

Is there an ultimate authority?

Islam is a **monotheistic** belief (There is only one God in Islam, Allah).

“He is God the One, God the eternal. He begot no one nor was He begotten. No one is comparable to him.” (Qur’an, Surah 112).

- **Allah as one God – Tawhid.**
- The Qur'an contains guidance for Muslims on the nature of Allah, and how to live a good life that pleases him.

Muslims must only worship one God. To worship anything other than Allah is an unforgivable sin (**shirk**). Muslim beliefs about Allah. To try and represent Allah is considered shirk as well as Muslims believe it impossible to represent Allah as an image.

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Key beliefs about God include:

Tawhid - the belief in the oneness and unity of Allah as expressed in the first of the Five Pillars of Islam, the Shahadah. Belief in this oneness or unity of Allah is an essential aspect of Islam. Muslims believe in only one God, Allah.

“Allah witnesses that there is no deity except Him, and [so do] the angels and those of knowledge - [that He is] maintaining the creation in justice. There is no deity except Him, the Exalted, in Might, the Wise.” Qur'an 3:18

Muslims believe that Allah is; Beneficent (All good), Immanent (Throughout the universe), Merciful (All forgiving / compassionate) Omnipotent (All powerful) and Transcendent (Beyond the universe).



Key terms

Allah - Muslim's God (no-one can understand Allah's nature, so Allah can only be represented by the word 'Allah', he is too holy).

Benevolent – kind.

Bhagavan – Personal God

Dharmas – Hindu teachings (sanatana dharma and Varnashrama dharma).

Genesis - The first book of the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) describing the origins of humanity and humans' relationship with God.

Haram – Forbidden.

Heaven - A place, or a state of mind, associated with God and the afterlife.

Hell - A place or state of torment and punishment for those who have done wrong.

Holy Spirit - The third element of the 'Trinity' (God is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit).

The Holy Spirit is active as God's presence and power in the world.

Incarnation -The belief that God took human form in Jesus Christ. It is also the belief that God in Christ is active in the Church and in the world.

Kutubullah – Muslim holy books (the most important is the Qur'an).

Liturgical – Following the word of the Bible regularly through prayer and worship in church.

Monotheistic – Belief in one God.

Nicene Creed – A set of beliefs that ALL Christians have.

Omniscient – All knowing

Omnipotent – All powerful.

Qur'an - Muslim religious book

Rakat - set sequence of actions and prayers (standing, bowing, prostrating, and kneeling).

They turn to the left and right to show respect to the angels.

Risalah - The belief in prophets.

Tawhid - Islamic word meaning Muslims only accept one God.

Ummah – the community of Islam (like the idea of the Church in Christianity).

Trimurti – The three avatars of Brahman, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

The Six key beliefs of Islam

Belief in one God (Tawhid) – This means having absolute faith in the oneness of God. Allah is simply the Arabic word for God and is not the name of any other being. Muslims believe that nothing can be likened to Allah. It is important to note that Allah has no plural in Arabic, showing the belief in the oneness of God.

Belief in angels (malaikah) – Muslims believe that God's greatness means he cannot communicate directly with humans. Instead, God passed messages to his prophets via malaikah, angels, who were God's first creation and who always obey him.

Belief in holy books (kutub) – The holy books of Islam should be respected. This is especially true of the Qur'an, which is the direct and unchanged word of God, revealed to the Prophet Muhammad.

Belief in the prophets (nubuwwah) – Allah is believed to have communicated with the prophets through the angels. Muslims believe the prophets should be respected but never worshipped.

Belief in the Day of Judgement and the afterlife (Akhirah) – All Muslims believe that this life is a test. When they die, they will be judged by God and sent to either Paradise or Hell.

Belief in predestination (Al-Qadr) – This means that everything in the universe is following a divine masterplan, which shows the importance of God's will. Muslims believe that Allah knows or decides everything that will happen: In all things the master-planning is God's (Qur'an 13:42).

