

Muslims are expected to believe – *and act on their beliefs*. It is not enough just to believe or just to act. A Muslim's actions are based on the following beliefs.

### ● One God (Allah)

Islam teaches that there is only one God. He has no family or partners. He is the only one whom people should worship. Every day, a Muslim says several times: 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.' This is known as the Shahadah – the confession of faith. If someone converts to Islam, they then have to say the Shahadah in front of Muslim witnesses.

- O my dear son! Do not make any partner to Allah. Truly, making anyone partner to Allah is a big **sin**.

Qur'an 31:13

24

### ● His Angels

Islam teaches that angels are God's servants who carry out his orders. They brought God's message to the prophets, including Muhammad himself. Other angels spend their time keeping records of human actions. But they cannot be seen by us.



### ● His Books

Muslims believe that God has given all humans guidance through his prophets. There have been a number of holy books, including the original versions of the Law of Moses, the Psalms of David and the Gospel of Jesus. But only the Qur'an has not been changed by human beings. So only the Qur'an is perfect and will never change. The Qur'an is therefore the final word of God.

### ● His Prophets

The Qur'an mentions twenty-five prophets by name. Most of them also appear in the Bible. The first was Adam and the last was Muhammad. Muslims believe they were all sent by God to show people how He wanted them to live.

### ● The Day of Judgment

When this day comes, Muslims believe that all dead people will come to life and be questioned about their lives. It will not be the effect of their actions that matters; it will be what people *intended* their actions should do.

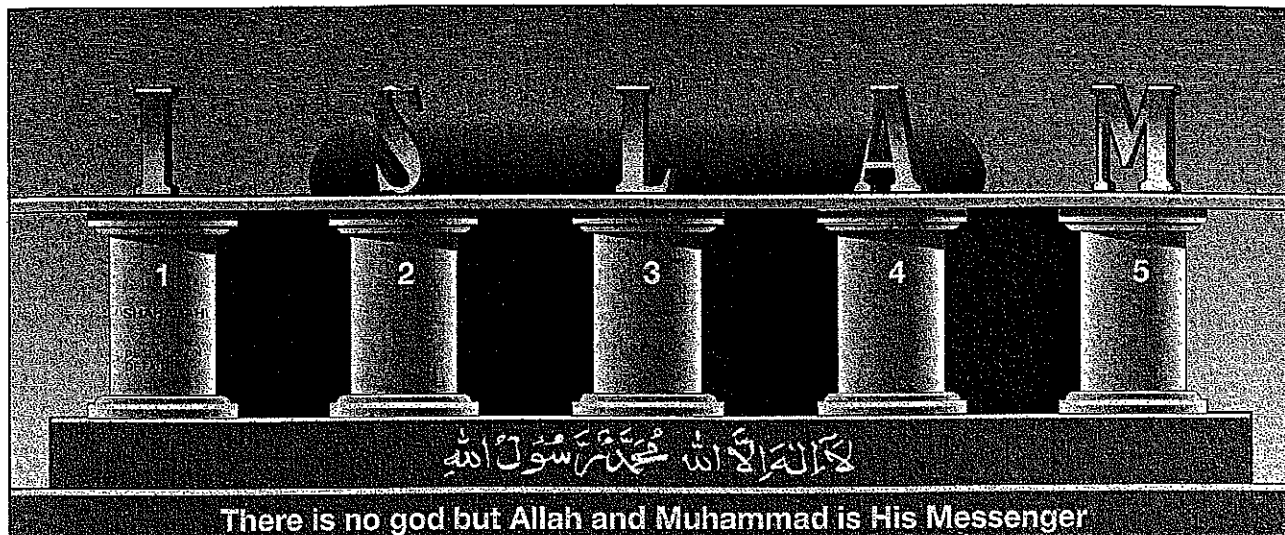
When this happens, God will judge us. Only God can judge and only God can forgive the wicked. People earn this forgiveness through prayers and actions.

