

# **Essential Questions and Answers for new Muslims**

Essential Questions and Answers for new Muslims

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2

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فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا

**“So whoever hopes for the Meeting with his Lord,  
let him work righteousness and associate none  
as a partner in the worship of his Lord.”**

The Noble Qur.aan - Soorah al-Kahf, Aayah 110

**Authored by**  
Abul Abbaas Naveed Ayaaz

**Publisher**  
Madeenah.com  
al-Madeenah an-Nabawiyah  
Saudi Arabia  
eMail: admin@madeenah.com

**madeenah.com**

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

3

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*Islām means “complete submission to Allāh, compliance to his laws, and an aversion to disbelief, its people and practises”.*

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## Contents

### Introduction

1. What does Islām mean?
2. How does a person become a Muslim?
3. What are the 5 pillars of Islām?
4. What are the 6 pillars of imān?
5. Who is Allāh?
6. What do Muslims believe about Allāh?
7. What are some of the beautiful names of Allāh?
8. What is Tawḥīd?
9. Who was Muḥammad ﷺ?
10. What is the Qur’ān?
11. What is ḥadīth?
12. What is sunnah?
13. What is bid’ah?
14. What are the Islamic evidences?
15. What do the words “Salaf” and “Salafi” mean?
16. How do I deal with different groups and sects?
17. Why did Allāh create us and place us upon the earth?
18. What do Muslims believe about death?
19. What is ṣalāh?
20. How do I pray ṣalāh if I do not know the words in Arabic?
21. What is a masjid?
22. What should I do before I go to a masjid?
23. What should I do when I enter a masjid?
24. What is du’ā?
25. What is dhikr?
26. What is the measure of good and evil?
27. What are sins?
28. How do I repent from sins?
29. Which festivals do Muslims celebrate?
30. What good manners does Islām guide to?
31. What should I prioritise learning?
32. How do I go about learning and seeking knowledge?
33. How do I learn Qur’ān and Arabic?
34. Do I have to change my name after accepting Islām?
35. What is circumcision?
36. How do I interact with my parents, non-Muslim family members, my social circle and colleagues?
37. How do I interact with the opposite gender?
38. How do I approach marriage?
39. How can I achieve a balance between being a Muslim and my professional life?

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*Islām, as a religion, consists of beliefs, statements and actions;*

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# 5

## Introduction

In the name of Allāh, ar-Raḥmān (the most merciful), ar-Raḥīm (the bestower of mercy).

All praise is for Allāh, the Lord of all creation, and may salutations of praise and peace be upon his Prophet Muḥammad, his companions and followers.

There is no other blessing greater than being guided to Islām, for it is the key to success in this life and the hereafter. Allāh said,

**{...Then, whenever guidance comes to you from me, and whoever follows my guidance, there shall be no fear on them, nor shall they grieve. But those who disbelieve and reject our signs - such are the dwellers of the Fire...}** [02:38 to 39]

The other great blessing of course, is being guided within Islām i.e. being protected from doubts, misunderstanding Islām and sects. So much so, that a great scholar called 'Ikrimah, from the early pious Muslims said, "I do not know which one of these two blessings is greater: that Allāh guided me to Islām, or that he saved me from the people of desires and innovations".

My dear brother/sister, between your hands is a compilation of concise answers to the most frequently asked questions that new Muslims – or newly practising Muslims - may have. For the sake of brevity, I have avoided using too many Arabic terms, and kept the answers as succinct as possible.

I ask Allāh to make it a source of benefit and guidance, and that he keeps us all firm upon the straight path.

Written by the one in need of the mercy of his lord,

Abul Abbaas Naveed Ayaaz

27th Safar, 1446 years since the blessed hijrah of the Prophet  
صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Corresponding to 1st September, 2024.

“

*The other great blessing of course, is being guided within Islām i.e. being protected from doubts, misunderstanding Islām and sects.*

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## 1. What does Islām mean?

Islām means “complete submission to Allāh, compliance to his laws, and an aversion to disbelief, its people and practises”.

The word “Islām” does not mean “peace”, however peace is a part of Islām; it is the greeting of the Muslims – “assalāmu ‘alaykum” (peace be upon you); and as-Salām is one of the beautiful names of Allāh, meaning: the one who brings peace and security.

