

<p><u>The Five Pillars, the Ten Obligatory Acts and Shahadah..</u></p> 	<p><u>Salah (Prayer)</u></p> 	<p><u>Sawm (Fasting)</u></p> 	<p><u>Zakah</u></p> 
<p><u>Sunni</u>: 5 pillars of Islam: Shahadah, Salah, Zakat, Sawm and Hajj. They are the central practices and seen as the key to living a perfect Muslim life. The Shahadah: "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." It is a Muslims declaration of faith.</p> <p><u>Shia</u>: Ten obligatory Acts include the 5 pillars and Khums (20% tax), Jihad (struggle to maintain the faith and defend Islam), Amr-bil-Maruf (encourage others to do good), Nahi Anil Munkar (discourage others from doing bad), Tawallah (showing love for people who follow God) and Tabarra (not associating with the enemies of God). Shia Muslims add 'and Ali is the friend of God' to the Shahadah.</p>	<p>Muslims perform wudu before prayer to be spiritually clean, men and women pray separately in a mosque with a male Imam leading the prayer. Jumma prayer is held midday every Friday. Prayers are made of a number of rak'ahs: set sequences of actions and recitations. "Your Lord says, 'Call on Me and I will answer you.'"</p> <p><u>Sunni</u>: Prays 5 times a day (Fajr, Zuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isa). Prostrate on the floor.</p> <p><u>Shia</u>: Prays 3 times a day (combine both Zuhr and Asr, and Maghrib and Isa). Prostrate forehead onto a piece of clay to remember Karbala.</p>	<p>Ramadan is where Muslims do not eat, drink, smoke or have sex after sunrise and before sunset. Ramadan is the month of fasting, studying the Quran, giving to charity, and trying to please Allah to spiritually connect. It remembers the Night of Power where Angel Jibr'il revealed the Quran to Prophet Muhammad on one of the odd-numbered dates on the last 10 days of Ramadan. "The Night of Glory is better than a thousand months."</p> <p><u>Sunni</u>: Sunnis break their fast at sunset, once the sun is no longer visible, but there is still light in the sky.</p> <p><u>Shia</u>: For Shias they wait to break after it gets completely dark.</p> <p>Both stay up late on Laylat al Qadr, recite the Qur'an and repent believing angels to be present on the Earth.</p>	<p>Zakah requires Muslims to give 2.5% of their savings to charity every year. Muslims believe that by giving Zakah it helps them to purify their souls, by removing selfishness and greed. "Alms are meant only for the poor, the needy..." In addition to Zakah, Muslims are encouraged to give their money and time to charities (Sadaqah).</p> <p>Shia: In addition to Zakah, Shias give Khums (20% of their savings), half of which goes to Shia leaders and the other half to charity.</p> <p>Zakah strengthens the ummah (Muslim community,) encourages a good attitude towards money and brings people closer to God spiritually. Zakah/zakat means that which purifies.</p>
<p><u>Hajj</u></p> 	<p><u>Jihad</u></p> 	<p><u>Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha</u></p> 	<p><u>Festival of Ashura</u></p> 
<p>Hajj is an annual pilgrimage that takes place in Makkah. Every Muslims is expected to perform Hajj once in their lifetime. Hajj remembers the actions of Prophet Ibrahim and his family such as: Hajira's search for water and Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his own son. Hajj takes place over 5 days, pilgrims travel from Makkah to Mina, Arafat, Muzdalifah and back to Makkah. Muslims need to be in a state of Ihram to perform Hajj. Pilgrims end their Hajj by sacrificing an animal to celebrate Eid-ul-Adha. "Pilgrimage to the House is a duty owed to God by people who are able to undertake it." Shia Muslims also visit the Shrine of Husayn in Iraq as an additional pilgrimage.</p>	<p>Jihad refers to the struggle against evil. It requires Muslims to strive to improve themselves and the societies they live in, in a way that would please God.</p> <p>Greater jihad is the inward, personal struggle to live according to the teachings of Islam e.g. waking up for fajr, avoiding temptation. "...this is My path, leading straight, so follow it, and do not follow other ways." Lesser jihad is the outward, collective struggle to defend Islam from threat. Holy wars must follow a criteria and can never be used to justify terrorist attacks.</p>	<p>Eid-ul-Fitr: is a Muslim festival that celebrates the end of Ramadan. Muslims celebrate by: performing Eid prayer, giving Zakah, exchanging gifts etc. It allows Muslims to give thanks to Allah for helping them through Ramadan, give thanks to Muhammad and for God's revelation of the Quran. "Anyone of you who is present that month should fast."</p> <p>Eid-ul-Adha: festival that celebrates Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son to God, and marks the end of Hajj. Muslims celebrate by performing Qurbani (slaughtering a lamb and giving it to the poor). It shows the importance of obeying God and strengthens a Muslims faith during and after Hajj. It reminds Muslims of Ibrahim's obedience. "And who is better in faith than those who 'fully' submit themselves to Allah?... Allah chose Abraham as a close friend."</p>	<p>The Day of Ashura is an important Shia festival that remembers the death of Husayn at the battle of Karbala where he and his followers were slaughtered by Yazid's army. Many Shia Muslims observe Ashura by taking part in mourning rituals like flagellation, recreating the battle scene, fasting, prayer, pilgrimage and donating blood. It reminds them of the Imamate, "Obey those of you who are in authority."</p> <p>Ashura is also observed by some Sunni Muslims, for whom the festival is known as the Day of Atonement where they also remember the day Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt. However, for Sunni Muslims it is not as important or solemn an occasion as for Shia Muslims.</p>