- Actions shall be judged only by intention. A man shall get what he intends.

Sahih Al-Bukhari (Hadith)



▲ Young Muslims praying in London



▲ Islam is like a house supported by five pillars. The first of these is the declaration of faith: 'There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger'

## ● The Will of God

Muslims believe that God has created the world and, at all times, remains in control of the world. He has complete knowledge of what will happen in the world. However, people face many choices each day. They can do bad or they can do good. God expects people to make choices. So we are still responsible for our actions.

## ● Life After Death

Islam teaches that those who obey God will go to Paradise. There, they will live forever a life of peace and happiness. Many who disobey God will go to Hell, where life will be miserable. No one can say how God will judge anyone – some wrongdoers will be forgiven. Only God knows exactly what it is like in Paradise and Hell. Muhammad said there were things in Paradise which no eye has ever seen, no ear ever heard and no one can imagine.

- If anyone has got an **atom** of pride in his heart, he will not enter Paradise.

Sahih Al-Bukhari

- 1 Draw the diagram above. (You may miss out the Arabic writing, if you wish.) In later chapters, you will read about the other four pillars and can fill in the details.
- 2
  - a) Look at the painting of the angel. How is it shown?
  - b) What colours and things does the artist use to suggest that this is a holy, mysterious being?
  - c) If angels cannot be seen, why show them at all? This was taken from an old Muslim manuscript. Today, most Muslims would not even show an angel, for fear that people might worship it instead of Allah. They believe that spiritual beings are invisible, and beyond our imagination.
- 3
  - a) Think of an occasion when you did something you thought was wrong. Briefly, describe what you did.
  - b) What made you think it was wrong?
  - c) If you thought it was wrong, why did you do it?
  - d) Now, describe a time when you tried to do something good, but it went wrong.
  - e) Which of your two actions would a Muslim think was wrong? Explain how you decided.
  - f) Think back over the last week. Divide your page into two columns. Put a heading, MY BALANCE SHEET. In the left column, write down the good things you have done. On the right, write down the bad things.
  - g) What have you had to do to make up for some of the wrong things? How have they made you feel?

## ● Beginning to Explore the Five Pillars

### 1 BELIEF

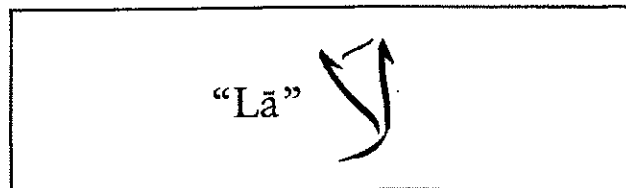
Letter	Arabic Pronunciation	Symbol
ا	alif	'
ب	ba'	b
ت	ta'	t
ث	tha'	s or t
ج	jīm	g or z
ح	Ha	H
خ	kha	kh
د	dal	d
ذ	thal	d or z
ر	ra	r
ز	za	z
س	sīn	s
ش	shīn	sh
ص	sād	s
ض	dād	d
ط	tā	t
ظ	thā	z
ع	ayn	"
غ	ghayn	gh
ف	fa'	f
ق	qāf	q or '
ك	kaf	k
ل	lam	l
م	mīm	m
ن	nūn	n
هـ	ha	h
و	waw	w
ي	ya	yt

▲ The Arabic alphabet

The Shahadah in Arabic goes as follows:

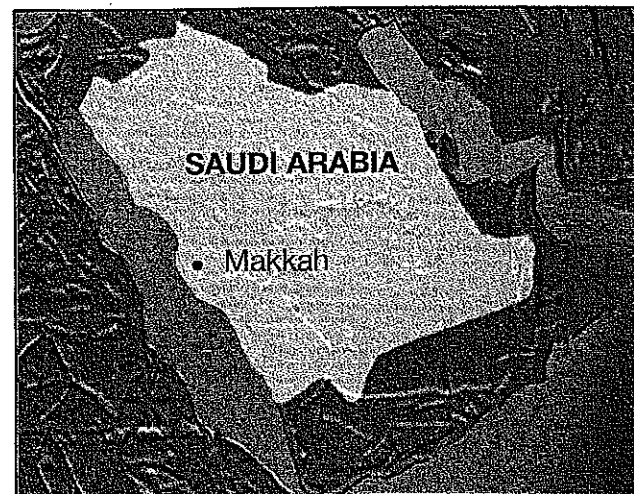
'La illaha illal lahu. Muhammad rasulul la.'  
'There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger.'