Islām, as a religion, consists of beliefs, statements and actions; its fundamental tenet is sincerity in worship, and complete submission to the laws of Allāh.

## 2. How does a person become a Muslim?

A person becomes a Muslim by affirming upon the tongue what is believed in the heart, that the right of worship is exclusive to Allāh, negating all false gods and deities, and affirming the prophethood of Muḥammad ﷺ. This is the meaning of

Ash-hadu al-lā ilāha illa Allāh  
wa ash-hadu anna muḥammadan ‘abduhū wa rasulūhu.

*I bear witness there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah.  
I bear witness that Muḥammad is the worshipper and messenger  
of Allāh.*

Whoever says the above with resolute belief, knowing its meaning, and fulfilling its conditions becomes a Muslim.

## 3. What are the 5 pillars of Islām?

They are the most fundamental actions of Islām which a person must accept to be a Muslim. They are:

1. Shahādah: The testification that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh and Muḥammad is his final messenger.
2. Ṣalāh: The 5 obligatory prayers which are prayed daily.
3. Zakāh: The obligatory alms a person gives to the poor from their savings.

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*They are the most  
fundamental ac-  
tions of Islām  
which a person  
must accept to be a  
Muslim.*

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4. Ṣawm: Fasting the month of Ramadān.

5. Ḥajj: The pilgrimage to Mecca, obligatory once in a lifetime if a person is able to do so.

The details and rulings of these pillars are contained in books of Fiqh (jurisprudence).

#### 4. What are the 6 pillars of imān?

They are the most fundamental beliefs, which a person must accept to be a Muslim. They are:

1. Belief in Allāh: The lord and sustainer of creation, the creator of the heavens and earth. He alone is to be worshipped.

2. Belief in his angels: They are beings from the world of the unseen, created by Allāh, from light. They were created to fulfil important responsibilities and tasks, and obey him in what he has commanded them. We believe they are physical beings with names, bodies and some emotions.

3. Belief in his divine revelation: Allāh sent revelation to his prophets and messengers; the divine scriptures include the Torah sent to Prophet Mūsa, the Injīl (Gospel) sent to Prophet ʿĪsa, and the Qurʾān – the final revelation sent to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. The laws of Islām are contained in the Qurʾān, and it has abrogated previous scriptures. This divine revelation is the speech of Allāh, which he revealed through angel Jibrāīl.

4. Belief in his messengers: Throughout history, Allāh sent messengers to humanity to guide them to the truth, and to teach them how to worship him. Nūḥ (Noah), Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsa (Moses), ʿĪsa (Jesus) and Muḥammad were all great messengers. We do not worship these prophets, neither do we give them attributes of divinity however we take from their guidance and use them as our role models.

5. Belief in the Final Day: This worldly life is temporary, and Allāh created the Hereafter as a permanent abode. He created Jannah (Paradise) for the righteous, and Jahannam (the Fire) for the evil. A person's life ends with death, and he moves to the Barzakh (the life in the grave); then each person will be resurrected after

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*They are the most  
fundamental be-  
liefs, which a per-  
son must accept to  
be a Muslim.*

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# 8

Yaum al-Qiyāmah (the Day of Resurrection), wherein there will be accountability for good deeds and bad deeds.

6. Belief in the divine decree: Everything which occurs, only occurs with the complete knowledge and decree of Allāh. Nothing can occur without Allāh allowing it to occur, and whatever he does or does not allow to occur is according to his divine wisdom. His decree is not questioned, but we submit and live according to his laws.

The details and rulings of these pillars are contained in books of 'Aqīdah (creed).

## 5. Who is Allāh?

Allāh is the one God and true deity, who created everything and is deserving of worship. He possesses beautiful names and lofty attributes; he rewards according to his generosity, punishes according to his justice, and decrees according to his wisdom.

**{Say, «He is Allāh, [who is] One. Allah - the Sustainer [needed by all, and not in need of others]. He neither begets [offspring] nor is He born, Nor is there any equivalent [or equal] to Him.»}**  
[112:1 to 4]

He is more merciful than a mother is to her only child, and closer to a person than the jugular vein; He is above the heavens, and nothing escapes his knowledge.