Kutubullah (Holy Books)
 For Muslims the Qur'an is the most important source of authority as it is believed to be the revealed word of God. Muslims believe it is the most sacred text and contains ultimate guidance for all humankind. Muslims believe that the Angel Jibril revealed the word of Allah to the Prophet Muhammad, who then passed it on to his followers.
 The Qur'an consists of 114 chapters, or Surahs, which were revealed over a period of 23 years. Surahs are divided into verses or ayat. The Qur'an instructs Muslims on how to behave and sets out what is right and wrong.
 'I will raise up a prophet from among countrymen like you, put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him' (Deuteronomy 18:18)



Life of Muhammad (pbuh)

Muhammad was born in about 570CE, in an Arab city called Mecca. His father died before he was born, his mother died when he was six. He was brought up by his grandfather & then his uncle. When he was 25 he married a rich widow called Khadijah. They had seven children.

As a young man, Muhammad was already known for his honesty & goodness. When he married Khadijah he was rich & respected – his marriage was happy. It seemed that Muhammad had everything which he could possibly want.

Muslims believe that when Muhammad was about 40, he was visited by the Angel Jibril (Gabriel) in a cave on Mount Hira. Gabriel revealed a series of verses to Muhammad which Muslims believe are the word of Allah. They make up the Muslim holy book, the Qur'an.

1. Founder of Islam.
2. Prophet and Gods messenger.
3. Final prophet of God.
4. Born in Mecca.
5. Muhammad received the word of God through Angel Gabriel, which made up the Qur'an.
6. Muhammad's popularity was seen as threatening by the people in power in Mecca, and Muhammad took his followers on a journey from Mecca to Medina in 622.
7. This journey is called the Hijrah (migration).
8. Within ten years Muhammad had gained so many followers that he was able to return and conquer Mecca.

Muhammad is known as the Seal of the Prophets. It is a title given to Muhammad in the Qur'an.

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but He is the Messenger of God and the Seal of the Prophets.” - Qur'an 33:40
 Traditionally it means that Muhammad is the last prophet, no other prophet is to follow.



Some key beliefs about angels Malaikah
 Sometimes seen by people in times of crisis.
 People can become aware of their presence when they pray or meditate.
 Every human assigned two special angels as guardians and recorders – they note down every good and evil deed in each person's 'book.' They will be judged on this on the Day of Judgement (angel on the right records good deeds, angel on the left bad deeds) These angels are called kiraman katibin
 All appear as male & have wings (whether these are literal or metaphorical wings of power is debated)
 Allah's first creation – created from light
 Immortal & sinless
 Don't have freewill, absolutely obedient to Allah's command.
 Not as holy as Allah & can communicate with Allah
 Praise Allah in Paradise day and night without stopping.
 Angels are present whenever Muslims are engaged in prayer and are acknowledged by the worshipper at the end of the ceremony.

Risalah (prophethood) - Islam means 'submission to God'. Muslims believe in one God, Allah, and follow the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, Allah's messenger. It is believed that Muhammad received the Qur'an, which is the most important Islamic holy book and the only one to contain the pure word of Allah.
 The importance of prophethood - Risalah is the Arabic word for message. It refers to 'prophethood' and represents the various ways Allah communicates with humanity. Islam teaches that Allah wants to help people to live good lives, so he sends messages to guide them on how to do so. Many of these messages are found in the Qur'an. Muslims believe that messages from Allah are communicated through prophets.

Al-Qadr
 The belief in free will is essential in Islam. This is because, for Muslims, life is a test from Allah. In Islamic tradition the two kiraman katibin are two angels called Raqib and Atid, believed by Muslims to record a person's actions. The book in which the angels are writing is the cumulative record of a given person's deeds. All human beings must make their own decisions, and they will be judged on those decisions by Allah. On the Day of Judgement, God will reward those who have had faith and done good deeds and punish those who have not. So, God judges people on their choices, not on the destiny already decided for them.
 Shi'a Muslims reject total predestination. One of the Usul ad-Din in Shi'a Islam is Adalat (Divine justice.) It is not fair for Allah to punish or reward someone for something he predestined them to do. Therefore Shi'as believe it is logically impossible to believe in total predestination.