

Ramadan



Ramadan

Purpose

To understand about and appreciate different cultures and religions through learning about important festivals.

Entrance of Pupils

A thought provoking slideshow introducing the theme of 'Ramadan' for the pupils to enter assembly to (10 minutes).

Introduction

Islam is a major world religion with an estimated 1.8 billion followers. It is the second largest religion in the world, second only to Christianity with 2.4 billion followers. In over 50 countries, it is the dominant religion and makes up the majority of the population.

The faith is built on the teachings of Muhammad, the messenger of Allah (God) and followers are widely known as Muslims.

The Story of Muhammad

Muhammad was born around 570 AD in the city of Makkah in Arabia which we now know as Mecca .

When Muslims mention Muhammad they use the Arabic phrase:

Sallallahu'alaihi wa salam (SAWS) meaning 'blessings and peace of Allah be upon him'.

Muslims believe that there is only one true God, Allah, and that He sent many messengers and prophets to earth to spread the message of Islam and to tell people what is right and what is wrong. Muhammad is the last of those prophets following in the path of Musa (Moses), Ibrahim (Abraham) and Isa (Jesus) amongst others. It is easy to see how there are deep connections between Islam, Judaism and Christianity!



Muhammad never knew his father as he died before Muhammad was born and sadly at the age of six, he also lost his mother. He was then brought up by his grandfather who was very good to him but again sadness struck as the Grandfather died when Muhammad was eight. From then he became the ward of his uncle and was a good and obedient nephew.

As Muhammad grew up, he tended sheep for his uncle and became known as a very wise young man. Meanwhile, many people in Makkah had grown selfish and violent, ignoring the wise words of previous prophets.

At the age of 25, Muhammad met Khadijah, a wealthy widow and he started working for her. She soon heard tales of Muhammad's kindness and also unusual occurrences. For example he and a servant travelled through the desert in the blazing heat, but everywhere they went, a small cloud followed and gave them shade.

He was a clever business man and Khadijah fell in love with him even though he was 15 years younger than her. A marriage was arranged and two were very happy and lived in wealth and prosperity.

محمد ﷺ

When Muhammad was 35, he was called upon to settle a huge dispute that threatened to send Arabia to war.. He continued to work for the people and help the poor including adopting two of his uncle's children. His wife gave birth to three sons and four daughters but sadly none of the sons lived.



At the age of 40, during one of his many periods alone in prayer, Allah sent the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) to give teachings to Muhammad.

The Qur'an is a record of the exact words of Allah brought to earth through the Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) to Muhammad. Muhammad then taught that there is only one God and that Allah created everything and there is nothing like him. This is recorded in the Qur'an (Koran).

For the next three years, Muhammad preached to the people around him, but only 30 followers remained steadfast. The local priests plotted against Muhammad. Every family was told that they had to beat any followers of Muhammad and then imprison them. Then the priests tried to tempt Muhammad to join their religion with a fortune and the chance to be chief. He rejected them all.

Muhammad performed a number of signs to show that he was doing Allah's work and the number of followers grew and grew.

Muslims follow Muhammad's example as the best person that ever lived on earth. He had a wonderful character and was able to give examples of being a son, father and husband; a military leader and ruler; a teacher, neighbour and friend by the way he lived his life. Muhammad was also well known for being wonderful with children and would often take the time to talk with them and play with them.

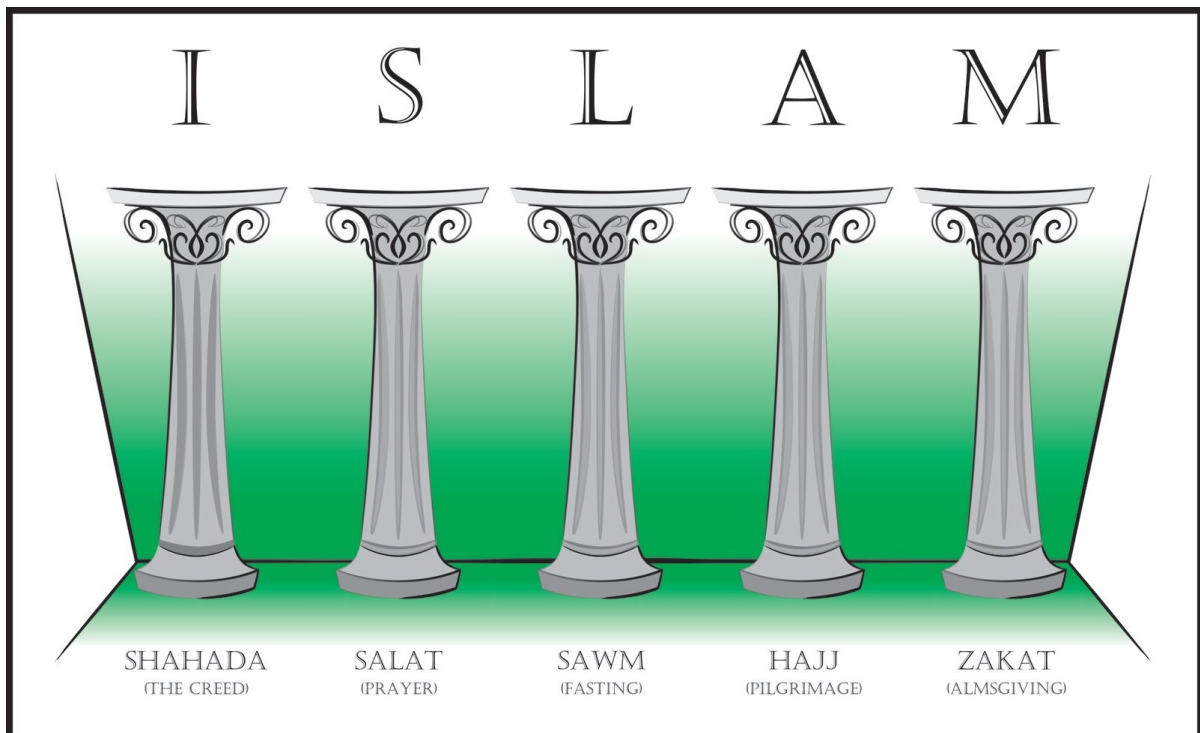
Muhammad died on 8th June 632AD at the age of 62 and was buried in Mecca. One of the 5 Pillars of Islam is to make a pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca at least once in each person's lifetime).