## 6. What do Muslims believe about Allāh?

Belief in Allāh is based on three main principles:

1. Accepting his lordship: He is the sole creator, sustainer and controller of all existence.

2. Accepting his exclusive right to worship: He is the only one deserving of worship, and every other entity worshipped besides him is false. We pray to him alone, supplicate to him alone, our complete reliance and hopes are in him alone, and we do not love or fear anybody above him.

3. Affirming his names and attributes: He has beautiful names and

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*Allāh is the one  
God and true deity,  
who created every-  
thing and is de-  
serving of worship.*

”



lofty attributes. Whatever he affirmed for his own-self, we affirm; and whatever he negated from his own-self, we negate. We accept his attributes according to their intended apparent meanings, without resorting to figurative or metaphorical meanings.

The details and rulings of these concepts are contained in books of 'Aqīdah (creed).

### 7. What are some of the beautiful names of Allāh?

His main name is Allāh, He has other names which demonstrates his beautiful attributes. They include:

1. Al-Ghafūr: The oft-forgiving.
2. Ar-Raḥmān: The beneficent and most merciful.
3. Al-Karīm: The kind and generous.
4. Al-Mannān: The one who bestows favours and bounties.
5. Al-Mu'min: The one bestows security and infuses faith.
6. As-Salām: The embodiment of peace.
7. Al-Qahhār: The all-prevailing and dominant.
8. Al-Hakīm: The most-wise.
9. Al-'Alīm: The all-knowing.
10. Al-Qadīr: The all-able.

...and many other beautiful names; the scholars have enumerated 99 of the names and clarified their meanings. A Muslim should memorise as many names as possible, know their meanings and utilise them in supplications.

### 8. What is Tawḥīd?

Tawḥīd is to single out Allāh in every aspect of worship. Its opposite is "shirk" i.e. associating partners to Allāh or directing acts of worship to other than Allāh.



*His main name is Allāh, He has other names which demonstrates his beautiful attributes.*



# 10

**{Then do not set up partners with Allāh [in worship] while you know [that He Alone has the right to be worshipped]} [02:22]**

Ascribing a son or partner to Allāh is shirk, similarly supplicating, wearing amulets or invoking saints is shirk.

Tawḥīd is the greatest obligation, and shirk is the worse sin. A person cannot be a Muslim without affirming tawḥīd; and committing an act of shirk is disbelief.

## 9. Who was Muḥammad ﷺ?

Muḥammad ﷺ is the name of the final messenger of Allāh, in a succession of prophets including Nūḥ (Noah), Ibrāhīm (Abraham), Mūsa (Moses) and ʿĪsa (Jesus). He was sent to mankind to remind them of their duty to worship Allāh, and to teach them how to worship. He is not worshipped like Jesus is by Christians, rather he is followed.

We believe he was the best and most pious human, and the most beloved to Allāh. When talking about him, there are certain etiquettes we should display:

- Respecting and venerating him.
- Loving him more than anybody else.
- Believing in what he informed us of.
- Obeying him in what he encouraged us to do.
- Avoiding what he forbade.
- Only worshipping Allāh in the manner he did.
- Loving his companions, and respecting his wives and family.
- Learning about his life, accomplishments, teachings and struggles.
- When mentioning him, we say: “ṣal Allāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam” which means: “May Allāh send salutations of praise and peace upon him”.

Details of his life, his family, struggles, miracles and conquests are contained in books of Sīrah (life of the Prophet).

## 10. What is the Qur’ān?

Every messenger sent by Allāh was given revelation, containing teachings to be conveyed to mankind. This revelation is the speech of Allāh. The Qur’ān is the final revelation sent to mankind through

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*Ascribing a son or partner to Allāh is shirk, similarly supplicating, wearing amulets or invoking saints is shirk.*

”

Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. It was revealed in Arabic, and is the ultimate miracle.

The teachings of the Qur'ān revolve around:

- Descriptions of Allāh and His right to worship.
- Information regarding the Hereafter.
- An encouragement to strive for Paradise and stay away from every action which leads to punishment.
- A mention of previous prophets and their people.
- Rulings of the Shar'iah including what is ḥalāl (permitted) and ḥalāl (unlawful); acts of worship and noble manners and morals.

The Qur'ān is divided into 30 parts (juzz), and it contains 114 chapters (sūrah); each surah contains many verses (āyāt). Whatever is in the Qur'ān is the speech of Allāh, as revealed to Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ without there being any change or alteration.

