it as the day of the Last Supper, when Jesus washed the feet of his disciples and established the ceremony known as the Eucharist. The night of Maundy Thursday is the night on which Jesus was betrayed by Judas in the Garden of Gethsemane.</p> <p>The word 'Maundy' comes from the command (mandate) given by Christ at the Last Supper, that we should love one another. In Roman Catholic churches the anthem Mandatum novum do vobis (a new commandment I give to you) would be sung on Maundy Thursday. In many other countries this day is known as Holy Thursday.</p>
Good Friday	<p>The most important events in Christianity are the death and later resurrection of Jesus Christ, who Christians believe is the Son of God, and whose life and teachings are the foundation of Christianity.</p> <p>Good Friday is the Friday before Easter. It commemorates the Passion: the execution of Jesus by crucifixion.</p>
Holy Saturday	<p>Holy Saturday is the Saturday after Good Friday which is often, but wrongly, called Easter Saturday.</p>
Easter Sunday	<p>Easter Sunday is the culmination of Holy Week.</p> <p>Easter commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the most important Christian festival, and the one celebrated with the greatest joy. The date of Easter changes each year, and several other Christian festivals fix their dates by reference to Easter. Churches are filled with flowers, and there are special hymns and songs. But not all Easter customs are Christian; some, such as the Easter Bunny, are pagan in origin.</p>
Easter Monday	<p>Ascension Day celebrates Jesus's ascension to heaven after he was resurrected on Easter Day.</p> <p>Then, when the eleven disciples were at the table. He appeared to them and reproached them because they had not believed those who had seen him after he was raised from the dead</p>

The resurrection and ascension of Jesus

It is quite normal that once a person dies, they only live on in the memories of those who knew and loved them, and maybe in the work. However, in Jesus' case his death was not the end. This only makes sense if Jesus is, as Christians believe, the Son of God.

<p>The resurrection of Jesus</p>	<p>According to the accounts of Jesus' burial in the New Testament, he was placed in a tomb late on Friday afternoon. We know this because it states that Shabbat (the Sabbath) was due to begin and Jews keep Shabbat at sunset every Friday. There was no time to anoint his body and bury him properly, so he was laid in the cave-like tomb. How long he remained there is unclear because early on the Sunday morning after Shabbat had ended, some of Jesus' female followers went to the tomb to anoint the body and prepare it for proper burial. There are some differences in the gospels as to the identity of these women, although all four name Mary Magdalene as one of them, and according to the Gospel of John she was the only one. Although other details vary between the four versions of the story, they all make it quite clear that the body of Jesus was nowhere to be found, a fact that was reported to the disciples. Each story mentions the women meeting a man or two men, who may have been angels, who told them that Jesus had risen from the dead and that they should pass the word on to his followers, including the disciples. The belief that Jesus rose from the dead is known as the resurrection and is a key teaching in the Christian faith. For Christians, it is significant evidence of the divine nature of Jesus.</p> <p>For the next few days or weeks, Jesus appeared to several people, including Mary Magdalene and the disciples, telling each that he had risen from the dead as he had predicted to them when he was alive. This ensured the story spread quickly and that there were several different witnesses to the claim that he had risen.</p>
<p>The ascension of Jesus</p>	<p>Just as the resurrection is a matter of faith and interpretation, so is the ascension. There are other explanations but if Jesus had the special power of God to rise from the dead, it is equally possible that this same power means he was able to leave the earth physically and return to heaven. Only Mark's and Luke's gospels finish off their story by telling their readers that, after meeting his disciples and asking them to carry on his good work, Jesus left them for the last time.</p>
<p>The significance of these for Christians today</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Christians believe the resurrection shows the power of good over evil. - Christians believe that by accepting Jesus, they can also be resurrected in some way. Therefore they have no need to fear death. - Jesus' resurrection assures Christians that God will forgive their sins if they follow the teachings of Christianity. By doing so, they will become closer to God in this life and beyond. - For Christians, the ascension shows that Jesus is with God. It paves the way for the coming of the Holy Spirit to provide comfort and guidance. - Without the resurrection, there would be no Christian faith.

1. What is resurrection?
2. How do we know that it happened on the Friday?
3. Why couldn't Jesus' followers anoint Jesus' body?
4. Which woman do all four of the gospel writers mention?
5. What does the Gospel of John say about this?
6. What happened over the next few days and weeks?
7. What is the ascension?
8. Which gospel writers explain what happens during the ascension?
9. Explain why Jesus' resurrection was important to Christians.
10. Explain why Jesus' ascension is important to Christians

Stretch: Read the quote below and explain what it means.

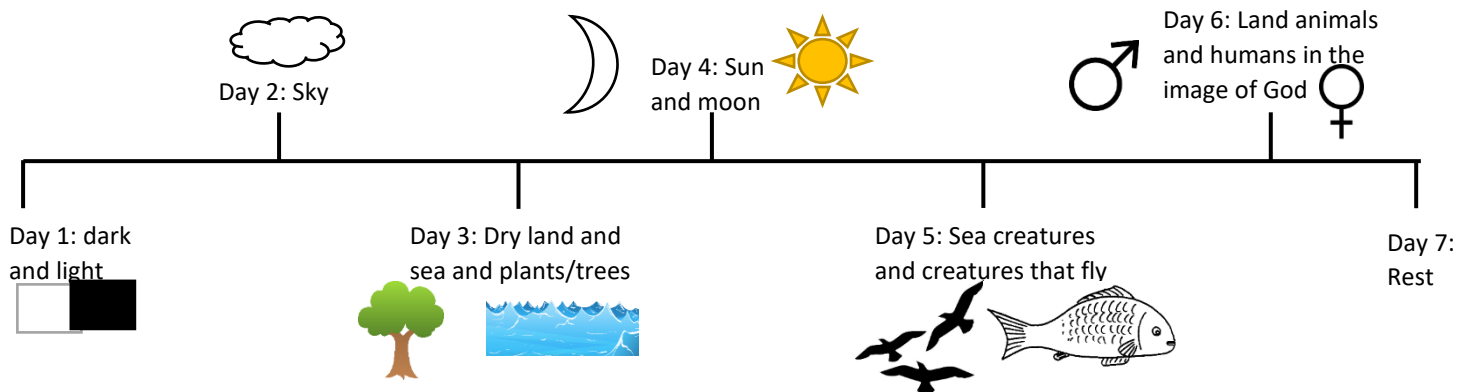
"When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven." Luke 24:50-57



Creation

Christians believe that God designed and created the earth and all living things. The Creation is in the Bible in Genesis 1. *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness over the surface of the deep, and the spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, 'let there be light', and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day' and the darkness 'night' and there was evening and there was morning- the first day"* (Genesis 1:1-5). The world is said to have been created in six days, and on the seventh he rested. Some Christians believe that the account of Genesis is historically and religiously accurate, despite it contradicting scientific accounts of creation [the big bang etc.], whilst others may claim that the six days represent six periods of times. Even if these more 'liberal Christians' don't believe that the creation story is literal, they do believe that God is the creator and sustainer of life. At the end of each element of the creation, God observes that "it is good" which affirms the belief that everything was created 'good'.

Creation is also referred to in the New Testament of the Bible, in the Gospel according to John, around 600 years after Genesis 1 was written. The key message in this account is that God is the only creator and without him the universe would not exist. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made"* (John 1:1-3). Theologians believe that the 'Word' refers to the second person of the Trinity, the Son as elsewhere in John's gospel it says *"The word became flesh and dwelt among us"*. This makes it clear that not only was the Holy Spirit involved in the creation, but that the Son was as well. Thus the whole of the Trinity were involved and have existed since the beginning.



Questions:

1. Where is the story of creation found in the Bible?
2. What did God create on the first day?
3. How does God create light in this account?
4. How long did it take for God to complete his creation?
5. What does God say after each thing is created?
6. Describe two different Christian views about the Creation story.
7. Who referred specifically to the Creation account in the New Testament?
8. What is the key message in this second account of creation?
9. What does the "Word" refer to?

Stretch:

Why is it important to know who was involved in the creation?

Sin

The origins and meanings of sin

Sin is any action or thought that separates humans from God, that is, an action or thought against God's laws and wishes or against the principles of morality God requires his people to follow. Sinful thoughts such as anger can lead to sinful actions such as assault or murder; lust can lead to adultery or rape. Many sinful actions such as assault, murder and rape are also illegal (against the laws of the state) whereas some, such as adultery, are not. However, just because some sinful actions are not illegal, as far as Christianity is concerned it does not make them right. Christians believe that all humans commit sins. Indeed as nobody is perfect, it is impossible not to sin.

This is further reinforced by the idea of original sin in which some Christians believe. This idea suggests that human beings are born with an in-built tendency to do wrong. This idea is introduced in the story of Adam and Eve, who, despite the paradise they lived in, sinned against God by breaking an instruction from God. This instruction was not to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Once they had done this, they became aware of sin through their own sinful action, an awareness that is shared by all humans descended from them. The result was a separation from God, and death.

Where did it come from?

Many have interpreted the serpent that tempts Eve to eat the forbidden fruit to represent Satan (the Devil) who is seen as a force of evil. Christians recognise that humans are tempted to do things that displease God, such as abusing drugs, misusing money by spending it on things God would not approve of or using the opportunities technology provides in a way that is harmful to others. As temptation is powerful and difficult to resist, some Christians believe its origins are with Satan who is constantly trying to tempt humans to disobey God.

Christians believe that God gave humans free will in order to choose how they live their lives. However, this does not mean that they can do whatever they want. They believe that if people use their free will to make choices that God would not approve of, these will be sinful and will separate them from God. The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-19), the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12), and other Christian teachings give guidance to allow Christians to use their free will wisely rather than to commit sinful actions.

1. What is sin?
2. How do sinful thoughts lead to sinful actions?
3. Are all sinful actions against the law? Explain.
4. Which instructions were given to Adam and Eve?
5. What did Adam and Eve become aware of?
6. Who do many interpret the Serpent as?
7. What kind of things do humans do that displease God?
8. Who do Christians believe continues to tempt humans to sin?
9. What do Christians believe God gave them that enables them to make choices in their lives?
10. Why do Christians believe that having free will does not mean that humans can do whatever they want?
11. Name two teachings that that give people guidance as to how to use their free will wisely?

Stretch: Read the Bible verses on the back of the sheet. Explain the difference between the way the two interpret sin.



<p>Matthew 5:1-12</p> <p>The Beatitudes</p>	<p>5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them.</p> <p>He said:</p> <p>3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.</p> <p>5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.</p> <p>6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.</p> <p>7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.</p> <p>8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.</p> <p>9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.</p> <p>10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.</p>
<p>Exodus 20:1-19</p> <p>The Ten Commandments</p>	<p>20 And God spoke all these words:</p> <p>2 “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.</p> <p>3 “You shall have no other gods before me.</p> <p>4 “You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.</p> <p>5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.</p> <p>7 “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.</p> <p>8 “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labour and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.</p> <p>12 “Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.</p> <p>13 “You shall not murder.</p> <p>14 “You shall not commit adultery.</p> <p>15 “You shall not steal.</p> <p>16 “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.</p> <p>17 “You shall not covet your neighbour’s house. You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.”</p> <p>18 When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance 19 and said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.”</p>

Salvation

Christian beliefs about the role of Christ in salvation.

John 3:16 sums up what Christians believe: “For God so loved the world that He gave up His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.” They believe that Jesus was central to God’s plan of salvation.

For Christians, the crucifixion was no unfortunate accident. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus pleaded with God as he said “Your will, not mine, be done.” The belief that he was carrying out God’s will was what enabled him to get through the arrest, the trials, the flogging and the crucifixion.

Christians often see Jesus’ death as an atonement. The New Testament authors express the idea in various ways, the main approaches which link to each other being:

- On the cross Jesus bore the consequences and penalty of human sin.
- This was God taking the initiative in reconciling humanity to God.
- It inspires human beings to take the moral lead in reconciliation in the world today.

The cross is an example and inspiration to Christians.

Atonement

Atonement means making up for, or making amends. The traditional Christian belief about atonement is that humans often put a barrier up between themselves and God by thinking only of themselves. Jesus’ death was a necessary atonement, because humans could not deal with this problem of selfishness themselves.

Reconciliation is the restoration of friendships or relationships. Christians believe that the relationship between God and man was so damaged that drastic action was needed.

Christians believe that human beings needed to be reconciled with God so that they could be reunited with him in heaven. Human beings could not make that happen, it was up to God through a drastic event; this was God’s self-sacrifice in the form of his son. They believe Jesus went willingly into this because he knew it was the only way for reconciliation to happen.

1. What is meant by ‘salvation’?
2. How does John 3:16 sum up what Christians believe?
3. Why is the crucifixion seen as no unfortunate accident?
4. Why do Christians see Jesus’ death as an atonement?
5. What does atonement mean?
6. Why is atonement necessary for Christians?
7. What is reconciliation?
8. How was Jesus’ death God’s self-sacrifice?
9. What does Mark 14:36 mean?

Stretch: Explain why human beings needed atonement and how this came about.

“And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible under thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.” Mark: 14:36

“For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.”
Romans 5:10



Judgement

Jesus' teachings	Jesus taught that God's love and mercy are unconditional, though many of his parables speak about God's judgement after death. Christianity teaches that there will be a Judgement Day at the end of time and all will be judged by Jesus according to how they behaved.
The Nicene Creed	The Nicene Creed states that Jesus 'will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.' This is showing Jesus will make and deliver the judgement.
The Catechism of the Catholic Church	The Catechism of the Catholic Church (a summary of Roman Catholic teaching) states that there are two particular judgements. The particular judgement occurs immediately after each individual's death. The general/final judgement takes place at the Second Coming, which is when many Christians believe that Jesus will return in glory to Earth, bringing the age of time and space to an end. He will judge those still alive and those who are dead, as a result of which they will be assigned to either heaven or hell.
Judgement Day	Many Christians believe absolutely that after they die their soul will wait for Judgement Day. From there, they will be rewarded with heaven or punished with hell. The problem is that words cannot describe the afterlife adequately, not least because no one has the experience to speak from. Some Christians reject the idea of the Second Coming and final judgement. They think Jesus was trying to express something human beings cannot fully understand, but in a way that they could make some sense of. They also believe the creeds should be understood in the same way. They do not deny that humans will be called out to account for their lives, but they disagree about the context and the way in which it is to be interpreted.

1. What did Jesus teach about judgement?
2. What does the Nicene Creed teach about judgement?
3. What does the Catechism of Catholic Church teach about judgement?
4. What is Judgement Day?
5. What does Luke 19:1-31 teach?
6. Which parable is told in Matthew 25:31-46?
7. What happens in this parable?
8. What is universalism?

Stretch: Look at the work on the back of the sheet.

Judgement in Jesus' teaching

A number of Jesus' parables relate to judgement. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 19:1-31) warns that ignoring the needs of others may have eternal consequences.

Another parable is that of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31-46). The message is that on Judgement Day, some will be rewarded with heaven for helping others, whilst others are sent to hell because they did not.

Some Christians reject any idea of Hell because they think its existence would mean that God's love would not triumph over evil. They think that ultimately everyone will respond to God's love and that whatever evil things people may have done, they will repent and be forgiven. This belief is called universalism.



Heaven

If people are asked to describe what they think heaven will be like, their answers might well relate to what they see as most desirable in their present lives. So for those living in a land frequently suffering from drought, heaven might well be a well-watered garden with an abundance of trees and flowers. Those who have to face extreme heat might think of somewhere with a cooling breeze. Children might imagine heaven as a party with lots of ice cream and chocolate. Christians themselves use earthly images to explain their understanding of heaven, but Christianity teaches that heaven is a state of being, not a physical place. It is being with God outside time and space. In a newspaper Desmond Tutu said of heaven: "It is difficult for us to conceive of an existence that is timeless, where you look at absolute beauty and goodness and you have no words. It is enough just to be there. You know how it is when you are sitting with someone you love and hours can go by in what seem like moments? Well, in heaven, eternity itself will pass in a flash... heaven is a community.