5 Pillars of Islam

There are 5 pillars of faith in Islam which are followed by devote Muslims all over the world:

- ⇒ Shahada - reciting the Muslim Profession of Faith
- ⇒ Salat - Ritual prayers 5 times a day
- ⇒ Zakat - Charity by paying alms (money) to help the poor
- ⇒ Sawm - Fasting during Ramadan
- ⇒ Hajj - Making pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime



Ramadan

Ramadan is the fourth Pillar of Islam and is an annual period of fasting to improve spiritual reflection, self improvement and heightened devotion and worship.

The word itself means 'scorching' which also reflects that Muslims neither eat nor drink between the hours of sunrise and sunset for the 9th month of the Islamic year (around April). They do not smoke or swear.

Many Muslims also take the month to read the whole of the Quran and the month is split into thirds:

First part - focuses on Mercy

Second part - focuses on Forgiveness

Third part - focuses on Emancipation (from the fire)

Some people are exempt from having to fast for example the elderly. Those who are ill, pregnant or are travelers are also exempt, but they are expected to carry out the fasts at another time instead.



Ramadan lasts for approximately 30 days. Many believe fasting should start between ages of 12 and 14 although some start as young as 10.



Eid Al Fitr

At the end of Ramadan, there is a feast which lasts between one and three days called Eid al Fitr, meaning 'Feast of Breaking of the Fast'. People listen to Eid prayers, give money to the poor and presents to the children and eat festive meals.

The Quran says:

'O you who have believed, decreed upon you is fasting as it was decreed upon those before you, that you might become righteous''

Surat Al- Baqarah 2:184

Let's Pray

Oh Allah

'I intend to fast today in accordance with your laws and for your benefit. Please accept my fast, forgive my faults, and bring me closer to you.'

Or:

Dear God

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Amen

Putting it Into Practice

For those who are not Muslim, try limited fasting for one by cutting out all sweets, crisps, cakes and other non essential foods and drinks and then giving what you have saved to charity.



Collective Worship and Putting it into Practice for the Rest of the Week

Day 2

Oh Allah

I seek forgiveness for all my sins from Allah and turn back to Him alone in repentance.

Or

Dear God

I confess that I have sinned in thought and word and deed though my own fault and I ask for Your forgiveness.

Amen

Learn the names and the meanings of the five pillars of Islam.

Day 3

Oh Allah

I fasted for You and I believe in You and put my trust in You and I break my fast with your sustenance.

(Said at night when the fast is allowed to be broken)

Or

Dear God

Bless us and all these gifts we are about to receive through your goodness, through Christ, Our Lord.

Amen

(Christian 'Grace' - said before meals)



Day 4

Oh Allah

Praise be to Allah. I seek forgiveness from Allah. Allah is the greatest

(Prayers of Zikr are said frequently throughout the day)

or

Dear God

Thank you for the food we eat, thank you for the friends we meet:

Thank you for the birds that sing; thank you Lord for everything

Amen

Research Islamic rules around food including Halal.

Day 5

Prayer for Racial Tolerance

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful, look with compassion on your whole human family.

Take away the controversial teachings of arrogance, division and hatred which badly affect our hearts.

Break down the walls that separate us; reunite us in the bonds of love.

Work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purpose on earth - that, in in Your good time, all nations and races may jointly serve You in justice, peace and harmony.

Amen

Find out more about the 5th pillar of Faith—the Hajj or Pilgrimage to Mecca. Do other faiths have anything similar?

