

# Islam

## Main beliefs

Muslims believe in one God, Allah, who created mankind, the universe and all living things. Muslims believe that Allah sent many prophets including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammed with messages from Him.

Muslims also believe in a life after death in which the good will be rewarded with Paradise and the bad people will be punished. The Islamic belief is that what happens to a person in the hereafter depends upon their actions in this life.

## Lifestyle

Islam is based on five principles. These are known as the 'Five Pillars of Islam'. They are:

1. Shahadah – The declaration of Faith. The verbal testimony of belief in Allah as one God and Muhammed as His last messenger.
2. Salah – Prayer. There are many different types of prayer. This one is the obligatory prayer performed 5 times a day at specific times.
3. Sawm – Fasting. Muslims are required to fast from dawn until sunset for one month of the year. This month is Ramadan and is the 9<sup>th</sup> month of the Islamic calendar.
4. Zakah – Charity. Muslims have to pay 2.5% of any excess wealth they have accumulated from one year to the next. It is paid to the poor and the needy and is a way of distributing wealth around society. If you haven't any extra wealth throughout the year you don't have to pay Zakah.
5. Hajj – Pilgrimage. Muslims have to perform this pilgrimage to visit the Ka'bah in Makkah, Saudi Arabia once in their lifetimes if they are financially and physically able to do so. During this time they perform specific rituals which originate from the prophet Abraham.

## Main festivals

Islam has two main festivals during the year.

1. Eid-ul-fitr – This is the day of celebration to mark the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting.
2. Eid-ul-Adha – this is the day of celebration which marks the end of the rituals of Hajj.

## Holy Scriptures

The Muslim holy book is the Quran which was revealed to Muhammed over 1400 years ago. The language of the Quran is Arabic.