Hell

The Bible depicts hell as a place of unquenchable fire. Again, this is a metaphor but it led to the most horrific paintings in the Middle Ages. As a way of frightening people into obeying the rules of the Church, some artists painted nightmarish scenes of devils teaching people apart and eating them. Many Christians have rejected those literal views of hell. They teach that hell is eternal separation from God. This separation results from the deliberate rejection of any relationship with Him. So hell is not what God decides from people. It is not what God wants. It is down to human free choice. Many Christians who believe in hell would agree with this statement: 'God predestines no one to go to hell; for this, a wilful turning away from God... is necessary and persistence in it until the end.' (Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The existence of hell does not fit with a belief in an all-loving God – Argue for and against this statement below:

For	Against

CHRISTIAN PRACTICES: Forms of Worship

You need to study four forms of worship: liturgical worship, non-liturgical worship, informal worship and private worship.

Liturgical worship	<p>This type of worship is found in services in the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Church of England (Anglican) churches. Some acts of worship require a liturgy (a set order/pattern), for example, a Roman Catholic Mass. Features of liturgical worship are: a set structure to the service, the use of set prayers and readings. Some Christians see it as 'old fashioned' or 'very traditional'. The service follows the text of a prayer book and is not improvised at all.</p> <p>Liturgical worship often takes place in a church but not always, for example, a papal open-air Mass or an Anglican Eucharist in the home of a sick person. Some Christians prefer liturgical worship: the familiarity of the service makes them feel secure and they can join in with ease. They know exactly what to expect even in a church they have never been in before. They like the dignity that is typical of liturgical worship and think there is variety and choice within the set structure.</p>
Non-liturgical worship	<p>Other Christians prefer a more informal style of worship. They think that liturgical acts of worship stifle genuine worship. Non-liturgical worship is typical of some nonconformist churches and tends to be Bible-based. It often follows a structure (for example, hymn, prayer, reading, hymn, sermon, prayer, hymn) but the service leader has free choice within that structure. They may choose a relevant theme for events in the world or community. The minister or person leading worship will choose Bible readings that will be based on the theme of the sermon. Prayer is usually in the person's own words and personal style, known as extemporary prayer.</p>
Informal worship	<p>Charismatic worship – Charismatic worship is a form of informal worship. The service has the characteristics of other forms of worship (hymns, sermon, prayer, readings), but is very free flowing.</p> <p>In charismatic (spirit inspired) worship, the worshippers often speak in tongues (outbursts of praise in words that are not intelligible, but which express devotion to God). This is seen as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Singing, often accompanied by music, is lively. This has a much more relaxed feel to it. Some Christians believe it comes more from the heart. Evangelical churches are often charismatic in style. These have become more popular in recent church history in Britain.</p> <p>Quaker meetings – Quakers (The Society of Friends) have a very distinctive form of informal worship. There is no leader and no set structure at all. Those present usually sit in chairs forming a circle around a table on which there are a Bible and the book of Quaker writings. The worshippers sit in silence, until someone feels called to share thoughts with the others.</p>
Private worship	<p>Christians believe that private worship (worshipping on their own) is just as important as public worship. It can take place anywhere. It may be liturgical in structure, for example, an Anglican saying Morning and Evening Prayer every day, or a Roman Catholic saying the Rosary. Some Roman Catholics say three times daily the Angelus, which is a structured series of short meditations on the incarnation. It may be non-liturgical, perhaps starting with reading a passage from the Bible or meditating. Christians might go into Church while they are out shopping, so that they can spend a short time worshipping God, shutting out the pressures and concerns of daily life. Those travelling, for example by train, might use the time for silent worship. Worshipping alone allows worship to be exactly how the person wants it and to feel close to God as they are alone with God and their thoughts.</p>

Private worship is the most important type of worship. Evaluate this view. (12 marks)

“And when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” (1 Corinthians 11:24)

Worship is the response of the human spirit to the presence of the divine and eternal, to the God who first seeks us. – Quaker Faith and Practice; Chapter 2



Prayer

Prayer is not just about asking God for things and expecting to get them. For Christians it is about listening, being open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and doing what God wants them to do.

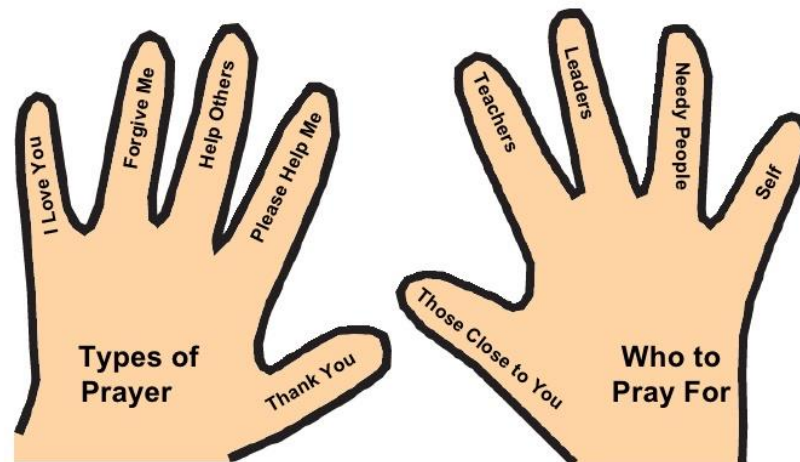
Set prayers	Set prayers form a key part of liturgical worship, but many Christians also use them for private prayer. Many were given by great thinkers, literary figures and above all, deeply religious men and women. Some come from the Bible, such as the prayer starting with 'The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ...' that is often said in both public and private worship and is taken from 2 Corinthians 13:14. Perhaps the simplest of all set prayers is the Jesus Prayer which says 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner'. It is an Eastern Orthodox prayer which dates back to the fourth century, but it has become popular with Christians in other denominations as it is so simple, yet so profound. It is meant to be said and repeated many times, like chanting. Whilst repeating it, a person meditates. Some also use rhythmic breathing as they say the prayer. The first part is said while inhaling and the second part while exhaling.
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Informal prayer	In public worship, this takes the form of extemporary prayer. Most Christians use their own words at least some of the time in their private prayers. Many prefer informal prayer to set prayers as they seem to come more directly from the heart, meeting their particular concerns. One type of informal prayer is known as the arrow prayer. These are very short prayers addressed to God spontaneously at a time of urgent need or in response to a particular situation. In a time of personal crisis a Christian might pray 'Help me God' or respond to getting through the crisis with 'Thank you God'.
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5 Mark Question:

Explain two ways in which Christians pray. Refer to Christian teaching in your answer.

'I believe;
help my
unbelief'
(Mark
9:24)



Sacraments

The term 'sacrament' has been defined as 'the external and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace'. In other words, a sacrament is something people can experience with their senses (see, taste, smell, hear, touch), but there is a deeper reality to it which cannot be experienced through the senses.

The Protestant traditions generally acknowledge only two sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist. They are known as Gospel sacraments because they were authorised by Jesus and there are many references to their use in the books of the New Testament.

Roman Catholics, Orthodox Christians and some Anglicans recognise that they are all implied by the ministry of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels and the practice of the Early Church described in the rest of the New Testament. These seven sacraments are: baptism, confirmation (chrismation in the Orthodox Church), the Eucharist, reconciliation (sometimes referred to as confession), healing, marriage and ordination (becoming a priest).

These Christians believe that through the sacraments God imparts particular gifts and powers. For many Christians, they are of central importance to the practice of their religion. Some of the seven sacraments are intended for all Christians, notably baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, healing and reconciliation. Roman Catholics refer to the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist as the three *rites of initiation*. Marriage is for those who get married. Ordination is for those who believe that God has called them to the priesthood.

Sacrament	Outward visible sign	Inward and spiritual grace
Baptism	Water and Trinitarian formula	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving the Holy Spirit, The removal of original sin, Entry into the kingdom of God/the Church.
Confirmation	The laying on of hands by the bishop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening/sealing the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the person Becoming an adult member of the Church
Eucharist	Bread and wine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spiritual feeding with the body and blood of Christ
Reconciliation	Words of absolution (forgiveness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The forgiveness of sin
Healing	Anointing and laying on of hands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spiritual and sometimes physical healing Preparation for death
Marriage	Ring(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The endless love between a couple. Ordination
Ordination	The laying on of hands by the bishop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The special gifts of the Holy Spirit needed by a deacon or priest.



Baptism

<p>What is baptism?</p>	<p>Baptism is the ritual through which people become members of the Church. It involves water which is used for the washing away of sin.</p> <p>For many Churches baptism is the initiation rite by which people become members of the Christian Church. In baptism the person is formally acknowledged as a child of God and receives God's saving grace; the person's sins are forgiven and he or she enters a new life with Jesus Christ.</p> <p>When John the Baptist baptised Jesus in the Jordan River, two extraordinary things happened that showed God's approval of his son's mission (see Mark 1:9-11). Jesus' baptism set an example for his followers to be baptised in order to receive the Holy Spirit and begin a new life in the Christian community.</p>
<p>Infant baptism</p>	<p>The first Christians were often baptised as adults, or whole families were baptised at the same time. Nowadays Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Methodist and United Reformed Christians practice infant baptism.</p> <p>People might ask why a baby who is too young to sin should be baptised. Catholic and Orthodox Christians would say everyone is a descendent from Adam and Eve who committed the first sin. Everyone has a tendency to sin and needs salvation, even a baby. For Catholics and Orthodox Christians, infant baptism removes this original sin. At an infant baptism the child is welcomed into the Church as soon as possible, and the parents are able to thank God for their new baby and celebrate the birth with family and friends.</p> <p>Rites vary but the priest or minister says, 'I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' while pouring blessed water over the head of the baby. Godparents and parents promise to bring up the child in the Christian faith. Besides water, other symbols are used such as making the sign of the cross on the baby's forehead, anointing with oil, dressing the child in white, and giving the parents a candle lit from the Paschal candle (a large candle lit every year at Easter). The congregation welcomes the newest member of the Christian community.</p>
<p>Believers' baptism</p>	<p>Some Christians, such as Baptists and Pentecostals, think that a baby is too young to understand the meaning of baptism, so people should wait and be baptised when they are old enough to come to a mature decision about their faith. They believe that baptism does not itself save a person; it is someone's conversion to living a life dedicated to Jesus that is important. Therefore the believer must be old enough to have come to a mature decision about their faith.</p> <p>Believers' baptism involves full immersion in a pool, symbolising the cleansing from sin and the rising up to a new life with Christ. Rites vary but usually the minister talks about the importance of baptism and asks in the candidates are willing to change their lives. Each person may read a Bible passage and give a brief testimony of their faith in Jesus as their personal saviour. The minister goes into the pool with the person and baptises them 'in the name of the father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.</p>

Exam practice:

What is baptism? [1 mark]

Explain two ways that baptism is practiced by Christians today. [4 marks]

Explain two Christian beliefs about Baptism. Refer to scripture or sacred writings in your answer [5 marks]

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19)

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:9-11)



The Eucharist

The Last Supper

Jesus' last meal was with his disciples on the night before he died. It was probably the Passover meal, which celebrated the escape from slavery in Egypt of Moses and his fellow Israelites. What Jesus said and did gave this meal a new significance. Paul, in a letter to the Christians in Corinth, described how in the course of the Last Supper Jesus 'took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.'"

Jesus linked the bread and wine to his imminent death, and it was a sign of the new covenant (relationship) established by his death between God and all believers. Ever since the start of the Church, in obeying Jesus' command most Christians have celebrated the Eucharist wherever they are and sometimes in secret. During the Second World War prisoners in Japanese POW camps did not have bread, so the Eucharist was celebrated instead with rice.

The Eucharist is celebrated by almost all Christian denominations (though not by Quakers and the Salvation Army). It has many names such as the Lord's Supper, the Breaking of Bread, the Liturgy, Holy Communion, and Mass. The central features are the same: the connection with the Last Supper, the giving of thanks for the bread and wine (consecration) and using Jesus' words at the Last Supper. The consecrated bread and wine are then shared among the congregation. However, the structure of the service and the interpretations of its meaning differ considerably between the Christian denominations. So, for example, Roman Catholics believe the bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Christ (transubstantiation) whereas Protestants see the ceremony as an expression of faith and obedience, whereas the Catholic, Orthodox and Anglican traditions see it as a way to receive God's grace. Not all denominations use wine, many Non-Conformist churches use a non-alcoholic substitute.

12 Mark Questions:

1. "The Eucharist is the body and blood of Christ" – Evaluate this view. Your answer should include the following:

- Arguments that support the statement
- Arguments that disagree with the statement
- Religious arguments
- Conclusion

2. "The Eucharist is an essential part of Christian worship" – Evaluate this view. Your answer should include the following:

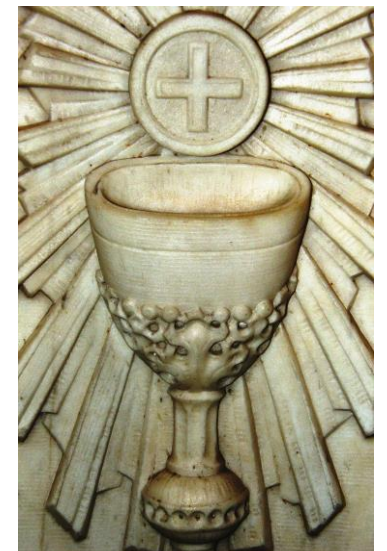
- Arguments that support the statement
- Arguments that disagree with the statement
- Religious arguments
- Conclusion

The Significance of the Eucharist for Christians

Roman Catholics believe in transubstantiation; that the bread and wine are invisibly transformed 'in their substance' into the body and blood of Christ.

Anglicans hold a range of beliefs, a few identifying with Roman Catholic thinking and others believing that bread and wine hold the spiritual presence of the body and blood of Christ rather than becoming it.

Others, like Methodists, believe the Eucharist is just a memorial; the bread and wine being purely symbolic of Jesus' death, which brought salvation. Many Christians believe this alongside other views.



Pilgrimage

<p>What is a pilgrimage?</p>	<p>A pilgrimage is a journey made for religious reasons, alone or with other Christians, to a sacred place. The believer makes a physical journey but it is also a spiritual journey towards God. The pilgrimage gives many opportunities for prayer and worship, and is itself an act of worship as believers show devotion to God by choosing to go.</p> <p>Pilgrims may visit the Holy Land, particularly Jerusalem, because it is where Jesus lived, died and was resurrected and where Christianity began. They may visit shrines connected with famous saints. Some prefer to go to remote places to pray and reflect on their lives.</p>
<p>The role and importance of pilgrimage</p>	<p>Christians go on pilgrimage to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow closer to God and strengthen their faith • Express sorrow for sin and be forgiven • Reflect on their lives, particularly when facing a crisis or big decision • Pray for something special or thank God for a blessing • Seek a cure for an illness • Help other pilgrims who are disabled or ill • Experience a holy place • Meet others who share their faith. <p>It is not compulsory to go on a pilgrimage but it can play an important role in their spiritual lives. Often they come back with a better understanding of their faith and with renewed enthusiasm for living a Christian life. They may have received advice from a priest or monk that has helped them see problems in a new light. They may also feel cleansed from sin.</p>
<p>Lourdes</p>	<p>Lourdes is in the south-west of France and is a place of pilgrimage dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus. In 1858 a young girl named Bernadette had visions of Mary in a grotto (cave) near the river. Bernadette spoke of praying the rosary with Mary who looked lovingly upon her. Mary told Bernadette to dig for a spring of water, which was discovered to have healing properties. Now thousands of pilgrims visit Lourdes to pray at the grotto where Mary appeared, to recite the rosary together, and to bathe in the water where it is claimed that 67 miracles and over 6000 cures have taken place. Many of these pilgrims are sick or disabled and are accompanied by able-bodied helpers.</p>
<p>Iona</p>	<p>Iona is an island off the west coast of Scotland. In the 6th century AD, St Columba, an Irish missionary who brought Christianity to Scotland, established a small monastic community there. It is now the home of the ecumenical Iona Community and a place of Christian pilgrimage dedicated to the Virgin Mary</p> <p>Some people think Iona is a 'thin place', where the veil between the spiritual world and the physical world is thin. Iona is remote and windswept, so for many pilgrims it feels like a place where nature reveals God's infinite power</p>

1. Why is pilgrimage an act of worship?
2. How might a pilgrimage strengthen someone's faith?
3. Explain the differences between a pilgrimage to Lourdes and a pilgrimage to Iona
4. "There is no difference between a pilgrimage and a holiday"
Evaluate this view (one argument on each side and a conclusion)

Bernadette describing her first vision of the Virgin Mary:

As I raised my head to look at the grotto, I saw a Lady dressed in white, wearing a white dress, a blue girdle and a tallow rose on each foot, the same colour as the chain of her rosary; the beads of the rosary were white.