Using the Arabic alphabet, try to write this out in Arabic script. Remember that Arabic is written from right to left. The first word has been done for you.



▲ 'La', the first word of the Shahadah

### 2 PRAYER



▲ Pointing the way to Makkah

Using an atlas, find out how many degrees Makkah is from the UK. Then, using a compass, work out the direction of Makkah from the classroom. Design a sign that points the way to Makkah and display this in the right position. When Muslims say their formal daily prayers, they have to face the Ka'bah in Makkah.

### 3 GIVING MONEY

<b>The Bank</b>		07-00-23 00112233
CURRENT ACCOUNT		Date 1 May 20xx
Pay Chosen Charity		
Twenty-four pounds and		£ 24.68
sixty-eight pence only		
100158 07 00 23	00112233	

#### ▲ Giving to charity

In groups, work out how much you all earn in a month from pocket money, odd jobs, paper rounds, and so on. Add it all up, and then work out what 2.5% of the total is. Decide upon a charity that this should go to (this is only make believe!). Draw the cheque and make it out to the charity for the correct amount.

A Muslim is expected to donate 2.5% of his or her savings each year. This is a compulsory payment. Muslims are encouraged to give to charity over and above this.

### 4 FASTING



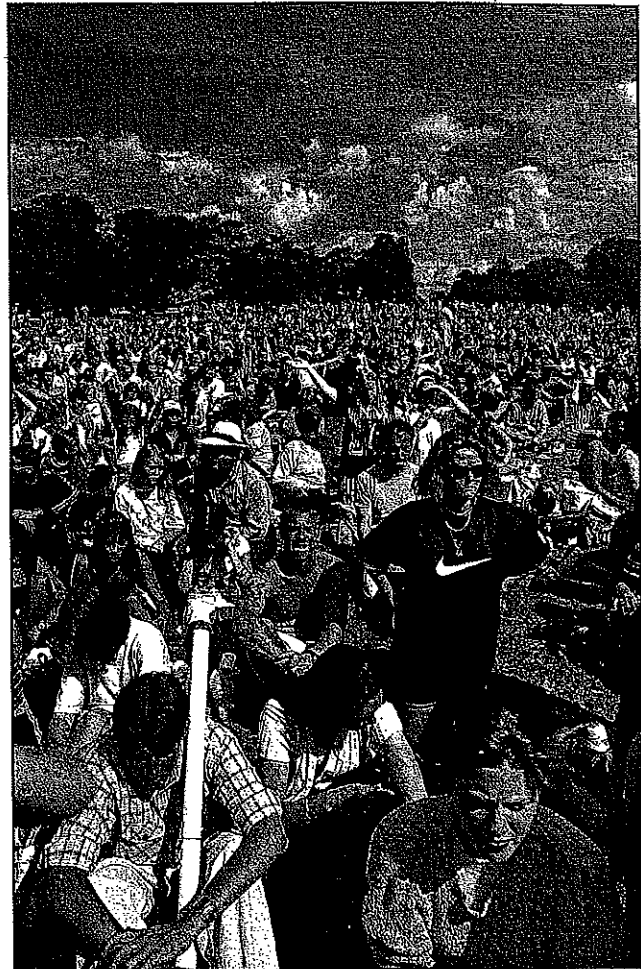
#### ▲ Muslims sit in cafés but do not eat or drink during Ramadan

Write out a list of all the things you drank and ate from breakfast until supper time yesterday. Then imagine a situation when the government banned people from eating and drinking in daylight hours. What would you do to stay alive?