We should memorise as much of the Qur'ān as possible, learn its meanings, contemplate its teachings and implement its rulings.

The explanation of the āyāt of the Qur'ān are contained in books of Tafsīr (Qur'anic exegesis).

## 11. What is ḥadīth?

A ḥadīth is a narration containing the statements, actions or descriptions of the Prophet ﷺ. Ḥadīth is legislation like the Qur'ān, in the sense that both are a form of revelation; the statements of the Prophet ﷺ are not his personal opinions, rather he was inspired by Allāh to make those statements and actions, and he was taught how to implement the Qur'ān. This is why Allāh said,

**{He does not speak from [his own] inclination, it is only revelation sent down to him} [53:3 to 4]**

The compilations of ḥadīth are called “Sunnan” or “Ṣaḥīḥ”.

## 12. What is sunnah?

Sunnah is the general guidance, legislation and daily practices of the Prophet ﷺ. Whatever is described as being his sunnah, is legislated for us to follow.

# 11

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*The Qur'ān is divided into 30 parts (juzz), and it contains 114 chapters (sūrah); each surah contains many verses (āyāt).*

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## 13. What is bid'ah?

A bid'ah is any religious belief or practice which has been introduced into or attributed to Islām but has no basis i.e. something which the Prophet ﷺ and his Ṣaḥābah (companions) did not perform, nor was it a part of Islām during their era. We can differentiate between a sunnah and bid'ah by looking at Islamic evidences and knowing what was done during the Prophets ﷺ life.

A bid'ah can be an act of worship, a virtuous day or time, a festival, a manner of performing worship, or a belief.

## 14. What are the Islamic evidences?

In order to preserve Islām, and ensure that we are following the same guidance which Prophet Muhammad ﷺ taught, we base every religious action upon an Islamic evidence (dalīl). There are two primary sources of dalīl:

1. The Qur'ān.
2. The ḥadīth or sunnah.

If an act of worship is mentioned in one of the above two sources, we are justified in implementing it. If it is not found therein, or its manner of performing is different to what is mentioned in the Islamic evidences, we cannot perform it.

Importantly, when we try to understand or implement the Islamic evidences, we must do so according to how the Salaf did.

## 15. What do the words “Salaf” and “Salafi” mean?

The word “Salaf” refers to the early generations of pious scholars, beginning with the companions (Ṣaḥābah) who were the people around the Prophet ﷺ, and then those who followed them upon goodness.

When we want to understand the meaning or implementation of an Islamic evidence, we consider what the Salaf did, and we do not exceed their understanding and implementation.

A “Salafi” is a person who follows the above methodology. In essence, every Muslim must be a Salafi.

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*A bid'ah is any religious belief or practice which has been introduced into or attributed to Islām but has no basis...*

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# 13

Importantly, the word “Salafi” is not a mere label or a group, we do not believe in splitting the Muslims into groups and parties - the word “Salafi” is used when it is necessary to clarify the correct methodology, not a mere label.

## 16. How do I deal with different groups and sects?

Muslims should not be divided into different groups and sects, rather we should follow the pure teachings of the Qur’ān and ḥadīth, according to the understanding of the early Muslims – this is known as the Salafi methodology, i.e. the methodology of following the Salaf – as explained above.

We should focus on learning, and trying to relate everything back to the way of the companions and the scholars who succeeded them. Do not feel embarrassed to ask questions, or ask for an evidence from the Qur’ān and ḥadīth to verify any claim.

Simply put, if an act of worship was not performed by the Prophet ﷺ, we should not perform it. If the understanding or implementation of an āyah from the Qur’ān or ḥadīth is not in line with the Salaf, it is an error.

Avoid any group which ascribes itself to a particular person, place or ideology; the only person we ascribe to is Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ; the only people we ascribe to are the Salaf; the only ideology we follow is tawḥīd and sunnah.

## 17. Why did Allāh create us and place us upon the earth?

According to the Qur’ān, Allāh created us for several objectives:

- For us to worship him; and to live our lives according to his laws.
- To know and learn about him.
- As a test, to see how we interact with everything around us.
- He divided us into tribes and nations, so we can know and learn from each other.