Festivals

What are festivals?	Festivals are a day or period of celebration for religious reasons. They have an important role in helping Christians remember the major events in their religion and to plan their public worship. Many Christians celebrate the same cycle of festivals each year. The Christian calendar has two main seasons: Advent, Christmas and Epiphany; Lent, Easter and Pentecost. By living through the events of Jesus' life, death and resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Christians remember the central teachings of their faith – that God gave his only son to save them.
Christmas	Christmas commemorates the Incarnation of Jesus, the belief that God became human in Jesus. In Great Britain, Christmas is celebrated on 25 th December. The celebrations last 12 days ending with the feast of the Epiphany. Trees and homes are decorated with lights and nativity scenes. Lights represent Jesus as the light coming into the world of darkness and nativity scenes show the baby Jesus being born in poverty. Many churches have carol services with readings from the Bible showing God's promise of a saviour and the events of Jesus' birth. Children act out nativity plays, and Midnight Mass takes place on Christmas Eve. Christians send Christmas cards and exchange gifts which recall the wise men's gifts to Jesus. It is seen as a time of peace and goodwill, when Christians give to charity as God gave the gift of Jesus, his son.
Easter	Easter is the most important Christian festival. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. During the week leading up to Easter (Holy Week) Christians remember the events that led to the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. Jesus was crucified on Good Friday and laid in the tomb. Special services are held and processions in the streets are led by a person carrying a wooden cross. On Easter Sunday (Easter Day) the churches are filled with flowers and special hymns are sung celebrating the resurrection. Orthodox Christians walk around the church at midnight on Saturday and then enter the darkened church at midnight with lighted candles or lamps. This symbolises entering the empty tomb. The priest announces 'Christ is risen!' and the congregation answers 'He is risen indeed'. Catholics and Anglicans also have a Saturday night vigil that begins in darkness, includes the lighting of a large Paschal candle to symbolise the risen Christ, and ends with Holy Communion. Many churches organise open-air sunrise services and share breakfast together usually eating eggs as a symbol of new life.
Key Quotes	"Father, you make this holy night radiant with the splendour of Jesus Christ our light. We welcome him as Lord, the true light of the world. Bring us to eternal joy in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever." – Opening prayer of the Catholic Midnight Mass at Christmas "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in tombs bestowing life" – Traditional hymn sung by Orthodox Christians at the Easter Divine Liturgy

1. What are festivals? (1)
2. Give two examples of Christian festivals (2)
3. Explain two contrasting ways that Christians celebrate Easter (4)
4. Explain two ways that Christians celebrate Christmas – refer to sacred text in your answer. (%)

Stretch: Plan a response giving three reasons on each side to evaluate this statement – "Christmas is the most important Christian festival".



The Church in the Local Community

<p>What is the church?</p>	<p>If asked to define the word 'church', many answer that the church is where Christians worship. This is correct but it is not the sense in which the word 'church' is used in the Bible. The word church comes from the Greek word 'ekklesia' which is defined as an assembly, or gathering of Christian people. The root meaning of 'church' is not that of a building, but of people. Originally, the early Church did not have a special building and Christians met together in people's homes. The New Testament explains that the Church consists of a group of believers under the leadership of Jesus. First and foremost the Church is made up of the followers of Jesus in the local community.</p> <p>Key Quote – "And God placed all things under his (Jesus') feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body." Ephesians 1:22-23</p>
<p>What does the Church do?</p>	<p>The church as a building provides a location where Christians from the local community can meet, worship, pray, obtain spiritual guidance and socialise. Often events take place on weekdays as well as worship on the Christian holy day of Sunday. Some activities are specifically for Christians such as prayer meetings or Bible studies; others fulfil a need in the local community, for example a mothers' and toddlers' group or a youth club.</p> <p>The role of the Church is not confined to the building. Throughout its history the Church has been a major source of social services like schooling and medical care, it has been an inspiration for art and culture and it has campaigned for justice and championed the neglected. In modern Britain the Church has become involved in projects that help the local community, such as food banks. This work fits with Christian teachings to act with compassion to those in need.</p>
<p>Food Banks</p>	<p>Some examples of food banks are on the other side of this sheet – they work to try to provide for people that are struggling to pay for basic essentials, whether that is food, training for work, or other basic essentials.</p>
<p>Street Pastors</p>	<p>The teaching of Jesus, for example in the parable of the Sheep and the Goats (Matthew 25:31-46), shows that Christians should not ignore the needs of society because showing agape love is part of the Christian way of life. Churches should respond practically to the needs of their local communities. These needs vary; for example there might be a lack of facilities for young people, insufficient care for the vulnerable, the problem of gang culture or people feeling frightened on the streets. Churches have tried to meet these challenges with local projects such as Street Pastors.</p> <p>Rev Les Isaac started the interdenominational network of Street Pastors in Brixton, South London, in 2003 with 18 volunteers. It was an initiative of Ascension Trust, a Christian charity where Christian adult volunteers patrol the streets in urban areas. They do not have the power to enforce the law but they act as a reassuring presence. Initially the main aim was to tackle gang culture and knife and gun crime. As the movement became more popular, it began to also focus on drunkenness, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.</p>

1. Give two examples of the meaning of the word "church"
2. Give two ways that the Church works in the community.
3. Explain two ways that the Church assists people in need in the community. Refer to sacred texts in your answer [5 marks]



Food Banks

The Trussell Trust	Founded in 1997 by Carol and Paddy Henderson, the Trussell Trust food banks provide emergency food, help and support to people in crisis in the UK. Based on Christian principles, shown, for example, in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats, the aim is to bring people together (religious and non-religious) to work towards ending poverty and hunger in Britain. Rising prices, cuts in welfare benefits, redundancy, family breakdown, and unexpected expense may all contribute to an emergency situation. Non-perishable food is donated to the food banks by churches, supermarkets, schools, business and individuals and is sorted out by volunteers, including making sure that is within date. Care professionals such as doctors, health visitors and social workers identify people in crisis and issue a food voucher. In exchange for their food voucher, three days of nutritionally balanced food is provided. Some of the food banks provide courses to help people 'eat well and spend less' There are around 420 Trussell Trust food banks in the UK and in a year they provide food for around 1,000,000 people.
The Oasis Project	The Oasis Project of the Plymouth Methodist Mission Circuit is a community hub with an internet café, creative courses, a job club, training opportunities and a base for meetings. It also runs a food bank. Paid staff are supported by volunteers and session tutors. Around 200 people use the centre each week and spiritual and practical support is given to those who need it because of ill health, learning disability, domestic violence, substance abuse, low income and housing problems.

Street Pastors

Street Pastors	Street Pastors aim to help and care for vulnerable people in practical ways, working closely with councils and the police in their local communities. Wearing a blue, reflective 'Street Pastor' uniform, their aim is not to actively preach but to provide a positive service to their local areas. Their work includes listening to people's problems, giving guidance regarding agencies which might be able to help and discouraging anti-social behaviour. They are backed up by prayer partners (Prayer Pastors) who pray for the Street Pastors and the work they are doing. Sometimes they communicate with each other via mobile phones.
School Pastors	A sister organisation, called School Pastors, was set up in 2011 with the aim of reducing anti-social behaviour, illegal drug use and bullying. Within school, School Pastors mentor young people and they patrol within and around schools to help prevent behaviour problems. There has recently been the development of College Pastors, Rail Pastors, and (in the event of disaster) Response Pastors.

Explain the role of two food banks in the community

Explain the role of two pastoral groups in the community

Mission and Evangelism

The place of mission

The Church not only provides a place to worship and learn about God, it also has a mission to spread the good news to non-believers that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and came into the world to be its saviour. Matthew's gospel ends with what is known as the Great Commission. This said: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20)

These were some of the last words that Jesus gave to his disciples and they sum up the mission of the Church: Christians are not only called to know Jesus in their lives but also to make him known to others. In Matthew's account of the call of the first disciples, Jesus says to Simon, Peter and Andrew 'Come, follow me... and I will send you out to fish for people' (Matthew 4:19).

When the early disciples received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, this gave them the gifts necessary to carry out the Great Commission (1 Corinthians 12:4-10)

Christians have the responsibility according to the Great Commission to tell others of their faith. This may be spreading the word to people they meet in everyday life or, for some, through organised events or preaching. Others may feel called to go to other countries and become missionaries, which involves evangelism and in some cases humanitarian work among the poor and disadvantaged. The main aim is to persuade people to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour (Romans 10:9-10) and to extend the Church to every nation of the world. The New Testament book, the Acts of the Apostles, explains how the early Christian Church grew in this way and includes, for example, the missionary journeys of the apostle Paul.

The Alpha Course

Originally known as the Alpha Course, Alpha was started in 1977 by a Church of England Curate, Reverend Charles Marnham, at Holy Trinity, Brompton, London. The aim was to help church members understand the basics of the Christians faith but soon it began to be used as an introductions for those interested in learning about Christianity. The organisers described this evangelistic course as an 'opportunity to explore the meaning of life; through a series of talks and discussions.

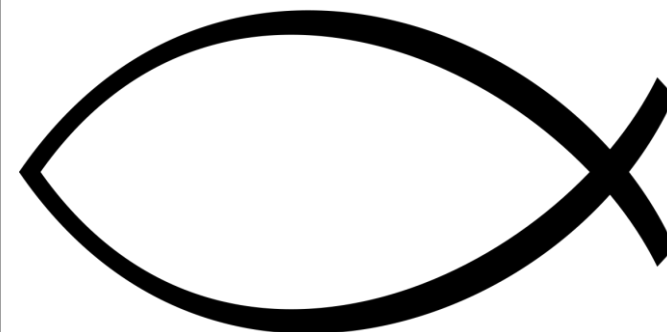
The idea caught on and eventually many of the major Christian denominations in Britain and abroad began using it. In the 1990s the Reverend Nicky Gumbel from Holy Trinity, Brompton was involved in revising the course and encouraging its use.

Alpha courses take place not only on church premises but also in people's homes, universities, workplaces, prisons and other venues. Worldwide, millions of people have taken part in this course and other related courses have been started. These include relationship and marriage courses for adults and study programmes for young people.

1. What is mission? (1)
2. What is evangelism? (1)
3. Explain the role of mission for Christians. Refer to sacred texts in your answer (5)
4. Explain the work of two Christian groups that try to follow the Christian mission. (4)
5. Explain the role of evangelism for Christians. Refer to sacred texts in your answer. (5)

Stretch: Complete the spider diagrams on the next page.

4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.



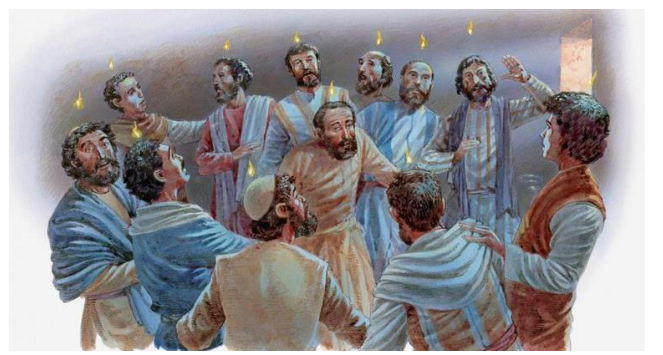
Christian Missionaries	
Church Army	<p>We are a mission-focused community of people who are committed to enabling and resourcing the church and its members to share the gospel. Our vision is that everyone everywhere has the opportunity to encounter God's love, and be empowered to transform their communities through faith shared in word and action.</p> <p>We have a strong, proud heritage and all we do today is based on the legacy of our past. Church Army was founded in England in 1882 by the Rev. Wilson Carlile to enable ordinary Christian men and women to share their faith. Through his visionary work, people were trained to be evangelists in the Church of England amongst the most needy in society. Wilson Carlile began by holding open air gatherings to share faith and encourage faith in to action such as serving the slums of Westminster. Since this beginning, Church Army has trained thousands of evangelists and been involved in a wide range of work always seeking to be culturally relevant to those being encountered. All we have done is rooted in our faith in the gospel, because we believe it changes lives. Church Army has always had a heart for the marginalised and vulnerable, those on the edges of society and for seeing God's love and hope break into people's lives.</p>
The Ichthus Fellowship	<p>We believe that our experience, the Bible and reason all point to one creator God who is a plurality and who made the diverse universe. The three persons of the Godhead exist in a state of mutual fellowship, relationship and sharing. Their mode of existence is loving communion which is to be reflected in our lives together in his church. We are a relational movement because we have a relational god - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - in loving relationship with us. Therefore we believe that the values by which the movement exists and grows are firstly love, which is the first definition of God (1 John 4:8,9,11), then humility which gives room for the Holy Spirit to guide the church (Luke 4:1) and thirdly evangelistic hearts like Christ's who came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). Whether we think we have an evangelistic ministry or not we are all witnesses to his grace and power.</p> <p>We are a faith movement. We recognise that 'if we do not stand firm in the faith, we will not stand at all' (Isaiah 7:9). We completely trust God for growth, provision and our life as a movement. Through worship we touch God's heart, receive healing and strength to increase our faith and love, and live in the love of God. Because faith and worship will always be contested, we understand that our walk with God often involves warfare against the spiritual powers that oppose and distract us. We are soldiers of Christ, as well as beloved children</p>

Explain the role of the Church Army

Explain the role of the Ichthus Fellowship

Church Growth

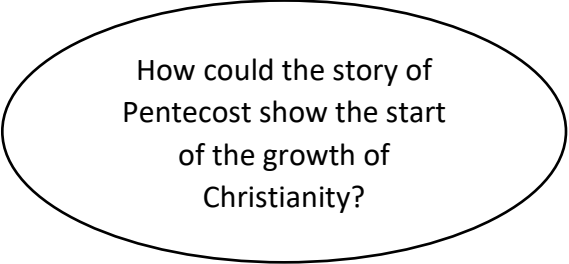
<p>Christian numbers</p>	<p>It is difficult to know how many Christians there are in the world. Estimates vary from 1.5 to 2.5 billion. Up to a third of the world's population claim some sort of Christian faith. This figure includes people who may know little of the Christian faith and rarely attend church but in a census declare themselves as some sort of Christian. The Church has grown rapidly from the time of Christ and is still doing so in South America, Africa and Asia. This is not the case in the USA and Europe, despite Church growth programmes, or in the Middle East where Christians have suffered much persecution.</p> <p>In 2010 there were nearly 1.1 billion Catholics, a big increase on the estimated 291 million in 1910. Despite opposition from the communist government, it is estimated that in China there will soon be more Christians than in any other country in the world. In 1900 there were no Protestant churches in South Korea, now the capital city Seoul alone has 7000 with the Yoido Full Gospel Church reporting that it has a million members. It is estimated that churches in Africa are increasing by 34,000 people per day. Worldwide, something like 80,000 people become Christians each day, and over 500 new churches are formed.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is meant by the term 'discipleship'? 2. How does this differ from being a believer? 3. Approximately how many Christians are there in the world? 4. Explain how the church has grown with specific examples 5. Explain why it is surprising that the Church has grown in China. 6. Explain how the Alpha Course <p>Stretch: Look at the worksheet on the back.</p>
<p>Discipleship</p>	<p>The Church's mission of sharing Christ does not end with people deciding to become Christians. The Great Commission as described by Jesus was to make disciples, not just new believers. So the Christian mission involves not only evangelism but also the training of new converts in the way of following Jesus. For this purpose each individual Christian has a part to play in spreading the faith and encouraging fellow believers. This can be done by sharing testimonies (describing what God has done in their lives), inviting people to Christian meetings, prayer, advertising, using the media (Premier Christian Radio, God TV, Facebook, Twitter, newspapers and magazines), fellowship meals and social events.</p>	
<p>Christ for all Nations (CfaN)</p>	<p>Begun in 1974 under the leadership of evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, this organisation has held evangelical missions throughout the world and in Africa in particular. Bonnke studied at the Bible College of Wales in Swansea and was a Pentecostal minister in Germany for seven years. He believed God called him to be an Evangelist in Africa when he was ten years old. He went to Lesotho and from there he has held evangelistic meetings across the continent and beyond. At first he was depressed that attendances were small but he had a dread he had repeated four times in which he believed God spoke to him and said 'Africa shall be saved'. This inspired him to organise large rallies and a tent which held up to 34,000 people was soon too small. His open air meetings now attract hundreds of thousands of people, with one meeting in Nigeria attracting an estimated 1,600,000. Towering sound systems are used which can be heard for miles and it is claimed that many miracles of healing occur at the meetings. Bonnke is supported by American evangelist Daniel Kolenda. Each event is a major operation backed up by local churches</p>	<p>4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.</p>



The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13)

2 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,[b] 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" 13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."



