

# Understanding Islam's Practices and Beliefs 2018

We need to understand Muslims.

To do that, we need to look at their: **Practices (Deen - 5), Beliefs (Iman - 6)**

## [A] Deen = Practices (5)

### 1. Shahada (Statement of faith)

- “**La ilah illa Allah**” (‘there is no god but Allah’ - Sura 2:255; 28:88; 112:1-4)
- “**Wa Muhammadu rasul u’llah**” (‘and Muhammad is Allah’s messenger’ - Sura 33:40; 48:29; 64:8)
- Why not complete until 9<sup>th</sup> c. (Bukhari–870 AD)?
- **Why do they say it?**
  - Obedience
  - Piety:
    - at birth (right ear, then left)
    - at conversion (after a ritual bath)
    - and at death

#### Who is ‘Allah’?

- ‘Allah’ Distant, Impersonal
- ‘Dushara’ or ‘Hubal’, ‘Al-Lat’, ‘Al-Mannat’, ‘Al-Uzza’ (Nabatean)
- ‘Yahweh’ (Ex.3:14-16; Jn.8:58), Immanent, Personal

#### Who is Muhammad?

##### A Prophet?

- 4 Reasons against:
  - What was his Race?
  - What did he do?
  - What did he say?
  - Who was his god?

##### Prophecied in the Bible?

- Deut. 18:15-20
- Song of Solomon 5:16
- John 14 & 16

### 2. Salat (5 Prayers)

- **Meccan** period: 2 prayers (sura 17:78)
  - Fajr (morning) and Maghrib (evening)**
- **Medinan** period: 3 prayers (sura 2:238) added **Zuhr (midday)**
  - In **Hadith (al Bukhari)** we find the 5 prayers:
    - **fajr** = morning
    - **Zuhr** = midday
    - **Ashr** = late afternoon
    - **Maghrib** = after sunset
    - **Isha** = before midnight

Sequence: 'Alahu Akbar', 'Fatihah', 'Ruku', 'Sujud', 'jalsah'

- 7 other occasions: Friday, Eid ('Eid al-Fitr' - Ramadan, 'Eid al-Adha' - feast), funeral, traveling, eclipse, Istisqa' (for rain), Tajahud (night vigil)
- Said after ablutions (hands, mouth, nose, face, forearms, hair, ears, & feet)
- Better in public, on mats, separate from women.
- Towards the Qibla - Mecca.
- The call 'Adhan', by a muezzin (freed slave 'Bilal' was the first)
- Salat = ritual, **Du'a** = personal

### 3. Sawm (Fasting)

- Sura 2:183-187
- (at ninth month, same as day of **Ashura**, or Jewish day of Atonement)
- 29-30 days during which entire Qur'an is recited
- Commences and ends by comparing 2 threads.
- No eating, swallowing one's saliva, or sexual intercourse during daylight
- Not for sick, travelers, or women during menstruation, pregnancy or nursing.
- Eid al-Fitr = feast of breaking the fast, for 4 days, new clothes, presents, visits....
- Compare Muslim fast with Isaiah 58
- Compare the purpose of fasting
- Compare the outcome of fasting
- Compare the relational aspect of fasting

### 4. Zakat (Tithing)

- Sura 2:43, 110, 177, 277; 9:5
- 2.5% paid once a year (cash, savings, jewelry, etc...)
- Usually to a mosque, or to the govt.
- Given to: poor, destitute, collectors, travelers, mujahidin, those in bondage
- Zakat vs. 'Jizyah' & 'Kharaj' taxes

### 5. Hajj (Pilgrimage)

Day 1- Ka'bah

- 7 circumambulations
- du'a & 2 *raka'at* prayers at Abraham's imprint
- Zam-zam Well
- Sa'y = 7 times between Safa and Marwah
- lock of hair, then night in Mina

Day 2 - Wuquf (standing) at Arafat = prayers, and stay standing till sunset either at Arafat or on Mount of Mercy, no hat, but parasol is advised, then night at Muzdalifah.

Day 3 - Sacrifice = gathers 49 or 70 pebbles at Muzdalifah, goes to Mina, throws pebbles at Jamarats (7 each), sacrifices (camel, ox or ram), hair shaved or clipped, return to Mecca.

Days 4-6 - at Mina, throws 7 stones each day at each of three Jamarat, meets and talks...

## [B] Beliefs (Iman)

### 1) Belief in God

- Allah vs. Yahweh
- Distant vs. Personal
- Tawhid vs. Trinity

### 2) Belief in the Prophets

- 124,000 total
- 24 listed – All but 5 in the line of Isaac
- **Formulaic:**
  - Commissioned
  - Confronts his people
  - Rejected
  - People destroyed
  - Prophet saved
- **4 Rules of Prophetic Office**
  - Prophetic line
  - Prophetic or Miracles
  - Prophecies coincide
  - Know God's name

### 3) Belief in the Books

- Tawrut, Zabuur, Injil, Qur'an
- All from the archetypal 'Mother of Books'  
Suras 39:9; 43:4
- Sura 85:22 (duality + 50:16 = trinity)

#### **Problems:**

- No early Manuscripts
- Contradictions, Errors, Compilations
- Talmudic & Sectarian Sources

### 4) Belief in Angels

- Gibril, Mikhael (from light)
- Israfil (resurrection), Israil (death)
- Iblis (Satan) 7 references to his sin
- Jinn & Devils (from fire)
- Recording Angels
- Role: -Protect Allah's transcendence
  - Provide Revelation

### 5) Belief in Predestination

- Allah controls all (Sura 4:60; 17:175; 25:29)
- Leads astray (Sura 7:178-179)

- Deterministic vs. Free Will
- Kismet & 'Inshallah'
- Responsibility for guilt?

## 6) Belief in the Judgment

- Good/Bad Deeds weighed
- *Sirat* bridge
- Only a hope, no assurance (except S.4:74 & 47:4-6)

**Paradise** In the Qur'an:

**A Beautiful Garden:**

- Surah 55 :26 *two gardens*
- Surah 56:12 *Garden of delights*
- Surah 56: 31 *water flowing constantly, fruit in plenty*

**With Female and Male Servants:**

- Surah 55: 56 *chaste females whom no man has been with*
- Surah 55: 70 *fair and beautiful women*
- Surah 55: 72 - 74 *Hûr - beautiful, fair females, guarded in pavilions - virgins*
- Surah 56:22 *Hûr, with wide, lovely eyes*
- Surah 55: 76 *reclining on green cushions and beautiful mattresses*
- Surah 56 : 34-38 *on couches or thrones raised high, a special creation, and made them virgins, loving...*
- Surah 56:17 *immortal boys will go around, serving with cups...flowing wine*
- Carnal, Male dominated Paradise (Suras 55-56)
- Man/Woman can fall again
- **God is not there!!!**