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*Importantly, the word “Salafi” is not a mere label or a group, we do not believe in splitting the Muslims into groups and parties...*

”

## 18. What do Muslims believe about death?

We believe this world is short and temporary, and we were placed on the earth to fulfil the above objectives. The eternal life is the Hereafter. The focus of a Muslim should be for the Hereafter, whilst fulfilling the rights and responsibilities of worldly life.

Death begins with the soul leaving the body; thereafter a person enters into the Barzakh which is life in the grave.

## 19. What is ṣalāh?

Every Muslim is obligated to pray to Allāh 5 times a day like the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ taught. These prayers are called ṣalāh. They are there to remind us about Allāh and fulfil our duties towards him.

The 5 daily prayers are a sign of a person's faith, they are the most important obligations in Islām; they are the relationship between a Muslim and Allāh.

Where possible, men should perform obligatory ṣalāh in congregation, in the masjid. There are other encouraged forms of ṣalāh a person can pray throughout the day and night. Before praying ṣalāh, a person must perform a ritual ablution called wudū.

The details of ṣalāh and wudū are contained in books of Fiqh.

## 20. How do I pray ṣalāh if I do not know the words in Arabic?

When learning how to pray ṣalāh, we should approach a knowledgeable person in the local Masjid who will teach us the correct method. Ṣalāh must be performed in the manner the Prophet ﷺ taught, in Arabic. However, for a new Muslim who does not know any Arabic or has not memorised the ṣalāh, it is sufficient to repeat the following Arabic phrases:

- Alḥamdulillāh: All praise is for Allāh.
- SubḥanaAllāh: Allāh is glorified above any imperfection.
- Allāhu akbar: Allah is the greatest.

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*We believe this world is short and temporary, and we were placed on the earth to fulfil the above objectives.*

”

- Lā ilāha illa Allāh: There is no deity worthy of worship except Allāh.

The first passage a person should learn is sūrah al-Fātihah – the first chapter of the Qur’ān, as this is a requirement of ṣalāh.

### 21. What is a masjid?

A masjid - translated as mosque - is a place dedicated for the worship of Allāh. In a masjid, ṣalāh is prayed in congregation, as well as the Friday Prayer. It is a place of sanctity, security and tranquillity; a place for personal reflection and remembering Allāh.

Typically, most mosques include activities such as: learning to recite Qur’an, Islamic studies for men, women and children; funerals; evening schools for children, and other religious social activities.

### 22. What should I do before I go to a masjid?

It is recommended for a person to perform wudū (ritual ablution) at home, purify intentions, wear appropriate clothes, use fragrance and walk to the masjid in a state of tranquillity.

A man in a state of major impurity i.e. after sexual intercourse or a wet dream - should not enter the masjid until he has bathed.

### 23. What should I do when I enter a masjid?

It is recommended to enter the masjid with the right foot, and before sitting to pray 2 rak’ah (2 units of ṣalāh). Whilst waiting for the ṣalāh to start, we should occupy our time with Dhikr (remembering Allah), reciting Qur’ān, reading a book or personal reflection. Whilst it is permitted to talk in the masjid about worldly matters, however we should not go to the extremes of making the masjid a place of mere socialising, joking or worldly discussions.

### 24. What is du’ā?

A du’ā is a supplication i.e. when a person asks Allāh for something. A du’ā can be made at any time, in any place and in any language however there are certain etiquettes that a person should observe

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*The first passage a person should learn is sūrah al-Fātihah – the first chapter of the Qur’ān, as this is a requirement of ṣalāh.*

”

# 16

when making du'ā such as raising the hands as Muslims do, addressing Allāh using his beautiful names, showing our need to Allāh, not being hasty and maintaining hope in him.

## 25. What is dhikr?

Dhikr are statements which contains the remembrance, praise and glorification of Allāh.

They must be said in Arabic, as taught by the Prophet ﷺ. Examples include: “SubḥānaAllāh”, “Alḥamdulillah”, “Allāhu Akbar” and “Lā ilāha illa Allāh”.

The quieter the dhikr, the better and more sincere. Performing group dhikr, or specifying dhikr to Thursday nights is a form of bid'ah.

## 26. What is the measure of good and evil?

Our ethics are taken from the teachings of the Qur'ān and ḥadīth. The rulings of ḥalāl (permitted) and ḥarām (unlawful) have been outlined for us; good and evil has been clarified. Every person will be accordingly recompensed in the Hereafter for good or bad deeds. The ultimate reward for goodness is Jannah (Paradise), and the ultimate punishment for evil is Jahannam (the Fire).