How could the story of Pentecost show the start of the growth of Christianity?

The importance of the worldwide Church

Working for reconciliation	<p>Imagine two close friends who fall out. The good relationship they once enjoyed is strained to breaking point. They stop speaking to each other and have so little to do with each other that they become strangers. They desperately need to be reconciled, to get over their differences, and restore their relationship. The primary mission of the worldwide Church is to proclaim that Jesus came so that the relationship between God and people can be restored. Christians argue that sin caused this relationship to be broken and separated the world from God who is holy. Romans 5:10 says that people have become enemies of God, but the message of the Church is that Jesus came to change that.</p> <p>Christians believe that when Jesus died on the cross and rose again he saved human beings from sin, and through his grace made it possible for 'God's enemies' – humankind – to be forgiven and become his friends. One of the seven sacraments in the Catholic Church is called the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and is a response to 2 Corinthians 5:18-19. Matthew 5:23-24 states that Christians are not only to be reconciled to God but should be reconciled to one another.</p> <p>So the worldwide Church has a role to restore people's relationship with God and with one another. From news bulletins it is clear that there is much disharmony and hatred in the world resulting in violence and bloodshed. Even sections within the Church have fallen out and fought each other, for example in Northern Ireland there has been conflict between Catholics and Protestants. Recently the Irish Churches Peace Project (ICPP) was set up to bring together Christians from all over Northern Ireland to discuss initiatives to develop peace and understanding.</p> <p>In 1940, during the Second World War, Coventry Cathedral was bombed. Local Christians were determined not to get revenge but to show forgiveness to those who were responsible. The cathedral has since become a world centre for reconciliation. The Community of the Cross of Nails at Coventry Cathedral works with partners in many countries with the aim of bringing about peace and harmony.</p>
Persecution	<p>Despite the work of Christians to bring reconciliation and peace, the International Society for Human Rights, claims that 80% of all acts of religious discrimination in the world today are directed at Christians. The Pew Research centre reported that, in 2012, Christians were discriminated against in 139 countries – almost 75% of the world's nations. The persecution ranges from forcing Christians to pay an extra tax; not allowing them to have good jobs or build churches; to attacks on their homes, churches and families, and even murder. It is believed that many Christians are killed each year for their faith. In 2015 it was reported that the ten countries where the most serious persecution was taking place are North Korea, Somalia, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Sudan, Iran, Pakistan, Eritrea and Nigeria.</p> <p>Christians have faced persecution throughout the history of the Church. The apostle Paul warned that 'everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted.' (2 Timothy 3:12). Jesus told Christians to expect persecution from the world because if they persecuted him, they would persecute his followers too (John 15:18-19)</p>

1. What is reconciliation?
 2. What is the primary mission of the worldwide Church?
 3. Who do Christians see as God's 'enemies' that then became His friends?
 4. What does 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 explain?
 5. What does Matthew 5:23-24 state?
 6. Who was the conflict in Northern Ireland between?
 7. Which group was set up to bring these groups together and how did they do this?
 8. Who receives around 80% of worldwide persecution?
 9. How might this group be persecuted?
 10. What persecution occurs in John 15:18-19?
- Stretch: Explain two ways in which the Church has worked for reconciliation (4 marks)

2 Corinthians 5:18-19
 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

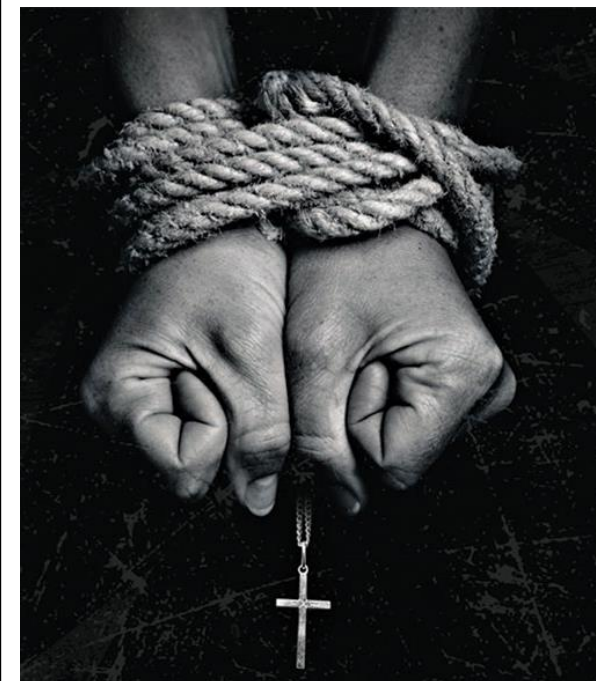


Christian Persecution

<p>How do Christian churches respond to persecution?</p>	<p>Persecution is acting towards another group with hostility and ill-treatment, especially because of race or political or religious beliefs; oppression.</p> <p>Not all persecution has a totally negative effect. It may also help Christians to develop their faith and strengthen their convictions as believers. When their beliefs are challenged Christians have to decide whether or not to be fully committed to the faith (James 1:2-4). Christians believe that those who suffer for their beliefs share in a unique way with Jesus: 'I want to know Christ – yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings' (Phillipians 3:10). The second century Church Father Tertullian wrote that the 'blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church'. He was claiming that the Church grows because of persecution because people witness calm assurance and hope of eternal life that Christians have.</p> <p>Whether faced with verbal or physical abuse, Christians are still encouraged to show love: 'Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.' (Romans 12:21) Jesus said, 'If someone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.' (Matthew 5:39)</p>
<p>Supporting the persecuted</p>	<p>In Corinthians, Paul likens members of the Church to different parts of the body and says, 'If one part suffers, every part suffers with it' (1 Corinthians 12:26). So the Church campaigns on behalf of persecuted Christians and supports them where possible. For example, during the Communist persecution in Eastern Europe, Christians like Brother Andrew, Daniel Scalf and David Hathaway smuggled Bibles into the USSR (Russia) to help strengthen the Christians there.</p>
<p>The Barnabas Fund</p>	<p>The Barnabas Fund sends financial support to projects that help Christians who are suffering from discrimination, oppression and persecution because of their faith. These projects aim to strengthen Christian individuals, churches and their communities by providing material and spiritual support. One of their aims is to raise awareness of the plights of those who are persecuted.</p>
<p>Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)</p>	<p>CSW is a Christian human rights organisation that campaigns for religious freedom for all. It uses four main strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documenting and raising awareness of religious persecution. 2. Attempting to influence governments whose policies or actions affect the oppressed. 3. Offering training in the basics of international human rights' law. 4. Helping the oppressed to speak up for themselves more effectively.
<p>Pastor Baber George</p>	<p>Baber George from Pakistan was imprisoned for being in a gang war and there he became a Christian. He joined the Full Gospel Church, went to Bible school, and joined to organisation Operation Mobilisation to share to gospel with non-Christians. He set up new churches and helped to organise missions and conferences in city stadiums and social projects that assisted the poor and uneducated. He became a peace ambassador fo the organisation Interfaith Harmony and spoke out against the persecution of Christians.</p> <p>His house was attacked and police refused to help him, he used the Barabas fund to help him gain asylum to America (after 40 months as a refugee in Sri Lanka)</p>

1. What is persecution?
2. Why can persecution be a positive thing?
3. What does Phillipians 3:10 teach?
4. What did Church Father Tertullian write?
5. What does Romans 12:21 teach?
6. What did Jesus teach in Matthew 5:39?
7. What does Paul liken to members of the Church in Corinthians? Explain why he uses this example.
8. Who are Brother Andrew, Daniel Scalf and David Hathaway? What did they do?
9. What do the Barnabas fund do?
10. What do the CSW do?


Stretch: Read James 1: 2-10 – Assess its message by making notes around it.



James 1:2-10

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. 7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 8 To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

Poverty

<p>Why should Christians respond to poverty?</p>	<p>Many Christian charities follow the teaching and example of Jesus in working to relieve poverty. Jesus told a rich man to sell everything and give to the poor (Mark 10:21). In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Jesus told of a rich man who ended up in hell having ignored the plight of a beggar (Luke 16:19-31). The parable of the Good Samaritan teaches the importance of caring for all people. Jesus helped outcasts such as lepers, tax collectors, sinners and the mentally ill.</p> <p>Christians believe they should present Jesus to the world through helping the disadvantaged. The passage from 1 John 3:17-18 says “If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did Jesus do in Mark 10:21? 2. What does the Parable of the Good Samaritan teach? 3. What message do Christians take from John 3:17-18? 4. What is CAFOD? 5. How does Gaudium et Spes explain CAFOD’s mission? 6. What does CAFOD aim to do? 7. What does CAFOD do during conflicts and disasters? 8. How many Church denominations use Christian Aid as their official relief and development agency? 9. How do Christian Aid see poverty? 10. Which organisations do Christian Aid work with? <p>Stretch: Read the Rich Man and Lazarus – how are CAFOD and Christian Aid following the teachings given in this parable?</p>
<p>Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD)</p>	<p>Begun in the 1960s, CAFOD is the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. It works to bring hope and compassion to people of all faiths and none in poor communities in Africa, ASIA, South America and the Middle East. The Catholic Church believes action needs to be taken to remedy the injustice of people suffering while others have so much: ‘God intended the earth with everything contained in it for the use of all human beings and peoples [...] goods should be in abundance for all in like manner’ (Gaudium et Spes 69) Pope Paul VI’s encyclical <i>Populorum Progressio</i> quotes St Ambrose: “You are not making a gift of what is yours to the poor man, but you are giving him back what is his [...] The earth belongs to everyone, not to the rich.”</p> <p>CAFOD helps to increase access to clean water, education and healthcare, and lobbies employers to adopt fair working practices and conditions.</p> <p>Working with partners, it aims to set up effective programmes and services in poor communities, and lobbies the UK and EU governments to help developing countries. It encourages Catholic schools and parishes to pray, give and campaign to help disadvantaged communities. During conflicts and disasters, CAFOD acts with local organisations to provide food, water and shelter for people who have lost everything, and helps them rebuild their lives.</p>	
<p>Christian Aid</p>	<p>Christian Aid is the official relief and development agency for 41 Church denominations in Britain and Ireland. Begun in 1945 they aim to encourage sustainable development, stop poverty and provide emergency relief in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, South America and the Carribean. Their stated vision is that ‘Poverty is an outrage against humanity. It robs people of dignity, freedom and hope, of power over their own lives. Christian Aid has a vision – an end to poverty – and we believe that vision can become a reality’. Their slogan is ‘We believe in life before death’ and they work to help the world’s poorest whatever their religion, nationality or race. Christian Aid has around 700 local partner organisations in 50 countries. They campaign with the Fairtrade Foundation, Stop Climate Chaos and Trade Justice Movement. They are members of the ACT alliance, a coalition of Christian denominations and church-related organisations that provide emergency food, aid, shelter, water, sanitation and poverty reduction programmes. Their biggest fundraising event is the annual door-to-door collection in May</p>	

<p>The Rich Man and Lazarus</p>	<p>19 “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. 20 At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores 21 and longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.</p> <p>22 “The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. 24 So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’</p> <p>25 “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. 26 And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’</p> <p>27 “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’</p> <p>29 “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’</p> <p>30 ““No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’</p> <p>31 “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”</p>
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<p>CAFOD</p>	
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<p>Christian Aid</p>	
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MUSLIM BELIEFS Pre-Islamic Arabia

The Prophet Muhammad

Muslims believe that Islam is a faith that has always existed and that it was gradually revealed to humanity by a number of prophets, but the final and complete revelation of the faith was made through the Prophet Muhammad in the 7th century CE. Muhammad was born in the desert city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia in 571.

He was a deeply spiritual man, and often spent time in meditation on Mount Hira. His main motive for doing this was to avoid festivals which celebrated polytheistic (multiple) Gods, as Muhammad was a monotheist (only believed in one God). The traditional story of the Qur'an tells how one night in 610 he was meditating in a cave on the mountain when he was visited by the angel Jibreel who ordered him to recite. Once Jibreel mentioned the name of Allah, Muhammad began to recite words which he came to believe were the words of God.

The Qur'an

During the rest of his life Muhammad continued to receive these revelations. The words were remembered and recorded, and form the text of the Holy Qur'an, the Muslim scripture.

Preaching

Believing that God had chosen him as his messenger Muhammad began to preach what God had revealed to him.

The simple and clear-cut message of Islam, that there is no God but Allah, and that life should be lived in complete submission to the will of Allah, was attractive to many people, and they flocked to hear it.

The Hijrah

Muhammad's popularity was seen as threatening by the people in power in Mecca, and Muhammad took his followers on a journey from Mecca to Medina (which prior to the Hijrah had been called Yathrib) in 622. This journey is called the Hijrah (migration) and the event was seen as so important for Islam that 622 is the year in which the Islamic calendar begins.

The return to Mecca

Within ten years Muhammad had gained so many followers that he was able to return and conquer Mecca. This was preceded by three battles – Badr, Uhud and The Ditch. The Muslims fought against the people of Mecca in these battles, and won in Badr and The Ditch, but lost Uhud. From this time on he was generally accepted by the faithful as the true final Prophet of God. He entered the Ka'ba (pictured right) and removed all of the stone idols from it, which he did because he believed that this did not belong to the idols, but belonged to Allah. The Ka'ba is now a central part of Hajj, a pilgrimage that all Muslims are expected to go on at least once in their lifetime (so long as they can afford it) Muhammad continued to lead his community both spiritually and in earthly matters until his death in 632.

1. What do Muslims believe that Islam is?
2. Where was Muhammad from?
3. What year was Muhammad born?
4. When did the angel Jibreel first visit Muhammad?
5. How was the Qur'an put together?
6. Why did Muhammad begin to preach?
7. What is the Hijrah?
8. What was Medina called before the Muslims arrived?
9. What were the names of the three battles and who won?
10. What did Muhammad do in the Ka'ba?
11. When did Muhammad die?

Stretch: Read the statements below. Explain why each of these would allow Islam to thrive.

Muhammad was a very good public speaker.

Muhammad was illiterate (couldn't read) but was still able to recite the Qur'an.

Muhammad was seen as a great religious and political leader.

God is believed to have intervened in order to ensure the Muslims were successful.



Explain Muslim teachings about the origin of Islam. Refer to sacred texts in your answer (5 marks)

“Read in the name of your Lord who created (96.1). He created man from a clot” (96.2).

One Muslim teaching about the origin of the origin of Islam is...

“Read and your Lord is the most honorable (96.3) who teaches by the pen” (96.4).

Another Muslim teaching about the origin of Islam is...

“He taught man what he did not know” (96.5).

We can see this in the Qur’an, which says...

The six articles of Muslim faith

'The oneness of Allah' is the concept of **tawhid** for Muslims, meaning 'oneness, absolute, alone'.

Surah 112:1-4 says: 'He is Allah, the One, Allah is Eternal and Absolute. None is born of Him, He is unborn. There is none like unto Him.'

This means that Allah is the creator and sustainer of life He is beyond any human limitations like age and death because He was not born and cannot die. He has no partners or children and nothing is like Him.

Angels do the work of Allah. They deliver revelations via the Prophets so that Muslims know what Allah wants them to do.

They record the words and actions of each individual person, so that they have a book to account for their lives. They receive souls at death. Angels do not have free will like humans and they only obey Allah's commands.

Five sources of authority are **books**: the **Torah** of Moses; the **Psalms** of David; the **Gospels** of Jesus and the **Scrolls** of Abraham; and finally the **Qur'an**.

