

Key Words

Tawhid	Sawm	Transcendence	Zakat	Rakat	Immanence	Beneficence
Hajj	Shirk	Sadaqah	Qur'an	Mihrab	Salat	Muezzin
Adhan	Sunnah	Allah (99 names)	Islam	Minaret	Merciful	Halal
Qiblah	Hadith	Monotheism	Shahadah	Omnipotence	Du'ah	

Key Sources of Authority

Qur'an
Hadith
Sunnah

Obligatory Acts

The Shahadah needs to be recited at important times in life as well as the occasions already mentioned. During the conversion to Islam it should be recited in front of witnesses. It will also be recited at the aqiqah ceremony which celebrates a child's birth. It should be whispered into the ear of the baby. It is also the last thing a dying Muslim should hear.

Zakat is the third of the five pillars and is a tax of 2.5% of disposable income. People can decide who they want to donate it to. They may decide the local mosque is the best place for their money or, perhaps, a charity such as *Islamic Relief*. Zakat is important because it redistributes wealth, but it also makes Muslims think of those less fortunate than themselves. It is a sign of helping the ummah – the wider community of Muslims.

Saddaqah is the act of giving more alms or charity above and beyond the requirements of Zakat.

Sawm is the act of fasting during the month of Ramadan. The Muslim calendar is a lunar one so Ramadan falls at different times each year. Between sunrise and sunset Muslims cannot eat or drink but life must carry on as normal. As well as not drinking or eating Muslims should abstain from sex, smoking and music as well as trying harder than usual to avoid bad actions or thoughts.

Sawm is linked to zakat in the sense that going without food or water should remind them of what it is like to experience hunger. In this way they should be more prepared to help those in need. The worship of Allah and spiritual needs matters more than physical necessities.

There are exceptions to those who fast: younger children until they are about twelve, the sick and the elderly (if they need to). Pregnant and breastfeeding women are also excused, and medications are also allowed. People who are travelling are excused but should be prepared to make up the days. In recent times there has been discussion about whether top sportsmen and sportswomen should fast if they are in a tournament, for example. See if you can find any examples of this.

Muslims follow a halal diet all year round. Halal is that which is allowed. Haram is food and behaviour that is not permitted such as the eating of pork and the drinking of alcohol.

See if you can find out why Laylat al-Qadr is linked to Ramadan and what they do to celebrate. Qur'an 97:3 might offer you a clue.