## 27. What are sins?

A sin is any action which opposes the guidance of Islām, involves ḥarām or violates the rights of others. There are varying levels of sins, including:

1. Kufr: This is a statement or action of disbelief, which may exit a person from the fold of Islām.

Examples include: Shirk; mocking an aspect of Islām; prostrating to other than Allāh as a form of exaltation; believing the Qur'ān is deficient, inapplicable or requires change; believing that other laws are better or more appropriate than the laws of Islām; insulting the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions etc...

2. Bid'ah: Innovating acts of worship which the Prophet ﷺ did not do, or attributing to Islām what is not from it.

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*Dhikr are statements which contains the remembrance, praise and glorification of Allāh.*

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Examples include: specifying days to visit graves; introducing new ṣalāh or days of fasting; dhikr aloud in congregation; dedicating and celebrating a day as the Prophet's birthday etc...

3. Transgression: This is violating the right of another person.

Examples include: False accusations, stealing, lying; taking the wealth of an orphan; annoying neighbours; exploiting other people; not paying wages on time etc...

4. Personal sins: Drinking alcohol; taking intoxicants; listening to music; harming the body; illicit relationships etc...

## 28. How do I repent from sins?

In Islām, there is no concept of "confession", that is to confess sins to a priest or minister for atonement, nor does another person bear the burden of a person's sins.

Rather, a person should seek forgiveness from Allāh alone, and conceal sins so they do not become public. If the sin involved a transgression against another person, their right should be returned and apologised to.

We should always remember, regardless of how severe a sin is, the mercy of Allāh is much greater:

**{Say, «O my worshippers who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allāh. Indeed, Allāh forgives all sins. Indeed, it is he who is oft-forgiving, the most merciful.»} [39:53]**

## 29. Which festivals do Muslims celebrate?

In Islām, a festival or a commemorative day is called 'Eid. Friday is a special day because we pray Salat al-Jumu'ah (Friday Prayer).

There are two annual festivals in Islām:

- 'Eid al-Fitr: A day of celebration at the end of Ramadān.
- 'Eid al-Adḥa: 3 days of celebration at the end of Ḥajj.

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*In Islām, there is no concept of “confession”, that is to confess sins to a priest or minister for atonement, nor does another person bear the burden of a person's sins.*

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# 18

During 'Eid, it is recommended for us to visit family and friends, enjoy food, spread happiness, invite people to our houses especially the poor, give gifts etc... However, we must stay away from ḥarām actions.

There are other festivals which are either bid'ah (innovated practices) which were never commemorated by the Prophet ﷺ such as celebrating his birthday, or celebrations of non-Muslim which may involve disbelief such as Christmas and Easter – both pagan festivals in origin.

### 30. What good manners does Islām guide to?

Islām is a religion of manners and morals; It outlines rights and responsibilities. Some of the manners it emphasises are:

- Obedience to parents and keeping the ties of kinship.
- Truthfulness, integrity and trustworthiness.
- Being kind to neighbours and honouring guests.
- Lowering the gaze in front of the opposite gender.
- Courage and bravery in defending the truth and people's rights.
- Care for the environment and animals.
- Respect of elders, compassion for the young and venerating the people of knowledge.
- Looking after the poor, needy and orphans.

### 31. What should I prioritise learning?

It is an obligation upon every Muslim to learn about Islām. Begin by learning about the basics of Islāmic belief which are summarised by the 6 pillars of Imān, read about the life of the Prophet ﷺ and his daily practices, and also learn how to pray correctly and recite the Qur'ān.

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*Islām is a religion  
of manners and  
morals; It outlines  
rights and respon-  
sibilities.*

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# 19

## 32. How do I go about learning and seeking knowledge?

The Islamic method of learning is to study with a qualified teacher, usually in a masjid or in an Islamic institute. You must ensure that you learn the authentic Islam, as opposed to Islām which has been mixed with cultural practices. A good indicator of being taught properly is to make sure everything is being referenced with evidences from the Qur'ān and ḥadīth.

It is important to understand, that learning requires effort and being proactive, but with consistency in learning, Allāh will make it easy.