According to Muslims, the first four have been lost in their original forms or changed. The Qur'an is the only revealed scripture still in its original form. It is the direct Word of Allah as given through Angel Jibril

Muslims believe in the **supremacy of Allah's will**. Sunni Muslims believe that Allah knows everything. Qadr means everything is ordered by Allah; nothing is random or by chance. Humans do have free will though, but as Allah knows the past, present and future their choices are already known to Him, but not to them.

Muslims believe that there will be a **Day of Judgement** when all Muslims and others stand alone in front of Allah, who decides whether they go to heaven or hell based on their deeds. Everyone must answer for themselves and must accept the consequences of their thoughts and actions on Earth. Human life acts as a test for the eternal life to come.

Prophets and messengers are chosen by Allah to deliver His message to humankind. Muslims believe that Allah has revealed messages throughout time to guide humanity and the Prophet Muhammad was the last (Seal) of the Prophets; he was given the ultimate guidance in the Qur'an. As a result of this, there is no need for any more Prophets.

1. What is tawhid?
2. Which Surah contains tawhid and what does it say?
3. Explain two beliefs about angels.
4. What are the five sources of authority and who wrote them?
5. What do we mean when we say 'supremacy of Allah's will'?
6. What does Qadr mean?
7. What happens on the Day of Judgement?
8. What do prophets and messengers do?
9. Who was the Seal of the Prophets?
10. What do we mean when we say the Seal of the Prophets?

Ext: Explain which of these articles of Muslim faith you think is the most important and why you feel this way.



Interviewer

5 Mark Question

**Explain two Muslim teachings about the six articles of the faith
Refer to sacred writing or scripture in your answer. [5 marks]**

One Muslim teaching from the six articles of faith is...

We can see this in which says...

Another teaching from the six articles of the faith is...

This teaches Muslims to...

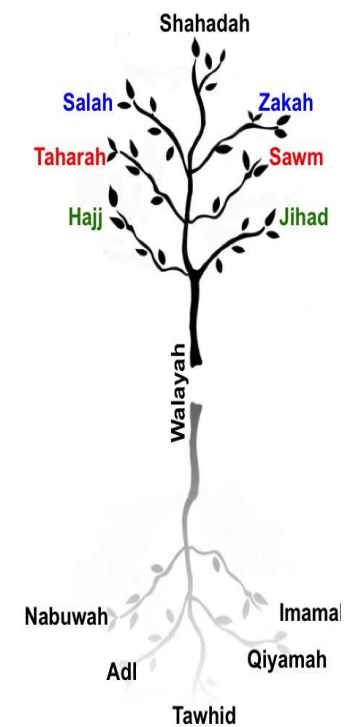
The five roots of Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam

Name	Explanation
Tawhid – 'Oneness'	This means the same as in Sunni beliefs, that Allah is One. Allah is the Almighty and unique in His Oneness. Shi'a use Qur'an Surah 112 to explain why they believe Allah is One. Allah cannot be associated with anything as 'none is like Him'; to do so is to commit the greatest sin, namely 'shirk'. This means 'association' in Arabic and therefore nothing can be compared to Allah. All is the creator of all, pre-existent, beyond time and space and beyond all human understanding.
Al-Ma'ad - Resurrection	The Shi'a believe that there will be a Day of Judgement (Yawm al-Qiyyamaah). Every Muslim and non-Muslim will be judged by Allah. Humans will be physically resurrected to stand to be judged and they will be asked to account for the words and actions of their lives on Earth. The events of this day are described in both the Qur'an and Hadith.
Adalat - Justice of Allah	Allah is 'The Just' and 'The Wise' which means He does no wrong. The Shi'a believe that they need to be aware there is good and evil in everything, but that Allah commands them to do good. Surah 16:90 says 'Indeed Allah commands you towards Justice.' Humans will be held responsible for all their actions, good and bad. Allah acts with a purpose which humans cannot understand. Sometimes justice can be hard to see but the Shi'a should try to understand as much as they can.
Nubuwwah - Prophethood	Shi'as believe that Allah sent messengers to guide people to the right path and Prophet Muhammad was the last of them. The 'right path' means a peaceful way of life, lived in total submission to Allah. Prophets deliver the messages to spread the religion. The imam protects the messages so that people do not forget and leave the faith in the absence of prophets.
Imamate - Leadership	Some believe that Prophet Muhammad said that twelve imams from his own tribe (the Quraysh) would succeed him as leaders. Shi'as believe that the first eleven led the community, some were killed, but that the twelfth disappeared after his father's death. This imam will appear again when Allah decides at the end of time. Currently he is alive and in hiding. All imams are seen as infallible (can do no wrong) and must be obeyed. They are protectors of the faith, ensuring the teachings do not become corrupted or spoiled.


1. What does Tawhid translate into?
2. Explain briefly what 'shirk' is
3. What does Al-Ma'ad translate into?
4. Briefly explain this belief
5. What does Adalat translate into?
6. Briefly explain this belief. Use a Qur'anic reference.
7. What does Nubuwwah translate into?
8. Briefly explain this belief
9. What does Imamate translate into?
10. Usul ad-Din is followed by Twelver Shi'a – where did they get this name?

Ext. Explain how this is different to belief in Sunni Islam and why these differences exist.

Usul ad-Din means 'the foundations of the faith'. These are the principles underpinning Shi'a belief, and from them come the Ten Obligatory Acts. The Twelver Shi'a (the largest group within Shi'a Islam) who follow this, are encouraged to be able to explain them; what they mean, why they are the five key roots to belief and how to understand how they link to their own religious practice in all its elements. If the five key roots, Tawhid, prophethood and resurrection are all key to Muslim belief. To be a Muslim means to accept them completely without question. If a Muslim rejects the other two (imamate and justice) - then they are still Muslim, just not Shi'a Muslims.



The Qur'an and its authority

<p>Beliefs and origins</p>	<p>The Qur'an is the direct word of Allah and therefore has His authority. It is infallible (without error) and remains in its original form. The Qur'an shows this when it says "Falsehood shall never come to it' (Qur'an 41:42). It is more important than other books like the Torah (from Judaism) and Injil (Gospels of Jesus). The Qur'an was revealed to the Seal of the Prophets (Muhammad) and because no man would be capable of writing such a book (particularly an illiterate one, as Muhammad was), it made him even more important. This is shown in the Qur'an when it says: "If all men and jinn (spirits) should combine to bring about the likes of the Qur'an, they could not bring the like of it, even if they helped one another.' (Qur'an 17:88) Muhammad was the first great miracle because Muhammad was illiterate. The written book (the Qur'an), was not written by Muhammad, but was used to formalise the religion after he died.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do Muslims believe the Qur'an is? 2. What does Qur'an 41:42 mean? 3. What made the Qur'an even more important? 4. Why was Muhammad reading the Qur'an the first great miracle? 5. Why does the Qur'an have authority? 6. What does the Qur'an explain? 7. Why is the Qur'an seen as infallible? 8. What is the Torah? 9. What are the Gospels? 10. What are the Psalms? <p>Stretch: Do you think that the Qur'an has more authority than the</p>	
<p>What the Qur'an contains.</p>	<p>The Qur'an has authority because it covers every aspect of life: past, present and future. It influences a person throughout their lives: birth, ceremony, marriage, death and in daily prayers. It contains the basics of worship which Muhammad developed, and contains legal (Shari'ah Law) and social systems. It explains creation and other ultimate questions like why we are here and what happens when we die. It has been suggested by some that science and the Qur'an go together; they are compatible and the Qur'an reveals ideas that scientists did not even know at the time. It provides personal and spiritual guidance for all life's situations and challenges.</p>	<p>The Torah The Torah is the revelation given to Musa (Moses) by Allah on Mount Sinai. It was put together by Moses' followers a long time after his death. The Qur'an refers to it as 'guidance and light'</p>	<p>Gospels – Injil The Injil is the story of Jesus (or Isa, in Arabic). Muslims believe that Jesus was born of a virgin mother, was not the son of Allah, was not crucified, and instead ascended into heaven, and that he didn't die to save people from their sins. They believe that the Gospels contain mistakes.</p>
<p>Why is this book so important to Muslims?</p>	<p>If Muslims combine all these ideas there is no reason to not believe that the Qur'an has supreme authority. It is a timeless book. Equally though, other religions also believe that their holy books are as important to them and have as much authority. Christians, for example, may say that where the Bible comes from is a secondary issue, what is far more important to them is how it speaks to people when they read it. In other words, God speaks to them individuals in their hearts when the Bible is read. Other books have been translated but in general the meaning still exists. What is more important is that people can read in their own language and it is available to all. The Qur'an is only infallible in its original language (Arabic), and translation is exactly that; a translation and not the word of Allah.</p>	<p>The Psalms Psalms are a collection of prayers the Allah. He was a great king, whose people were God fearing and righteous. The psalms contain lessons of guidance for the people and they were recited in song version. Jesus also referred to them</p>	

Prophethood and Adam

The angels collected soil, red, white, brown and black, smooth and gritty, soft and hard. It came from mountains and valleys, from dry deserts to green and fertile lands.

Allah honoured Adam. He blew life into his soul. He ordered his angels to bow down before Adam as a sign of respect and honour. His descendants were to be as diverse as the clay he was created from.

<p>What do we know about Adam?</p>	<p>Everything was created from Adam and his descendants so to be able to worship and know Allah, we must understand Adam. Adam was to be the caretaker of Earth. Adam was given the ability to identify and give names, language, and the ability to communicate. Allah gave him a thirst for learning, the ability to reason, evaluate and make choices.</p> <p>To prevent loneliness Adam was given Hawwa (Eve), a woman for company. Allah told Adam and Hawwa to enjoy all the things made for them, but not to eat from one tree. Iblis (a jinn, or supernatural creature) managed to tempt them to taste the fruit, hence disobeying Allah. They also became aware of their nakedness and covered themselves. As punishment, Allah banished them to Earth, but He forgave them because they asked for mercy. They became ordinary people living on Earth instead of in the Garden of Bliss (Eden). On Earth, Allah sent guidance to Adam, so he could teach people about Allah. Adam and Hawwa had many children, the most famous being Qabeel (Cain) and Habeel (Abel). The brothers continued the evil side of humankind when Qabeel killed Habeel, fulfilling a prophecy in the Qur'an. When Adam died, he named his son Seth as successor but over time his descendants split up and moved apart.</p>
<p>Why is Adam important in Islam?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He is the father of all humankind 2. He was a prophet until his death 3. He taught the revelations to his sons 4. He taught about the work of Iblis and how to protect themselves from jinn. 5. He taught life on Earth was temporary, eternal life is in the next life. 6. He built the Ka'ba as the first place of worship with the help of the angels after he was sent to Earth.
<p>What can Muslims learn from Adam?</p>	<p>Iblis and Adam disobeyed Allah. However, Adam repented his sins straight away and regretted it all his life, so finding salvation. He openly criticised himself for falling into Iblis' trap but hoped he could make amends and receive Allah's mercy. Iblis did not show repentance or regret. He lost all home and was forever tormented.</p>

1. What do we know about Adam?
2. Why is Adam so important in Islam?
3. What can Muslims learn from Adam?

Stretch: Which is more important for Muslims: Muhammad or Adam? Why?

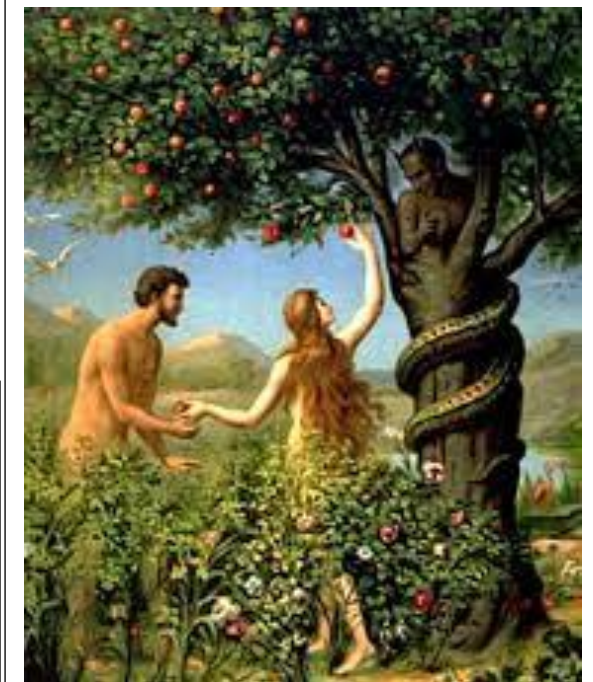
Key people: Adam, Hawwa, Allah, Qabeel, Habeel, Seth.

'I am going to create a human out of clay... so when I have made him, and breathed life into him'

(Qur'an 38:71-72)

'Indeed I am going to set a vicegerent (earthly representative of Allah on Earth'

(Qur'an 2:30)



The nature of Allah

Your task here is to put all of the descriptions of Allah's nature in order. 1 = most important 8 = least important

Nature	Explanation	Qur'an verse
One (Tawhid)	Muslims believe that Allah is one God, indivisible and absolute; nothing comes close to Him as the ultimate source of power and creation. He is totally supreme. There is nothing that can be likened to Him. He is beyond human understanding. Everything belongs to Allah; everything humans have is on loan from Allah. Humans only exist because Allah wills them to. Muslims are what Allah makes them.	"He is Allah, One, Allah the eternal refuge. He neither begets nor is born, nor is there to him any equivalent" (Qur'an 112:1-4)
Omnipotent	Allah is Al-Qadeer – all powerful. The idea that 'He is able to do all things' ensures a Muslim's submission to Him. Humankind will always need Him and there is a reason for everything that happens. Muslims can be secure in knowing that Allah knows what is happening in the world. He sees their every action and knows their innermost thoughts and desires and He hears when they call Him. There are hidden blessings to everything that happens.	"...He who is All-knowing, the All Powerful, able to do anything" (Qur'an 30:54)
Immanent	The Qur'anic quotes below show that Allah is vital to human existence. If the jugular vein is cut, humans die. Trying to live without Allah, for Muslims, is worse than death. Allah knows humans so well that, for example, he knows what someone will say even before they say it. Muslims believe Allah must be in the world to help and guide, to give people the purpose and ability to live this life. This is what immanence means; that Allah is very active in the world.	"We are closer to human than his jugular vein" (50:16) "And He is with you wherever you may be" (57:4)
Transcendent	He is outside the world, outside everything that He created. Allah is outside time, whereas humans are subject to time. Allah has no beginning or no end, so He cannot be a part of time. Allah is beyond human understanding, limitless and therefore He is not part of this world. Transcendence is separate to the world, beyond it, which allows Allah to control it and act in the world but not be affected by it.	"No vision can grasp Him... He is above all comprehension." (Qur'an 6:103) "Nothing there is like Him." (Qur'an 42:11)
Beneficent	In the Qur'an, Allah is referred to 57 times as Beneficent. This is basically to say that he is loving. Ways that He is beneficent include sending the prophets to help humans follow the right path, forgiving those who repent – he also created humans as beings that should focus on the good, such as charity, kindness, family togetherness and selflessness.	Indeed, we used to supplicate Him before. Indeed, it is He who is the Beneficent, the Merciful." (Qur'an 52:2)
Merciful	In Islam Allah is known as the merciful, and this is referred to in the Qur'an 160 times. Allah's mercy allows humans to exist, to live, to love and to care. Muslims are never alone. Allah's compassion surrounds them and mercy helps them to deal with being humans. Also, out of mercy, Allah forgives and even repeated sin is forgiven. Muslims are always given a chance to make up for bad deeds.	"Limitless is your Lord in His mercy..." Qur'an 6:147
Fair	Allah is absolute, so always does what is right. Muslims must accept this and try to act in a fair way to others. Humans are instructed to be fair (see Qur'anic verse below). This belief should influence Muslims to never be extreme in their emotions. Never be too angry or calm, never be too courageous or too weak, too clever or too foolish. Extreme actions cannot be justified.	"We have made you a moderate nation" (Qur'an 2:143)
Just	Justice (Adalat) means fairness, that is, to do what is right. Allah is absolute, so always does what is right. Muslims must accept this and try to act in a fair way to others. Humans cannot always see justice being served because they are incapable of fully understanding how Allah acts. His creation, in His laws and in all His actions.	"Be steadfast witnesses for Allah in equity and let not hatred of any people seduce you that you deal not justly." (Qur'an 5:8)