Muslims are expected to fast in this way for the month of Ramadan. Yet, they do eat and drink at other times to stay alive. When do you think they will have to do this?

These activities have been brief and simple introductions to the themes of the five pillars. The following chapters will explore these further.

### 5 PILGRIMAGE



#### ▲ Each of these young people will have made plans to spend a day at the concert

Imagine that you wanted to go to a pop festival such as Glastonbury for the weekend with a group of friends. Make a list of all the things you would have to organise and plan for – transport, cost, food, buying tickets, where you were going to stay and what to take with you. If you think that being there is so important you will save up, plan ahead and go out of your way to do it.

Muslims try their best to visit Makkah at least once in their lifetime. This is a sacred place, a holy thing they are doing, and far more valuable than any mere music festival!

Discuss how much more they will plan, save and put themselves out to find spiritual blessing.

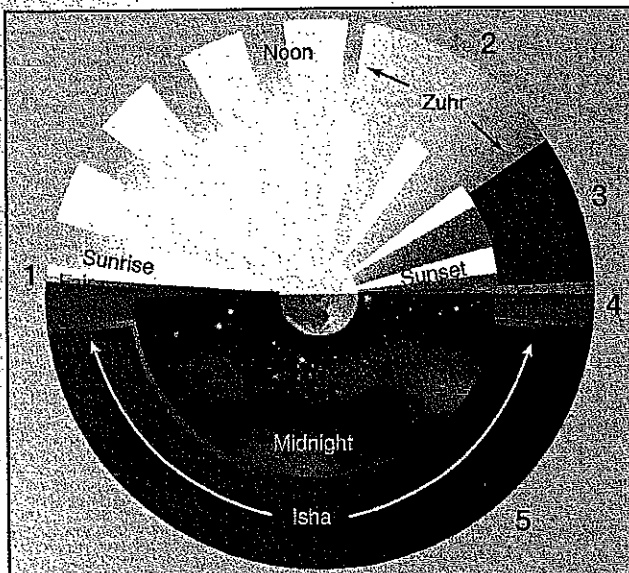
Muslims believe that God has created human beings to worship him. So the second pillar of Islam is prayer. Muslims must pray five times a day. Each time takes about ten minutes.

These five compulsory prayers are known as *salah*. They help Muslims to remember God and keep them from doing bad deeds. Muslims must still pray if they are ill or even fighting a war.

These five daily prayers do not mean that a Muslim cannot pray at other times. Other prayers, called *Du'a*, may be made at any time, anywhere. But all Muslims are expected to say *salah*. Once a week, on Fridays, there are special prayers called *salah* at mid-day instead of the normal mid-day prayers.

Men are asked to pray at mosques. However, if that is not possible, they may pray anywhere that is clean. Women are encouraged to pray at home. Every Muslim over the age of ten is generally made to perform these prayers. Children are taught to pray from any age, and custom varies.

All Muslims, wherever they are, face the Ka'bah when they perform *salah*. There is a special place in the mosque wall which shows them which way to face. Outside a mosque, some Muslims use a prayer mat with a compass in it.



This means that British Muslims face south-east when they pray. In Mexico, Muslims face east. In most of Africa, they face north-east.

● There's quite a lot of Muslim boys in our school. We have a separate room to pray in. Our headmaster is not **prejudiced**. One of the mothers asked him for a prayer room so they provided us with a special room. We only need to go there once for the afternoon prayer.

Darwa

● There's nowhere in my school where I can go. So, at the end of the day, I just put my prayers together.