## 33. How do I learn Qur'ān and Arabic?

In most mosques, there are classes for adults to learn how to recite the Qur'ān properly. This can either be a formal class, or approaching a learned Muslim who will sit with you and go through Qur'ān or Arabic. If there are no classes which you can physically attend, there are many online institutions and colleges which can be enrolled onto, or as a last resort video series on YouTube.

## 34. Do I have to change my name after accepting Islām?

It is recommended for a person to change their name to a Muslim name, especially if ones previous name contains a bad meaning. A name should be chosen considering its meaning and/or an Islamic personality.

If it will be difficult to legally change your name or costly, it may be easier to have a Muslim name amongst family and friends, and keep your previous name on official documents such as passports.

## 35. What is circumcision?

Circumcision is a procedure to remove the foreskin from the penis, to maintain hygiene, health and purity. Without circumcision, when urine is discharged from the urethra, it is not discharged completely, and droplets of urine collect under the foreskin which is both unhygienic as well as a possible cause of infections.

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# 20

Male circumcision is an obligation for every new-born baby, and if an uncircumcised adult accepts Islam, he should also get himself circumcised with medical experts. A Muslim GP is usually the first point of contact for this.

### **36. How do I interact with my parents, non-Muslim family members, my social circle and colleagues?**

As Muslims, we are encouraged to maintain our family ties – regardless of whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim. In fact, as a Muslim, your kindness, relationship and obedience towards your non-Muslim parents should be even better, and your relationship with your siblings should be stronger.

Similarly, with your social circle and colleagues, you can maintain relationships with them especially if it will be an avenue of showing them Islām. However, as Muslims we are not allowed to obey people if it necessitates disobedience to Allah. For this reason, we cannot partake in Christmas celebrations, new year festivities, gatherings where alcohol is drunk etc...

### **37. How do I interact with the opposite gender?**

Allāh created humans, male and female, and he is more knowing what is to our benefit and what is to our detriment. He has placed between both genders attraction and desires. The general guidance in Islām is segregation between men and women who are not related to each other; we have to dress modestly and in accordance to Islamic rulings. Women specifically, must cover their bodies and hair in front of unrelated men.

Both genders are taught to lower their gazes in front of the other, to not touch each other nor freely mix or be secluded. Relationships and friendships with the opposite gender, outside marriage, are not permitted as it leads to other sins.

**{Tell the believing men to lower their gaze [from looking at forbidden things], and protect their private parts [from illicit actions]. That is purer for them. Verily, Allāh is all-Aware of what they do. And tell the believing women to lower their gaze, and protect their private parts [from illicit actions] and not to show off their adornment...} [24:30 to 31]**

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*As Muslims, we are encouraged to maintain our family ties – regardless of whether they are Muslim or non-Muslim.*

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# 21

## 38. How do I approach marriage?

Marriage is an important phase in the life of every Muslim; we are encouraged to marry whilst we are young, and not delay it unnecessarily. Marriage has many benefits including: protecting yourself from illicit desires; a woman being provided for and a man being looked after; building a family; taking care of each other; the human need to have loving secure relationships etc...

In Islām, we are not permitted to have relationships outside marriage, however if you know a person who is looking to get married or shares your ideal values as a spouse, you should speak to her family members if it is a woman; and if it is a woman looking for a husband, request your male relatives to speak to him.

Both people can then see each other and discuss marriage, in the presence of the woman's guardian i.e. a responsible relative such as father, brother, uncle etc...

If you do not have male relatives, or they are inappropriate, approach your local masjid imam to act as a wali (guardian).

## 39. How can I achieve a balance between being a Muslim and my professional life?

Islām guides us to a life of balance between working towards the Hereafter as well as fulfilling worldly rights and responsibilities. This is exactly what is mentioned in the Qur'ān,

**{But seek, through that which Allāh has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allāh has done good to you} [28:77]**

Balance is therefore attained through aiming for worldly success within the boundaries of the Sharī'ah: earn and spend what is ḥalāl, avoid ḥarām, rectify your relationship with Allāh and rectify your relationship with people; fulfil your worldly duties but keep your ultimate focus towards the Hereafter.

Note: If you are new Muslim, or a Muslim who would like to learn about Islām, but are unsure where to start, feel free to send an email to us and we will try to signpost you to a local masjid or online institute which will be appropriate inshaAllah.

Email: [admin@madeenah.com](mailto:admin@madeenah.com)

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