Angels in Islam

<p>Jibril – the ‘Angel of Holiness’</p>	<p>Jibril is the most famous angel, and in Islam, the most important. You might be more familiar with his name as Gabriel (from the Nativity). In Islam, it is believed that Jibril did visit Maryam (Mary), the mother of the Prophet Isa (Jesus). Jibril is known as the ‘spirit of holiness’ as he always brings good news.</p> <p>In the Hadith, Muhammad was said to have described Jibril as having 600 wings. Each wing filled the horizon as far as the eye could see in all directions. Jibril was the first thing to be given life by Allah and he was sent to look at paradise. Jibril spoke with many Prophets who received revelations from Allah.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He helped Ibrahim when he was thrown into the fire • He opened up the Zamzam well so that Hajar could give her dying son water • When Yusuf (Joseph) was thrown into the well by his brothers, Jibril caught him and was his protector • Spoke to Muhammad in Cave Hira and over 23 years dictated the Qur’an directly from Allah.
<p>Mika’il</p>	<p>Most of what is known about Mika’il is from Islamic tradition rather than the Qur’an. He is mentioned as one of the most important angels. Mika’il not only supported Muhammad with his spiritual mission, but still does today.</p> <p>He is often known as the giver of rain and sustenance. He was the first to bow down to Adam and he was put in charge of the plants and rain. Muslim teachers think this is symbolic to mean that Mika’il provides spiritual help to the soul and material help to the body.</p> <p>Mika’il had to prepare Muhammad by providing water that Jibril used to purify him.</p> <p>On judgement day, both Mika’il and Jibril will help with weighing of a person’s actions. Mika’il has seen hell and how easy it is to get there, as opposed to how hard it is to get to paradise, so it is believed that he does not smile.</p>
<p>Azrai’l</p>	<p>Azrai’l and the angels he is in charge of are responsible for taking the souls of the deceased away from the body. Azrail does not act independently from God and just takes those, who were commanded to be taken. Rather than merely representing an independent personified death, Azrail is described in Islamic sources as subordinate to the will of God “with the most profound reverence”.</p> <p>Several Muslim traditions recount meetings between the Angel of Death and the prophets, the most famous being a conversation between the Angel of Death and Moses. In an Islamic narration, Idris befriended the angel of death. Idris offered him food, thereupon he revealed him his non-human essence, because as an angel, he does not eat. Later the angel of death showed him the heavens.</p>
<p>Angels of the seven heavens</p>	<p>In other sources, the concept is presented in metaphorical terms. Each of the seven heavens is depicted as being composed of a different material, and Islamic prophets are resident in each.</p> <p>The first heaven is depicted as being made of silver and is the home of Adam and Eve, as well as the angels of each star.</p> <p>The second heaven is depicted as being made of gold and is the home of John the Baptist and Jesus.</p> <p>The third heaven is depicted as being made of pearls or other dazzling stones; Joseph and Azrael are resident there.</p> <p>The fourth heaven is depicted as being made of white gold; Enoch and the Angel of Tears resides there.</p> <p>The fifth heaven is depicted as being made of silver; Aaron and the Avenging Angel hold court over this heaven.</p> <p>The sixth heaven is composed of garnets and rubies; Moses can be found here.</p> <p>The seventh heaven, which borrows some concepts from its Jewish counterpart, is depicted as being composed of divine light incomprehensible to the mortal man. Abraham is a resident of the seventh heaven.</p>

Al-Qadr and human freedom

What is Al-Qadr?	Al-Qadr means that everything happens as a result of Allah's <i>will</i> and nothing is ever random or without reason. It means predestination of the will of Allah; that Allah is <i>in charge</i> of everything in life and has a purpose for everything as part of His plan.
Human freedom	<p>Many Shi'a Muslims believe that God <i>knows</i> everything that is going to happen, but this does not mean that he <i>decides</i> what is going to happen. This means that people still have free will, so they can make their own choices. Here is one way to think about it: a mother of a little boy knows the child very well, and knows in advance what he is going to do. If he is given a choice between a bowl of peas and an ice cream, she is very sure he will choose the ice cream. That's not to say the boy was forced to eat the ice cream – it was his choice. Another time he might be offered peas or spinach, and he might choose the peas then if he likes them better. Just because a mother might be able to predict what will happen does not mean the boy is not being given a real choice.</p> <p>Or imagine you travelled in time 100 years into the future. You spend some time observing what people are doing and writing down their actions. You take this written record back with you to present to the present year. Does this mean that the people you observed 100 years in the future suddenly have no free will? No; those people are still deciding for themselves what they want to do – you just happen to have been able to see in advance what they are going to decide.</p>
Responsibility and accountability	Often Muslims use the words 'Insha'Allah' (if Allah will). However, everything cannot just be left to Allah, humans have to take responsibility for as much as they can and then put their trust in Allah. Being responsible also means being accountable for actions. Surah 16:93 states "...and most certainly you will be questioned as to what you did." This will lead to paradise or hell.

1. What is Al-Qadr?
2. How is the idea of a mother and child used to explain Al-Qadr?
3. How is the example of a time-traveller used to explain Al-Qadr?
4. What does 'Insha'Allah' mean?
5. How does Surah 16:93 explain that you must be accountable for your actions?
6. What does Qur'an 2:277 teach? What does this mean?
7. What does Qur'an 13:11 teach? What does this mean?
8. What does Qur'an 9:51 teach? What does this mean?

Ext: How are belief in Al-Qadr and belief in the Day of Judgement combined?

Those who believe, do good deeds, keep up the prayer, and pay the prescribed alms will have their reward with their Lord." (Qur'an 2:277)

"Say, 'Never will we be struck except by what Allah has decreed for us; he is our protector; and upon Allah let the believers rely.'" (Qur'an 9:51)

God does not change the condition of a people [for the worse] unless they change what is in themselves (Qur'an 13:11)



Akhirah – life after death

What happens after we die is one of life’s biggest mysteries. Philosophers call it an ‘ultimate question’, which is one that has no answer that can be empirically tested or even agreed upon. What happens when we die is something some people fear as it is a move into the unknown. There are many possibilities given as ‘answers’ (resurrection, reincarnation, heaven, hell) whilst others think that death is the end and that is it.

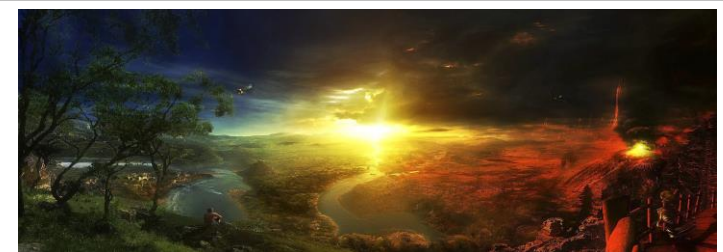
How does Islam explain life after death?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Akhirah definitely exists. The Qur’an says it does and, as the Word of Allah, is right. • Life after death makes sense of our short existence on Earth – why we are here at all. • On Earth, Muslims’ lives are tested by Allah and the end result in akhirah in one form or another. • Most of the prophets state that Muslims were created deliberately, people will be accountable for their actions in order to complete the journey back to Allah.
The ‘Angel of Death’ – the grave and Barzakh	When a person dies, their soul is taken by the Angel of Death, called Azra’il. The soul hovers around the corpse, seeing everything but unable to communicate. It watches the burial, as it is no longer part of the body. Two angels visit to ask three questions: 1. Who is your Lord? 2. What was your life? 3. Who is your prophet? If these are answered correctly it is believed that the soul is made comfortable to sleep until the Day of Judgement. If not, it is tormented by angels. This is known as the punishment of the grave. After this stage, waiting for the Day of Judgement is called Barzakh. Barzakh means ‘barrier’. This is not governed by time and there is no return to life to warn or help others.
The Mahdi	The Mahdi (guided one, Messiah) will come to Earth and Isa will return to help the Mahdi to fight against false prophets. It is believed that the Qur’an will be taken up to paradise and not even hafiz (those who know the Qur’an by heart) will remember its words. New heaven will also replace the old. Forty days after the trumpet, there will be smoke covering the world. A second trumpet will then sound when the dead will rise to await judgement. Muslims believe that death and judgement are certainties in their lives that they must face up to.
What does the Qur’an say?	Surahs 81 and 82 describe what will happen when this time comes. The Angel Israfil will sound the trumpet, there will be a blinding light and the sky will be cut. The Earth will be destroyed, with mountains becoming dust and oceans boiling over with fire. The Earth will be transformed and the dead raised up. The living will die instantly.

1. What is an ultimate question?
2. What is akhirah?
3. Explain how Islam explains life after death.
4. What is the name of the Angel of Death?
5. What does the Angel of Death do?
6. Which questions are asked to the person who has died?
7. What is Barzakh?
8. What is the Mahdi?
9. Who supports the Mahdi?
10. What happens during judgement day?

Ext: Explain two Qur’anic beliefs about what happens when we die

When the sun is wrapped up [in darkness], (1)
 And when the stars fall, dispersing, (2)
 And when the mountains are removed (3)
 And when full-term she-camels are neglected (4)
 And when the wild beasts are gathered (5)
 And when the seas are filled with flame (6)
 And when the souls are paired (7)
 (Surah 81:1-7)

For whoever wills among you to take a right course.
 And you do not will except that Allah wills - Lord of the worlds (Surah 81: 28-29)



MUSLIM PRACTICES: The Five Pillars of Islam

The Five Pillars of Islam

The Five Pillars are central to Muslim practices, and they have a great impact on daily life. Muslims believe that they support the main principles and beliefs of Islam, just as pillars are used to support a building.

They can be seen as key to living a perfect Muslim life. They help to give Muslims an identity as one community who share a faith, and enable them to show their obedience and dedication to God. The Five Pillars are:

Shahadah (Declaration of the faith)	Salah (Prayer five times a day)	Zakah (Almsgiving – giving to charity)	Sawm (Fasting – Not eating during Ramadan)	Hajj (Pilgrimage – visiting Makkah once in your lifetime)
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The ten obligatory acts of Shi'a Islam

There are Ten Obligations for a Muslim according to the Shi'a branch of Islam. According to Shi'a, study and defining of law comes from Muhammad and the twelve imams. Today there are clerics who are seen as the guardians of Islamic law. They base their decisions on the Qur'an and Hadith in order to have responses to modern-day issues. This is known as ijtihad. Clerics like the Ayatollahs (religious leaders in Iran) make these decisions. The Obligatory acts are as follows:

Prayer (salah)	Fasting (sawm)	Almsgiving (zakah)	Pilgrimage (hajj)	Struggle (jihad)
One fifth – 20% tax on yearly earnings after deduction of household expenses (khums)	Directing others towards good/commanding what is just (Amr-bil-Marooif)	Forbidding evil (Nahi Anil Munkar)	Expressing love towards good – those in Allah's path (Tawalla)	Expressing hatred/disassociation with those who oppose Allah

Shahadah

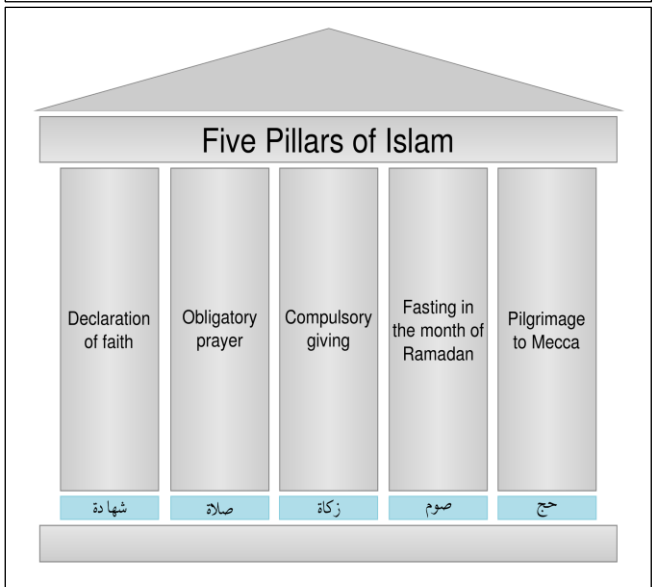
The basic belief of Islam is expressed in the Shahadah. In Arabic it is 'La Ilaha illa Allah wa – Muahammad rasul Allah' which in English translates to 'There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Prophet of Allah'. Sincerely reciting this statement in front of Muslim witnesses is the only requirement for joining the Muslim community. It is recited many times during a lifetime. It is said when a baby is born, so the first thing they hear is this basic belief of the faith they are born into. It is also included in the daily prayers. If possible, it becomes the last words of a Muslim before they die.

As well as being the first of the Five Pillars, the Shahadah also provides the foundation for the other four. These four pillars are actions that put a Muslim's faith, expressed in the Shahadah into practice. (This also applies to the additional five obligatory acts found in Shi'a Islam)

Shahadah in Shi'a Islam

1. What do Muslims believe about the Five Pillars?
2. How can they be seen as key to living a perfect Muslim life?
3. What are the Five Pillars? Make a note of what you think they are for.
4. Which branch of Islam follows the ten obligatory acts?
5. What is ijtihad?
6. Which pillar is missing from the ten obligatory acts?
7. What is expressed in the Shahadah?
8. What requirements exist to become Muslim?
9. When might it be important for the Shahadah to be said?
10. How does the Shahadah differ in Shi'a Islam?

Ext: Which pillar do you think is the most important? Explain why.



4 Mark Question:

Explain two ways that Muslim beliefs about the Shahadah influence Muslims today

One way that belief in the Shahadah influences Muslim belief is...

Another way that belief in the Shahadah influences Muslim belief is...

Salah: the daily prayers

The times of prayer

To observe the second pillar of Islam (salah), Sunni Muslims are required to pray at five set times during the day. The times are worked out from the times of sunrise and sunset, so they change slightly each day. Muslims refer to prayer timetables based on where they are in the world so they know that their times are right.

The times of prayer are

Fajr – Just before sunrise	Zuhr – Just after midday	Asr - Afternoon	Maghrib – Just after sunset	Isha - Night
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The first prayer is earlier in the summer than the winter because sunrise is earlier. This places demands upon Muslims but is all part of the self-discipline required in submitting themselves to God.

Shi'a Muslims combine the midday and afternoon prayers, and the sunset and night prayers, so they only pray three times a day.

How Muslims prepare for prayer

It is important that Muslims are spiritually clean before they pray. This is achieved by ritual washing (or ablution) called **wudu**. Muslims follow detailed instruction in order to make sure that they do this properly. These are outlined in the Qur'an: "You who believe, when you are about to pray, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, wash your feet up to the ankles and, if required, wash your whole body" (Qur'an 5:6)

Mosques have two special rooms set aside for washing, one for men and another for women. Washing is done under running water rather than using a basin. If water is not available, for example in a desert, a dry form of washing is allowed using sand or dust. This illustrates that it is not physical cleanliness that is required but spiritual cleanliness, and wudu is a form of spiritual preparation or purification to allow Muslims to focus fully on God in their prayers.

The direction of prayer

It is very important that while praying, Muslims face the holy city of Makkah. This means that all Muslims are physically and mentally focussing on one place associated with God, in the same way that all Muslims should focus every part of their lives on God. If the prayers are taking place in a mosque, this is easy to achieve. All mosques have a mihrab. This is a semi-circular niche built into the qiblah wall, which shows the exact direction of Makkah from the mosque. Muslims face this in order to pray.

If prayer is taking place anywhere outside the mosque, a special compass is used to show the direction of Makkah. This is sometimes a part of the mat Muslims kneel on when they pray.

Prayer inside a mosque

Many mosques have special carpets that look like separate rows of prayer mats, facing the mihrab. This gives each person a suitable space to carry out their prayers properly.

The prayers are led by an imam who is positioned in front of the congregation but also facing the mihrab. Men and women pray at the same time but in separate spaces; they are either separate by a partition or curtain or they pray in separate rooms. It is normal for the voice of the imam in the men's prayer room to be broadcast in the women's prayer room at the same time, so he can lead their prayers along with the men's.

1. What is Salah?
2. How many times do Sunni Muslims pray per day and what are these times called?
3. Why is the first prayer of the day earlier or later depending on the time of year?
4. What is wudu?
5. What does Qur'an 5:6 instruct for proper wudu to be performed?
6. How many rooms are there for wudu and why is this the case?
7. What would a Muslim do if they lived in a place where there was no water?
8. In which direction do Muslims pray?
9. What is a mihrab?
10. Who leads the prayers and how do men and women manage to access this at the same time?