Ali

- 1 Copy out this paragraph and fill in the gaps. Muslims must pray \_\_\_\_ times a day. This is called \_\_\_\_\_. When they do this, they face the \_\_\_\_\_. Other prayers are called \_\_\_\_\_. These can be offered at any time.
- 2 a) Draw the diagram on this page.  
b) Which prayer do you think is most inconvenient? Give reasons for your choice.  
c) Why does Darwa only need the prayer room for the early afternoon prayers?
- 3 a) Look at the picture strip on page 29. Why do you think Muslims must wash themselves before praying?  
b) The following actions are all part of *salah*. Write them down in the order in which they are done.
  - (i) Stand and face Makkah
  - (ii) Bow down with hands on knees
  - (iii) Sit with knees bent
  - (iv) Raise hands to ears
  - (v) The call to prayer
- 4 In groups, write down reasons why a Muslim might want to say *Du'a*. For instance, he or she might want to pray when a friend is ill. Afterwards, compare your answers.

A Muslim must be clean. First, he performs Wudu (ablution).

He says

In the name of Allah the most merciful, the most kind.

Both hands are washed up to the wrist.



The mouth is rinsed three times.

The nostrils and tip of the nose are washed three times.



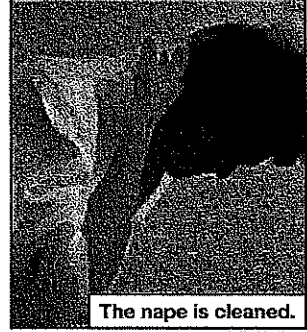
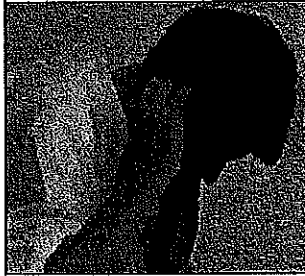
The face is washed three times, from right to left and from forehead to throat.

Each arm is washed three times.



Wet hands are passed backwards from the forehead to the neck.

The ears and behind the ears are cleaned.



The nape is cleaned.

The feet are washed up to the ankles.

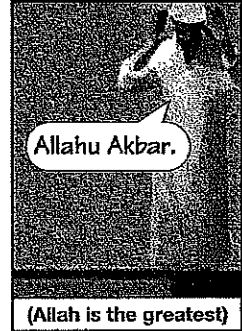


The Muslim says,

I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is his servant and messenger.

### THE CALL TO PRAYER

After the call to prayer, everyone faces the Ka'bah in Makkah. Each Muslim says how many prayers he intends to say. Women's positions are slightly different.

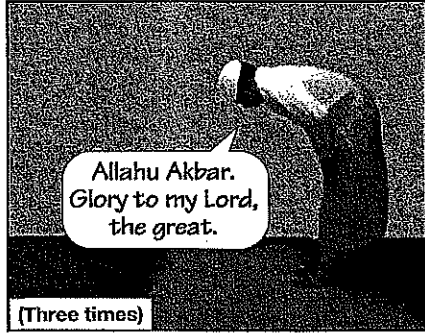


Allahu Akbar.

(Allah is the greatest)

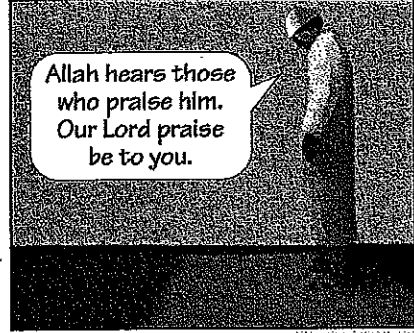
He recites the opening chapter of the Qur'an and any one other chapter.

O Allah, glory and praise are for you, and blessed is your name, and exalted is your majesty; there is no God but you. I seek shelter in Allah from the rejected Satan. In the name of Allah, the most merciful, the most kind.

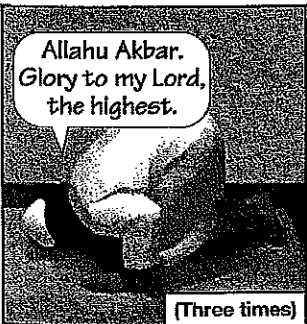


Allahu Akbar. Glory to my Lord, the great.