Stretch: Look at the picture below. Why do you think a Muslim takes this position?



5 Mark Question:

Explain two Muslim beliefs about wudu

Refer to scripture in your answer.

One Muslim belief about wudu is that...

The Qur'an shows this when it says ...

Another Muslim belief about wudu is that...

This outlines the fact that it is not about...

Salah: the daily prayers (2)

Type of Prayer	Explanation
The rak'ah	<p>The daily prayers are made up of a number of rak'ah. This is a set sequence of actions and recitations. For example, the morning prayer is made up of two rak'ah and the night prayer is made up of four rak'ah. The rak'ah changes slightly depending on which prayer it is used in, and whereabouts it occurs in the overall sequence, but it includes the following basic actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While standing, Muslims recite the first chapter from the Qur'an. • While bowing, Muslims say in Arabic 'Glory be to my Lord who is the very greatest' three times. The bowing positions shows that they believe God to be great. • Returning to the upright position, they make a recitation, praising God. • They then kneel with their forehead, nose, hands, knees and toes touching the floor. This is called prostration and shows complete obedience to God. They recite 'How perfect is my Lord the most high'. • Muslims then sit while reciting 'God is the greatest', and after pausing for a few seconds prostrate themselves once more while repeating 'God is the greatest'. <p>Once the required number of rak'ah is completed, in a kneeling position Muslims turn their face to the right and then to the left, reciting in Arabic 'Peace be upon you, and the mercy and blessings of God'.</p> <p>Personal prayers (Du'a prayers) may be added on at the end of the final rak'ah. These do not have to be in Arabic and do not follow any set form. Muslims believe that God answers their prayers in the way that God know is best for them.</p>
Jummah Prayers	<p>The midday prayer every Friday is considered to be special, and is called the Jummah prayer. All male Muslims are expected to attend a mosque for this prayer, and women may do so if they wish. Once the prayer is complete, the imam will deliver a sermon that reminds Muslims of their obligations and duties to God. Although Friday is not a day of rest, Muslims must leave their work or close their business in order to attend the Jummah prayers, and then return to work afterwards.</p>
Prayer at home	<p>Muslims are allowed to pray at home. They must perform wudu before prayer, but they do not need a special room in their home to pray. Provided the room is clean, it is suitable. Many Muslims will use a prayer mat, which they position so it is facing Makkah, in the same way as it would in a mosque. Muslim women in particular can find it useful to pray at home, especially if they have children to look after.</p>

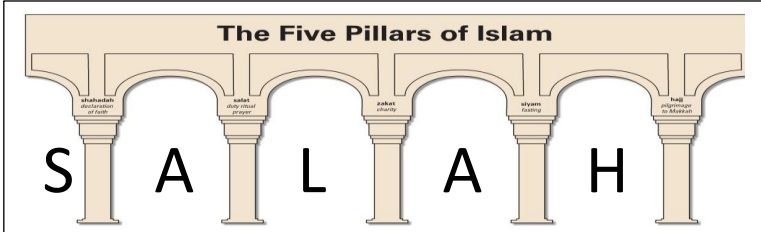
1. What are rak'ah?
2. Explain what the individual rak'ah are and what they are for.
3. What do Muslims do when the required number of rak'ah are complete?
4. What are Du'a prayers?
5. What are Jummah prayers?
6. What are Muslims required to do for Jummah prayers?
7. Are Muslims allowed to pray at home?
8. Who might find it particularly useful to pray at home?
9. Why is prayer so important to Muslims?
10. How does prayer unite Muslims worldwide?

Ext. What is more important, Shahadah or Salah? Why?

The Significance of Prayer

Prayer has its own importance as one of the Five Pillars. However, for Muslims it is more than that – it is what God has commanded them to do. Prayer creates a much greater awareness of God, which in turn motivates them to do God's will.

Prayer also unites Muslims worldwide because they all pray the same way. A Muslim can go can go into any mosque anywhere in the world and be able to participate with fellow Muslims. In addition, reciting from the Qur'an during the prayers reminds Muslims of its importance. The action of bowing and prostrating remind them that God is greater and more important than they are.



Sawm: fasting during Ramadan

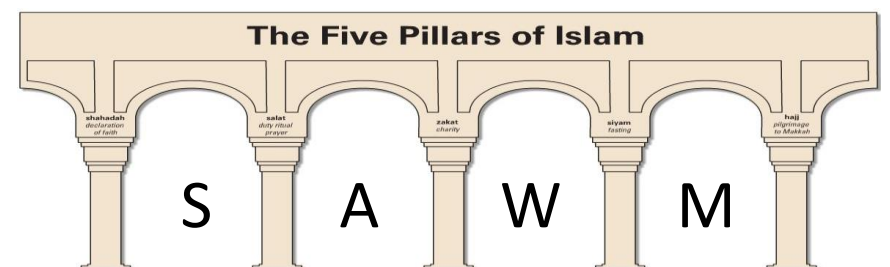
Things done for Sawm	Explanation
Fasting	<p>Ramadan is known as the month of fasting because Muslims fast during daylight hours of the whole month, going without food or drink. They get up every day before sunrise in order to eat and drink enough to keep them going until sunset. Then the fast is broken and Muslims are allowed to eat until sunrise the next day. The evening meal is often shared with family and friends, then followed with extra prayers and readings from the Qur'an.</p> <p>The command to fast can be found in the Qur'an, and it has been obligatory for Muslims to fast during Ramadan since the seventh century. For Muslims, fasting is not just to do without food and drink; smoking and sex are also forbidden during daylight hours. Muslims who live in non-Muslim countries may find this month particularly difficult, since there can be more temptation to break the fast. For example, in the UK it can be very difficult for those in school to resist temptation or participate in PE lessons without being able to drink to rehydrate themselves. Many schools at break and lunchtimes provide special rooms during Ramadan, where Muslim students can go so that they may avoid the temptation of food and drink.</p> <p>The whole focus during the month of Ramadan is on God, for which purity of thought is required in order to cleanse the soul and free it from harm. Fasting requires considerable self-discipline, but it allows Muslims to show they can sacrifice their physical needs as evidence of their submission to God.</p>
Exceptions to fasting	<p>Not all Muslims have to fast during Ramadan, although those excused from fasting are supposed to make up for it later if they can. People can be excused for health reasons – for example pregnant women, mothers nursing babies, children and those who are ill do not have to fast. Some children fast for a shorter length of time to help train themselves.</p>
Charity	<p>One of the positive elements to feeling hungry during the day is that it serves as a reminder that the poor feel that way all the time if they cannot afford to eat properly. This greater awareness inspires many Muslims to find ways to help the poor. This may include inviting the poor to share their meal that breaks the fast at sunset. Many Muslims choose to pay Zakah during Ramadan.</p>

1. What is fasting?
2. Why is Ramadan known as the month of fasting?
3. What does it mean to 'break the fast'?
4. When would a Muslim break their fast?
5. Why might a Muslim from a non-Muslim country find Ramadan more difficult?
6. What is the main focus for Ramadan?
7. Who doesn't have to fast during Ramadan?
8. What might Muslims choose to pay during Ramadan?
9. What is the Night of Power?
10. Briefly explain what Surahs 96:1-15 and Surah 97:2-3 teach

Stretch: Do you think that fasting is more important than Salah or Shahadah?

The Night of Power

The Night of Power is an important festival that marks the beginning of God's revelation to Muhammad. The exact date this happened is not agreed on, but it is believed to be one of the odd-numbered dates in the second half of Ramadan. The first verses of the Qur'an that were revealed to Muhammad on this night (96:1-5) describes how the Angel Jibril instructed him to start reading: "Read! In the name of your Lord who created: He created man from a clot. Read! Your Lord is the Most Bountiful One who taught by the pen, who taught man what he did not know." Surah 97:2-3 goes on to explain the night's importance, saying "What will explain to you what that Night of Glory is? The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months." This means that observing the Night of Power gives Muslims the benefits of worshipping for a thousand months. Because of this, Muslims try to keep awake throughout the night on each of the possible dates, devoting themselves to prayers and studying the Qur'an



Zakah – Giving to charity

	Explanation
What is Zakah?	<p>Zakah is the giving of alms in order to cleanse or make pure. The Qur'an says 'Be steadfast in prayer and giving' (Surah 2:110). This is a directive from the Qur'an to pay zakah and for those who do not it says 'And those who hoard gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah – give them tidings of painful punishment. The Day when it will be heated in the fire of Hell and seared therewith will be their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs, [it will be said], this is what you hoarded for yourselves, so taste what you used to hoard' (Surah 9:34-35).</p> <p>Muslims are expected to be kind, compassionate and help others. After all, their wealth is on loan from Allah. Muslims are encouraged to give to charity as the need arises. This is called sadaqah. Whilst sadaqah is voluntary giving, zakah is one of the five pillars and is compulsory giving. It is a payment given once a year of 2.5% on income and savings. It is given by any adult Muslim who has paid all debts and expenses, and has over a certain amount leftover (it differs depending on what valuables and cash are being considered).</p> <p>The actual percentage varies depending on what a person owns; their wealth may be in animals, properties, businesses, and so on. It is not a tax, as it is only paid by those who can afford it.</p>
Dangers with zakah	Some people give reluctantly or give as little as they can; it is seen as ungrateful to not want to pay as you have the benefit of these blessings. However, since no one records what is given, and the giving is secret, only Allah can deal with that.
How is it given?	<p>The purpose of giving zakah is to cleanse or purify; giving zakah makes a person's remaining money clean and unsullied. By paying it Muslims share their blessings from Allah with others and at the same time reduce chances of their own greed. Money is for the welfare of the people of the ummah (community of Muslims); giver and receiver. The Qur'an says that Muslims will be given back 'a hundred fold' rewards in the afterlife and they do not need to fear Judgement Day. Zakah is a test, but the benefits are great. Muslims say that by helping others they have strengthened the ummah.</p> <p>For those individuals who receive zakah it can practically improve their lives, for example, by providing decent food for a period of time. Imam Ali said that if all people paid their zakah then there would be no more poor people. On a community level it can support the community in its religious practice, but can also be used to spread it further as well.</p> <p>All Muslims are expected to pay zakah, but from the Shi'a perspective the kinds of things that it is payable on are outdated, for example: wheat, barley, dates, raisins, camels and sheep, none of which fits modern life in the developed world. They recognise that lifestyles have changed and money is made differently, so use the idea of khums. This is a tax set at 20% of any yearly surplus.</p>

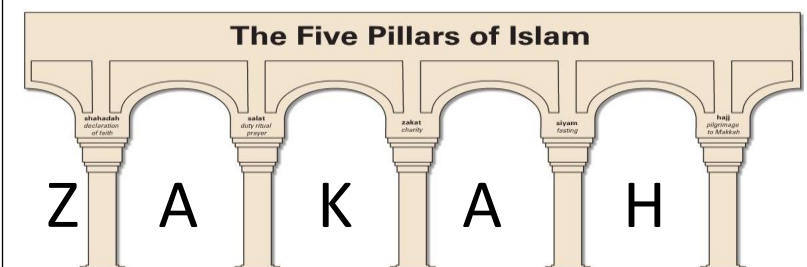
1. What is meant by the term zakah?
2. Briefly explain surah 2:110
3. Briefly explain surah 9:34-35
4. How much of a Muslims earnings do they have to give?
5. Does everyone have to pay? Explain
6. What are the main dangers with Zakah?
7. How much does the Qur'an teach Muslims will receive if they give Zakah?
8. What did Imam Ali teach?
9. What is the Shi'a perspective?
10. Briefly explain how zakah is paid.

Stretch: Do you think we should have a system like zakah in the UK?

How is it given?

In Islamic countries, zakah is paid to an Islamic government who distribute it to those who need it. In non-Muslim countries it is either collected by the mosques during Ramadan, or given directly to specific organisations or individuals. The first use should be locally to benefit the Islamic community. It is given anonymously so that the money remains pure and so there is no pride or arrogance or smugness in the amount given.

Those who receive zakah should not be embarrassed. No one actually owns anything, so in fact people are receiving a blessing from what is Allah's anyway. If a person is poor, that is the test that Allah has given them and so to receive from the rich is the will of Allah. Everyone has a different test. The rich have a duty to help others, and someone who accepts zakah is helping others fulfil their duty of giving. Zakah should be paid with good grace, and not grudgingly.



Hajj – Pilgrimage to Makkah

Hajj is the pilgrimage to Makkah. It takes place in the last month of the Muslim calendar (Dhu al-Hijjah). All Muslims should go at least once in their life time, or every time they can afford it.

Stage	What happens
1	Ihram – Muslims dress in two pieces of white cloth (ihram), one around the waist, the other over the shoulder. Women also wear white (though this is optional). All Muslims stand equal before Allah and dressing so simply shows that. Muslims bathe, put on ihram clothing, pray two rak'ahs and recite the Talbiyah Du'a: Here I am O God, here I am...'
2	Muslims then go to the Great Mosque in Makkah to perform 'Tawaf' (seven times circling the Ka'ba anticlockwise). The Ka'ba is covered with black cloth (Al-Kiswah). They say 'At your command Lord, at your command.' Muslims raise their hands towards the black stone. If close enough they touch it.
3	Muslims then drink water from the Zamzam well, take some home and dip their garments in it to be used at their burial.
4	Al-Safa and Al-Marwa – two small hills joined by a walkway. Muslims walk between them seven times, and activity called 'sa'y'. There is a section in the walkway for those who are old or disabled.
5	Mount Arafat is the Mount of Mercy. Muslims perform 'Wufuq' here. They stand from noon to sunset meditating, praying and asking for forgiveness. In the evening they listen to a sermon from the top of Arafat and spend the night in the open thankful for forgiveness. In the evening they listen to a sermon from the top of Arafat and spend the night in the open thankful for forgiveness from Allah.
6	Muslims move to Muzdalifah (to camp with two million other Muslims). They collect pebbles here for the next day; seven are needed to hit each of the three jamarat (stone pillars).
7	At Mina, Muslims throw pebbles at the three jamarat which represent Shaytan. A sacrifice is also made here called Qurbani. Men also shave their heads and women cut a lock of hair off.
8	Eid ul-Adha is celebrated here. It is a serious rather than celebratory festival. Sheep and goats are sacrificed as Ibrahim did, the meat being distributed to the poor.
9	Some Muslims take the option to travel to Madinah at this point to visit the Prophet's mosque and burial place.
10	The journey is completed by returning to Makkah, carrying out Tawaf and sa'y again. After every Tawaf they perform two rak'ahs. There is then a farewell Tawaf before leaving.

1. What is Hajj?
2. What is Ihram?
3. How is Tawaf performed? Why are the Ka'ba and Black Stone significant?
4. What do Muslims drink from during Hajj and what else do they do with this water? Why is this significant?
5. What are Al-Sage and Al-Marwa and why are they significant?
6. Where is Wufuq performed, and what is it?
7. What is Muzdalifah?
8. What happens at Mina?
9. Where do some Muslims go at point nine?
10. How is the journey completed?

Stretch: Explain the significance for Muslims today of each of the four places they visit during Hajj.

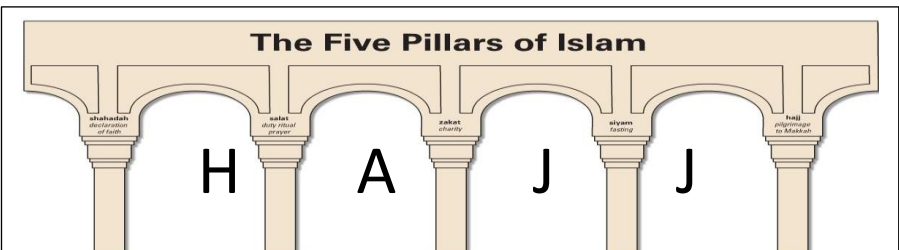
Significance of the places visited on the hajj journey

The Ka'ba is known at the Baitullah (The House of Allah). It was built by the Prophet Adam, rebuilt by Noah (Nuh) after the flood, and then again by Abraham and his son Ishmail. It is the focus of salah for Muslims.

The Black Stone existed before Muhammad. Muslims believe it was brought to the Prophet Adam from Paradise by the Angel Jibril.

Zamzam – Abraham escorted his second wife from Jerusalem to Arabia so she could settle there. After a while she ran out of water, so ran frantically trying to find some as her son, Ismail was dying of thirst. A spring came up from the desert where Ismail laid.

Al-Safa and Al-Marwa – This is associated with the same story As Ismail lay dying, Hajars solution was not just to give up on her son; she searched and searched for water. As a reward Allah produced the Zamzam well.



Eid ul-Fitr

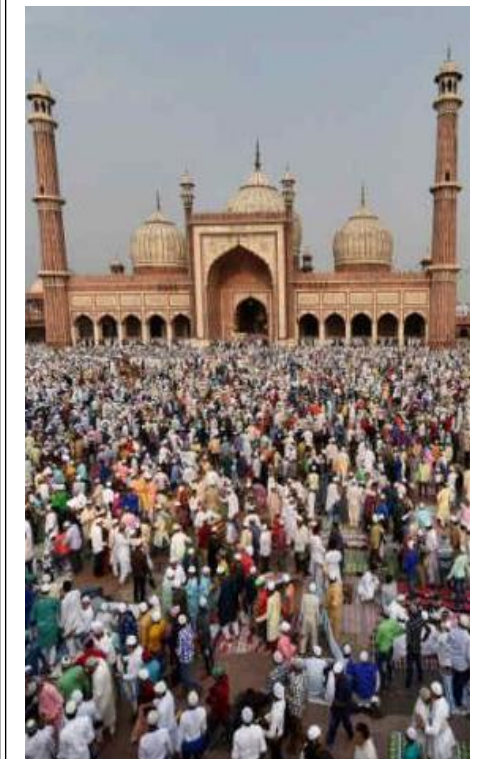
Eid ul-Fitr takes place at the end of Ramadan and signifies the end of fasting. The importance of the Eid festival is the same for Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, but the Eid prayers vary slightly.

What do Sunni Muslims do during the festival?	In the Sunni tradition there are two rak'ahs – the prayer starts with niyyah or intention to pray, followed by the term 'Allahu Akbar'. The next is to recite 'Takbir Al-Ihram' and Allahu Akbar' seven times, with the raising of hands to ears each time. In the next rak'ah, five Takbirs are said, whereas the.
What do Shi'a Muslims do during the festivals?	The Shi'a have five raising of the hands in Takbir with a small du'a being recited. Then the imam reads the Surah Al-Fatiha and Surah Al-A'la and the congregation performs ruku and sujud. They then repeat this in the next rak'ah.
How is this festival celebrated?	Muslims have gone without food for the fast and glimpsed how hard life is for fellow Muslims who regularly go hungry. Therefore their zakah has to be given by the day of Eid. Often today, Mosques have boards up in the mosque of the families that attend and names are crossed off when it is given, though what they give is not written. There is a pressure therefore to make sure zakah is paid.
How important is this festival?	The importance of this festival is both in reflecting on what has gone before and looking into the future for the next year. Reflecting on Ramadan, Muslims have had many reminders about the role of religion in their lives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allah needs to be the focus of everything. 2. Time should not be wasted on the material things in life – the Qur'an and prayer should dominate time. 3. Behaviour should be modest, polite, peaceful, kind and generous to others. 4. Their wealth is not their own and it should be used as Allah would want – to benefit the community.
Misuse of the festival	In 2015, some Muslim fundamental groups called for Ramadan to be used to promote Islam by violent means. Bombings and killings took place on one of the Fridays of Ramadan in Tunisia, Kuwait and France. These calls for violence totally contradict Islamic teachings. In the Iraqi city of Mosul, ISIL banned Eid prayers, claiming that the prayers were more of a social gathering than a religious activity, and that there was no foundation in the Qur'an for them, so they were not appropriate. However, the social aspect as well as the personal striving is integral to the purpose of Ramadan, so this ban of prayers was criticised by Muslims worldwide.

1. When does Eid ul-Fitr take place
2. What do Sunni Muslims do during the festival?
3. What do Shi'a Muslims do during the festival?
4. How is the festival celebrated?
5. What should be the main focus?
6. What should dominate time and what should it not be wasted on?
7. How should behaviour be?
8. How should wealth be used?
9. Explain the reaction to ISIL's proposals on the use of Ramadan in the wider Islamic world.
10. What does Eid celebrate and what is the aim of this?

Stretch. Explain the key differences between Eid ul-Adha and Eid ul-Fitr

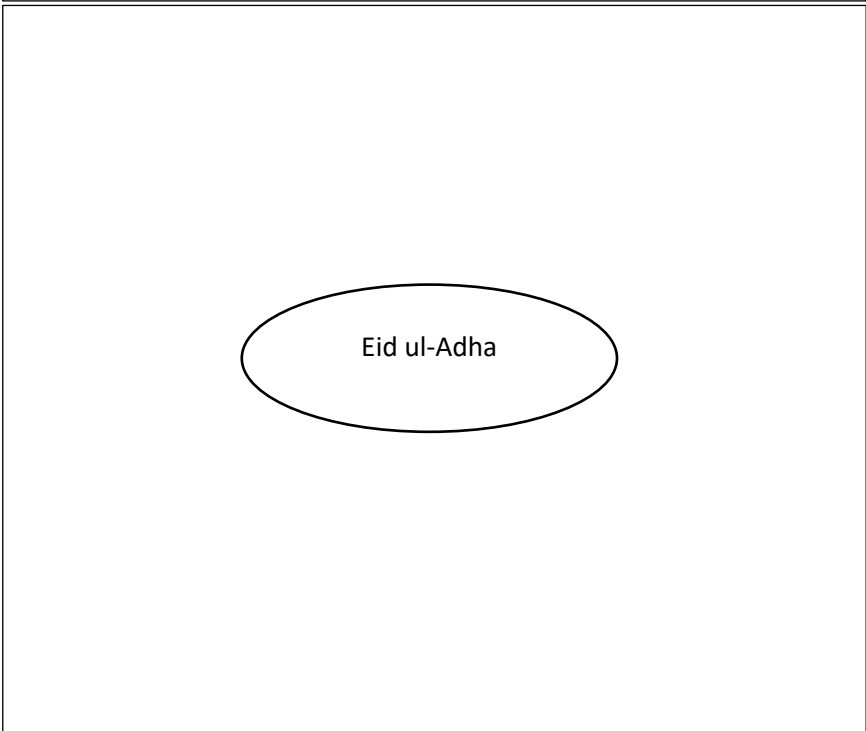
In terms of looking ahead, the actions of Ramadan have bettered those who have fasted, the harder part is to maintain that state throughout the next year. Muslims believe Allah knows that people wander from His path, hence Ramadan is annual as a reminder. Eid celebrates achievement and betterment, so these ideas should continue so as to make the community a better ummah and improve each Muslim's prospects for a good afterlife.



Eid ul-Adha

What/when is this festival?	Eid ul-Adha takes place on the 10 th day of the month of Dhu al-Hijjah each year. This day is within the period for hajj, and anyone on hajj will celebrate the festival as part of that pillar. Eid ul-Adha is the Festival of Sacrifice, so is also called Bakr-Eid (sacred feast).
Why is this festival celebrated?	It dates back to the time of Prophet Ibrahim, who dreamt he was told by Allah to sacrifice his only son, Ishmael. Ibrahim spoke to Ishmael about the dream and they both agreed they had to do as Allah commanded. Ibrahim showed his faithfulness to Allah by being prepared to carry out this terrible command. Even when Shaytan (the devil) tried to persuade Ibrahim to protect not sacrifice his son, Ibrahim kept to his orders. Ibrahim threw stones at Shaytan to make him leave (which is why pilgrims throw pebbles at him during hajj). Muslims believe that Ibrahim did attempt to cut his son's throat in the manner of ritual slaughter. However, when he looked down at what he had done, it was a ram which had been slaughtered.
How is this festival celebrated?	The central element of the festival is the sacrifice of a lamb, called adhiya or qurbani. The meat from the lamb is split three ways – one third for the family who have paid for the sacrifice, one third to relatives, neighbours and friends, and the remaining third to the poor. Many families pay charity money in place of having a lamb sacrificed.
The Sunnah of Eid	The Sunnah are the practices of Muhammad, which Muslims believe are encouraged to follow as he is the perfect example. Muslims are encouraged to prepare themselves for Eid by completing the pre-sunrise prayer (Fajr), and dressing up in new clothes. Eid prayers have to be offered at the mosque with other Muslims – congregational prayer is important. There will always be a sermon at the mosque for this festival, and the theme will be focused around Ibrahim, commitment, the poor and a Muslim's responsibilities. After the service is completed, people exchange greetings and gifts. Many Muslims will visit relatives, and have special meals.

11. When does Eid ul-Adha take place?
 12. What is Eid ul-Adha?
 13. Why is the festival of Eid ul-Adha celebrated?
 14. What does Shaytan mean?
 15. What do pilgrims at Hajj do to commemorate Shaytan's presence?
 16. What did Ibrahim think he was slaughtering and what did he actually slaughter?
 17. What is the central element of the festival?
 18. What do many families do instead of slaughtering a lamb?
 19. What are Sunnah?
 20. How does the Fajr at Eid differ from normal practice?
- Ext: Do you think it would be more important for Muslims performing Eid ul-Adha at hajj than to perform it at home? Explain.



The festival of Ashura

What is Ashura?	Both Sunni and Shi'a observe this festival on the tenth day of Muharram. However, their reasons for celebrating are very different. Literally, Ashura means 'tenth'
Sunni Belief	<p>Tradition believes that when Muhammad was in Madinah he saw the Jews fasting on the tenth of the month of Muharram. He asked them what they were doing and they explained that it was a day to remember when the Israelites were saved from the Pharaoh. They said that Musa fasted on this day. He replied 'we are closer to Musa than you'. So he fasted on the day and told people to hold the fast. There are no hadith to support this, but many Muslims accept its authenticity. Ramadan was established later in Madinah replacing the fast in Muharram.</p> <p>Many Sunni Muslims do remember Ashura as a Day of Atonement, that is, a day sins are forgiven if repented. Many fast, often on the eighth, ninth and tenth of Muharram. However, it is not compulsory in Sunni Islam to do so.</p> <p>Sunni Muslims do not accept the whipping of their bodies because according to teaching the body should not be harmed. This used to be a common practice for Shi'a Muslims.</p>
Shi'a Belief	<p>For Shi'a Muslims this is a really significant festival based in sorrow. For Shi'a, it remembers the martyrdom of Hussein, the grandson of Muhammad who was killed in the Battle of Karbala on 10 Muharram, 680 CE along with 72 members of his family. He was killed by Yazid, a ruler who had demanded Hussein give him allegiance.</p> <p>He refused because of corruption, use of slavery and injustices first of Mu'awiyah, then his son, Yazid, whom he saw as illegitimate leaders. Hussein had taken his family to Makkah, hoping he would be safe in the holy city. On his way to Kufa in Iraq, he was intercepted and driven into Karbala by 30,000 soldiers. They were held without water. Hussein realised it was him they wanted and told the others to leave, but they refused and were soon attacked.</p> <p>Hussein was beheaded, the camp set on fire and everyone murdered. Bodies were mutilated and left unburied. Later, they were buried respectfully in Damascus.</p>
How the Shi'a observe Ashura	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is a festival of sincere sadness. 2. Many wear black as a sign of grief. 3. Mosques are covered in black cloths. 4. After the afternoon prayers, poems about the tragedy are read and people will cry. 5. Some gather to beat themselves with whips and chains in sorrow, especially in Karbala, but this practice is becoming less common. <p>For Shi'a Muslims there is a great deal to learn from this festival: firstly that Hussein should never be forgotten, nor the actions of the imams. Muslims must stand up for justice to fight for a better society. A Shi'a's love for Allah is shown through their love of the imams.</p>

1. What is the literal meaning for 'Ashura'?
2. When do Muslims celebrate Ashura?
3. Briefly explain the story that meant that Sunni Muslims observe Ashura.
4. Explain what Sunni Muslims do on the eighth, ninth and tenth of Muharram and explain why.
5. What do Sunni Muslims refuse to do as part of Ashura?
6. Briefly explain the story that led to Shi'a Muslims observing Ashura.
7. Who is Hussein in relation to Muhammad?
8. Briefly explain how Shi'a Muslims observe Ashura.
9. What are Shi'a Muslims trying to express by whipping themselves?
10. How is a Shi'a Muslims love for Allah shown?

Stretch: Begin planning the question below.

"Ashura should be the main festival for all Muslims"

Evaluate this view. You should:

Refer to Muslim teaching

Give developed arguments to support this view/an opposing view

Reach a justified conclusion



Jihad

Jihad	<p>This is one of the Obligatory acts of Shi'a Islam. It is important to all Muslims especially in its sense as trying to follow Allah's teachings in the world. Actually every religious person might say they have a similar duty in their own faith; to keep their laws and beliefs in the best way possible.</p> <p>Prophet Muhammad said: 'The person who struggles so that Allah's Word is supreme is the one serving Allah's cause.'</p> <p>The word Jihad means to struggle or to strive, It comes from the word 'juhd' which means to 'make effort'.</p> <p>Muslims today use jihad in two contexts. First, spiritual struggle to conquer their own selfishness, lust or greed. Second, the struggle to defend Islam.</p> <p>The idea of Jihad is often misunderstood. Most Muslim scholars believe that the internal struggle is the greater jihad, based on what they Prophet Muhammad said. Others believe that these Hadith are not reliable and that holy war is the better interpretation. There are many references in Islamic writings to jihad meaning a military struggle, often having similar meanings to 'crusade' This is referred to as lesser jihad. In the modern world where war is prevalent, claims that the war is for the will of Allah often means that non-Muslims interpret it simply as holy war.</p>
Greater Jihad	<p>Firstly, many Muslims do not accept this term at all. Those that do, claim that it applies to the everyday life of a Muslim. It is simply following a moral and virtuous life. A person engaged in jihad is called a mujahid.</p> <p>Examples of Jihad include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the Pillars; striving to do them properly • Those who are hafiz, as they have made an effort to learn the Qur'an • Forgiving someone who has insulted you • Giving up things for the poor or working for social justice. <p>According to Muslim public opinion polls in countries like Lebanon, Kuwait, Jordan and Morocco, most people referred to Jihad as 'duty to God' or 'worship of God' or 'striving for peace or cooperation' with no reference to war. So whatever scholars think, many modern-day Muslims indicate that jihad for them is a struggle to live rightly, worship Allah and have total faith in Him.</p> <p>There are those who believe there is a third kind of jihad; namely working for a better community. Majid Khadduri, an Iraqi academic, said there were four jihads: jihad of heart, jihad of the tongue, jihad of the hand and jihad of the sword. All these point to believing, thinking, saying and doing the right things.</p>
Lesser Jihad	<p>The following teachings are attributed to Muhammad: 'The best jihad is the word of justice in front of an oppressive ruler' and 'the best jihad is the one in which your horse is slain and you blood spilled'. It is the existence of such quotations, whether authentic or not, that cause some people in the modern world to take up arms against any enemy of Islam as they see it. Holy books can often be interpreted in many ways and now, 1400 years after Muhammad, there are believers who focus on such teachings. However, even if these quotes are adhered to, there are regulations and rules that should apply concerning behaviour and parameters. This is where extreme groups like ISIS, Al Qaeda, etc. could be seen to be failing in their Islamic understanding. There are rules to follow for lesser jihad, which mean that the groups mentioned are mistaking the teachings.</p>

1. What is jihad?
2. What did Muhammad teach about jihad?
3. How is the term often misunderstood?
4. What is greater jihad?
5. How do Muslims follow greater jihad?
6. What did Majid Khadduri believe?
7. What is Lesser Jihad?
8. What did Muhammad teach about lesser jihad?
9. How are groups such as ISIS failing in their understanding of teachings?
10. What are the rules for a lesser jihad?

Stretch: What contrasting beliefs exist for jihad? (4)

Rules of lesser jihad

- To defend Allah and not for conquest
- Gain freedom from tyranny and restore peace
- Fight until the enemy lays down their weapons
- Woman and children should not be harmed nor crops damaged; mosques should be protected absolutely
- Mercy should be applied to enemy captives, soldiers treated, women left unharmed not abused or raped and the enemy should never be executed.

Border disputes, wars for personal power and wars to exploit others are not jihad.