(Three times)

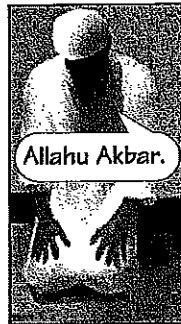


Allah hears those who praise him. Our Lord praise be to you.



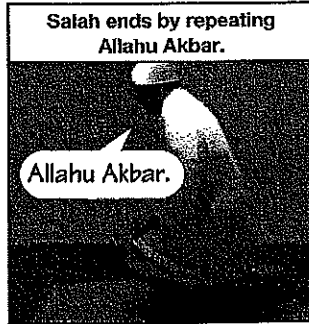
Allahu Akbar. Glory to my Lord, the highest.

(Three times)



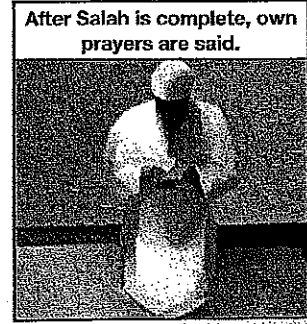
Allahu Akbar.

He rests a moment, then prostrates himself on the floor again, repeating the words in the last picture.



Allahu Akbar.

Salah ends by repeating Allahu Akbar.



After Salah is complete, own prayers are said.

◀ Everyone has their own peaceful place



▼ Different prayer positions

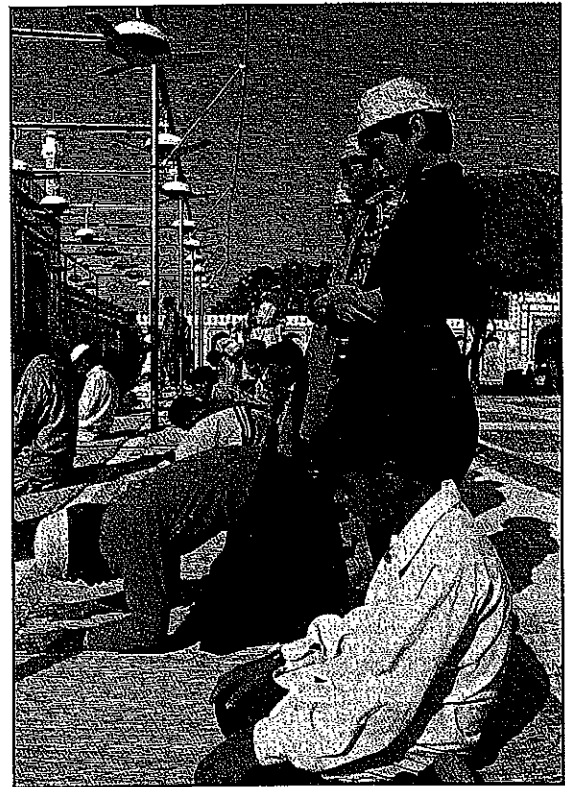
Think of a peaceful place. This might be known to you, or in your imagination. It is a place to be still, alone, carefree, undisturbed.

We all need peace and privacy at times. It helps to relieve stress and anger that we can bottle up so easily.

Prayer, for a Muslim, is partly about this sense of space and peace. By turning to God five times a day, Muslims unload their worries, ask forgiveness, and seek peace of mind. A Muslim girl once said, 'Saying my prayers and reading the Qur'an really makes me feel at peace. It's good.'

Muslims also remind themselves that they are dependent upon their creator. They did not make themselves and they have no power over the gift of life.

Muslims can say their own prayers anywhere, at any time. True prayer comes from the heart. However, we also express ourselves with our bodies. For example, Christians might kneel, cross themselves or raise their hands in the air, while Muslims bow low, kneel, and cup their hands in prayer.



- 1 Think about your ideal peaceful place. Describe this and draw it.
- 2 How often do you try to be alone, and find some space to think and calm down? What sort of things do you do?
- 3 What value do Muslims find in praying five times a day?
- 4 What body language is used in Muslim prayer, and what does this express?